

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Thursday, September 29, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
Mariama S. Yilla
Ext 7217 / 7216

Independent Observer. Thursday 29th September, 2005.

New V-P For Special Court

Justice Robertson QC, the first President of the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, will serve as its new Vice-President for the next four months. He succeeds Sierra Leonean Justice George Gelaga King, while Justice Renate Winter will assume the Vice-Presidency in January.

The Vice-President of the Court is filled by the Judges of the Appeals Chamber by rotation every quarter.

Justice Robertson's earlier tenure of the Court Presidency occurred during an important phase of its work, when its procedures were drafted, its courtroom built and its financial viability established with the United Nations. Together with President Kabbah, he opened the new court in an historic ceremony in March 2004.

Geoffrey Robertson is founder and head of Doughty Street Chambers. He has argued many landmark cases in the European Court of Human Rights. A Master of the Middle Temple and visiting Professor in Human Rights Law at London University (Queen Mary College), he is also the author of several books on human rights and international humanitarian law. His latest work is entitled *The Tyrannicide Brief*.

Thursday, September 29, 2005

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VIEWPOINTS

OPINION: In defence of asylum for Charles Taylor

By Omon Akhigbe

Posted to the Web: Thursday, September 15, 2005

I HAVE listened and watched with total dismay the clamour by some Nigerians, especially some civil society organisations demanding for the hand-over of Ex-President Charles Taylor to War Crime Tribunal holding in Sierra Leone for trial. I am quite aware that many of these Nigerians are civilians who have never seen operations in the war fronts and cannot say much about wars and war crimes

Some of them might have been legal luminaries but might have not known the remote and immediate effects of wars. Some of these agitators might have broken promises with impunity and they also want our President to break the promise he made to Charles Taylor. These group of agitators are in the same school of thought with Jonathan Swift (1667—1745) who believed that: "Promises and pie-crusts are made to be broken."

Some of the questions that I would like to ask these Nigerians that are olamouring for the release of Charles Taylor to War Crime Tribunal for trial are as follows:

How many lives and property should have been lost by now in Liberia and Sierra Leone if Charles Taylor was not granted asylum by President Obasanjo and the war in both countries continued up till now? Is it better to deny Charles Taylor asylum and put the lives of Liberian on death roll? Is it not better for President Obasanjo to save the life of Charles Taylor and save the lives of other Liberians/Sierra Leonians that should have been eliminated if the war was further prolonged? Are these agitators not happy that the war in Liberia came to an end because of the asylum granted to Charles Taylor by President

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Olusegun Obasanjo?

Besides, are these agitators not happy that the war in Liberia came to end and the lives of Nigerian officers and men of the Armed Forces that should have been lost if the war in Liberia had continued are now saved? Of course, how many of them are happy with the Nigeria Armed Forces? These agitators should mention any war that was fought in any part of the world and there was no war crime.

How many of these agitators dead or alive that have agitated that those who committed war crimes during Nigeria/Biafra Civil War and other crimes as revealed by Oputa Panel should be brought to book?

The agitators should tell the world the distance between Charles Taylor's troops and the Presidential Lodge of Ex-President Samuel Doe before Nigeria sent her troops to Liberia to defend Samuel Doe which made the war that should have ended within few weeks to last for many years.

Was it not during this prolonged war that two of the Nigerian journalists sent to Liberia to cover the operations of the Nigerian troops were killed by Liberian soldiers?

If Charles Taylor's troops have been allowed to capture Samuel Doe without the intervention of Nigerian troops as they (Taylor's troops) were already close on him and the war then came to end, should have war crimes been levied against Charles Taylor? Do Presidents of countries command troops in the war fronts or the Commanders are the officers commanding the troops? Was General Yakubu Gowon the Commander of troops in the war fronts in Biafra and is President George Bush the Commander of American troops now in Iraq?

There are many questions begging for answers and I am sure these agitators cannot provide correct answers due to lack of knowledge. At times people give bad names to dogs in order to hang them. The hue and cry by some Nigerians that Charles Taylor should be sent to War Crime Tribunal for trial could be termed as a sort of vendetta. The clamour is not based on what happened in Sierra Leone but on what happened in Liberia in order to avenge the death of our two beloved journalists.

Nigerians should know that respect begets respect and that was why Charles Taylor respected our President and agreed to leave his Presidency in Liberia and take up asylum in Nigeria. I will only advise the civil society organisations and other Nigerians to direct their energies in solving the problems confronting their country such as corruption, poverty, debt forgiveness, rule of law, disregards to constituted authority, etc.

As for President Obasanjo, I will advise him not to heed or listen to these Nigerians who would like him to break the promise he made to Charles Taylor. Breaking such promise and handing Charles Taylor over to War Crime Tribunal will be a betrayal of confidence. Some

Nigerians always blow hot and cold at the same time and many will later blame/accuse the President if Charles Taylor is handed over to the War Crime Tribunal by President Obasanjo.

President Obasanjo is one of the most senior retired military officers in Nigeria today and he is fully aware of why late Col. Fajuyi, then Military Governor of old Western Region was killed along with the late Head of State, Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi in 1966. The President should please protect Charles Taylor for now no matter whose ox is gored. As for me, I am not ready to follow the bandwagon of those demanding for the release of Charles Taylor to War Crime Tribunal. Nigerians, especially the Armed Forces during General Babaginda's rule ought to apologise to Charles Taylor for prolonging a war that should last few years to many years that resulted in the destruction of many lives and property and the economy of Liberia.

That is the truth but nobody wants to say the truth. John Wycliffe (1471) said "I believe in the end the truth will conquer." As for me, I believe that truth is like oil and no matter the amount of water poured into it, it must always float. Truth can only mould but it will never rot. Those who are trying to bury truth today will be hurried by lies tomorrow. I know that in Nigeria, truth is a stranger and honesty is a taboo but we must always be honest and always say the truth no matter whose ox is gored.

Omon Akhigbe, writes from Lagos, Lagos State

Voice of America

Liberian Government Needs Funds for New Army

By Gabi Menezes

Abidjan

27 September 2005

Menezes report - Download 369k

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The Liberian transitional government says it needs about \$11 million to pay severance and retirement packages to thousands of soldiers. The cash-strapped Liberian government is looking for donors.

Liberian Deputy Defense Minister Joe Wylie says the Liberian government is looking for funds to pay off 4,000 soldiers. He says he wants donors to pay for this crucial need, and that South Africa has already promised about \$4 million.

The United States has pledged \$35 million to train new Liberian forces, under the private security company DynCorp International, but first the payments to old soldiers have to be settled.

The spokesperson for the U.N. Mission in Liberia, Paul Risley, says that he expects training to begin early next year. He says the U.N. mission will remain in the country until Liberia can adequately deal with its own security.

"The peace-keeping force will remain in place in Liberia until suitable security can be provided by a newly trained Liberian police force and a newly trained Liberian military force," he said.

Mr. Risley says that there is already progress on security issues in the country devastated by 14 years of civil war. The police academy has recruited almost 2,000 police cadets who are patrolling the streets of Monrovia. But Mr. Risley says he is concerned because the Liberian justice system is not equipped to deal with criminals and Liberian prisons are too small and rundown to hold them.

"There continues [to be] a sense of impunity for criminals because there is still not truly a functioning court system as we have more and more newly trained police on the streets," he added. "Police are able to arrest persons, but it is very likely that people will be released by courts or released by police."

A Liberian researcher at the University of Birmingham, Thomas Jaye, who studies security issues, says that it is imperative that a new army be constructed as soon as possible because many soldiers have allegiances to former Liberian leaders, which could have a divisive effect on the country.

"You need more of a professional army that is not really tied to any government, but tied to the state and the people. And this is what many of us are now proposing," he said.

Liberia's civil war ended in 2003, when former president Charles Taylor fled into exile in Nigeria, where he has been told not to meddle in regional affairs. Mr. Taylor is accused of funding rebels, including child soldiers, in West Africa in exchange for diamonds.

About 15,000 U.N. peacekeepers have been helping Liberia's government with security and preparations for elections scheduled October 11.

SIERRA LEONE EVENING PRESS REVIEW
UNAMSIL

Wednesday 28 September 2005

UNAMSIL-UNDP STRENGTHEN SECURITY

President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah Tuesday commissioned a UNDP-UNAMSIL sponsored-project at the Wilberforce Barracks. The project, which was implemented by UNAMSIL Pakistani peacekeepers, included fifteen water points, a toilet and a rehabilitated school. During the commissioning, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) in UNAMSIL and also UNDP Resident Representative, Victor Angelo, described the implementation of the project as a “success through partnership.” Implementation of the project came about following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by UNAMSIL, the UNDP, and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) early this year, with UNAMSIL and UNDP donating US\$75,000 each towards the project aimed at improving the living environment of the soldiers.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in collaboration with UNDP will host a one-day retreat in Freetown with senior media practitioners tomorrow, with theme, “Promoting Development in Sierra Leone: Civic Responsibility and Your Role In It.” The Deputy SRSG, and UNDP Resident Representative, Victor Angelo will give the keynote address. The aim of the retreat is to assist in mapping out a tangible strategy for the promotion of Sierra Leone’s post war development.

The Executive Management Board (EMB) of the Sierra Leone Police has promoted 145 police officers to the ranks of Sergeants and Inspectors. Assistant Inspector-General of Police-in-charge of Operations, Francis Munu yesterday told journalists that the promotions were based on satisfactory performance.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND PEACE CONSOLIDATION

The Commissioner, National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), Aljahi Kanja Sesay has handed over four constructed court houses in four communities respectively in the Kailahun district, eastern Sierra Leone.

The projects were funded by the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank. They were implemented over a nine-month period under NaCSA’s National Social Action Project (NSAP), a community-driven programme as part of Government’s commitment to the restoration of civil authority and decentralization. During the war, all community structures were destroyed. The main objective of NaCSA, which was set up by an Act of Parliament in 2001, is to rehabilitate or construct those structures and, resettle Sierra Leoneans that were either returnees or Internally Displaced Persons to their respective communities.

In another development, the commission has allocated US \$600,000 to the Kailahun District Council to rehabilitate all feeder roads in the district.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE AND VIOLATION

Following persistent delays and adjournment of the trial at a Freetown court of the dreaded 'West Boys,' suspects out of frustration and anger yesterday refused to disembark from a truck and onward into the prison since they had been held in solitary confinement for long. They had been in solitary confinement since 2000. They were the faction that broke away from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), after the invasion of Freetown, the capital in January 1999, and stayed up the hills on the highway to the provinces, ambushing vehicles, killing passengers and looting their baggage. They held 12 British soldiers hostage who were on patrol in an area called, 'Okra Hill.'

POLITICS

The former Minister of Energy and Power, Emmanuel O. Grant, who was sacked after the Makeni-Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) Convention, has complained that he was sacked because he was a Creole. He said the Ministers of Transport and Communication, Dr. Prince Harding, a Mende, and Marine and Fisheries, Okere Adams, a Temne, were not sacked for not supporting the candidature of Vice President Solomon Berewa, nor the Minister of Development and Economic Planning, Mohamed B. Daramy, another Mende, who also did not support the Vice President's bid.

The people of Pujehun District, southern Sierra Leone have urged Charles Margai, one of the defeated SLPP Presidential candidates to form his own political party. They assured him of genuine support during the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 28 Sept 2005**

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

International Clips on Liberia**LIBERIA: "We're being ignored", say voters outside the capital**

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

GBARNGA, 28 September (IRIN) - Liberians living outside the capital are complaining about being neglected by presidential candidates, bent on pouring resources into capturing the Monrovia vote but making only fly-by-night visits to the rest of the country.

"Our would-be presidents think that Monrovia is the whole of Liberia," said Johnny Smith, a shoe repairer in the central town of Gbarnga. "None of them has taken time off to tell us in detail how Liberia or our county will be developed."

Further north, in the village of Palala, 59-year-old Kemah Farzue was also critical of candidates making fleeting visits.

"When they are passing in their cars, they either drop T-shirts or photos, but none of them has stopped to sit or talk with us," she told IRIN with a sigh.

International Clips on West Africa**Four Hundred Sierra Leone soldiers to join ECOWAS stand-by force**

23 September 2005

Freetown, Sierra Leone (PANA) - Some 400 Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) soldiers will soon leave for Nigeria to join the envisaged ECOWAS peace keeping force.

The group, including army officers, medical officers, signal officers, military police will undertake peace support operations within the stand-by force envisaged by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Jeddi Armah at armahj@un.org.

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
21 September 2005

Original: English

Letter dated 16 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as the representative of the current chairman of the African Union, I have the honour to transmit herewith the communiqué issued by the thirty-eighth meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, held on 14 September 2005, in New York, concerning the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

I should be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aminu Bashir Wali
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 16 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Communiqué of the thirty-eighth meeting of the Peace and Security Council

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union held its thirty-eighth meeting in New York on 14 September 2005.

The meeting, which was held at the level of Heads of State and Government, received and considered a report by the African Union mediation team on the latest developments in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Peace and Security Council,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the African Union mediation team;
2. *Commends* President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, the African Union mediator, for his tireless efforts and expresses its appreciation for the progress made so far in addressing the outstanding issues that were impeding the full implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra Agreements;
3. *Expresses* concern over the fact that the Ivorian parties did not demonstrate the necessary political will for the full implementation of the agreements reached on the outstanding issues, in particular the dismantling and disarmament of the militias, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation and the creation of conditions for holding free, fair and transparent elections. The Council urges the Ivorian parties to recommit themselves to the peace process, exercise restraint and honour their obligations;
4. *Underlines* the need to review the situation in Côte d'Ivoire before 30 October 2005. In this regard, the Council requests the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) summit to urgently convene to assess the situation with respect to the problems of the implementation of the outstanding agreements and report to a meeting of the Peace and Security Council, to be convened urgently at the summit level, with the participation of ECOWAS leaders, to consider the matter and decide accordingly;
5. *Expresses* its readiness to continue to cooperate with the United Nations on the best ways and means to support and advance the peace process;
6. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.



Ivory Coast leader rules out poll

Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo has said that a presidential election planned for 30 October cannot go ahead because rebels have not disarmed.

Speaking in a televised address, the president said the constitution allowed him to remain in office beyond then.

Earlier, Mr Gbagbo said he would not attend a regional summit on Ivory Coast on Friday.

The talks in Nigeria are a fresh attempt to find a solution to the three-year-old Ivorian crisis.

Ivory Coast has been split in two since a failed coup and subsequent armed uprising by rebels who now control the north of the country.

Mediator role

Earlier this month, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan voiced concern over the lack of preparation for the poll, and sharply criticised leaders on both sides for their lack of progress towards peace.

Both the rebels and opposition parties had rejected the poll, saying it could not be free and fair if held on 30 October.

Mr Gbagbo's spokesman did not explain why Mr Gbagbo would not travel to the Nigerian capital, Abuja.

The summit has been called on the wishes of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and it is possible that South Africa, the current mediator, will be asked to withdraw from the role, or at least take a back seat.

The New Forces rebels, who seized the north of the country in September 2002, are refusing to work with South Africa.

However, South Africa says Mr Gbagbo has done everything asked of him, in contrast to the armed and unarmed opposition.

Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/4288534.stm>

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