

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:

Friday, October 07, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Due to the ongoing dispute between local media houses and vendors, no newspapers were published today.



Funds sought for Sierra Leone war crime cases

Sierra Leone - A special criminal court trying those charged with war crimes in Sierra Leone will run out of money next year unless some \$25-million (R163-million) is raised to keep it running.

At a United Nations (UN) pledging conference held last week, Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette urged countries to give generously.

"By doing so," she said, "states will make clear that those who commit heinous crimes against international law, wherever they may be, must be held accountable."

The special court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) was established in January 2002 by an agreement between the UN and the government of Sierra Leone.

'This is not what one expects to see in a democratic country'

Its mandate is to prosecute "persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law" committed in the country since November 30, 1996, the date of the Abidjan Peace Agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

The conflict was one of the region's most brutal, involving widespread rape, amputation of limbs, and other atrocities against civilians.

The SCSL was funded by voluntary contributions until the end of 2004.

In June 2005, the UN General Assembly appropriated \$20-million (R130-million) to supplement the court's financial resources for the first six months of this year, and authorised another \$13-million (R84-million) for the second half of 2005.

Starting on January 1, 2006, the court will revert to voluntary contributions. According to Robert Vincent, the court's registrar, \$25-million (R163-million) will be needed to finance its activities next year.

"We have seen a tremendous amount of support today, so we are very hopeful that we will approach that amount in the coming weeks and months," he said at the pledging conference.

In addition to the European Commission, 14 UN member states have already made pledges of up to \$9-million (R58-million).

The biggest pledge - \$3,5-million (R22-million) - came from Britain, followed by Canada with \$1,7-million (about R11-million) and The Netherlands with \$1,2-million (about R7-million).

Other countries that made pledges at the conference are Denmark, Australia, Belgium, Norway, Turkey, Finland, Germany, Italy, Greece and Sweden.

Vincent noted that the United States has also been one of the biggest contributors and supporters of the Special Court, having already given a total of \$22-million (about R143-million).

"And we fully expect the United States to again be the major contributor to this Court," he said. "We already have an indication that they will be contributing this

year."

Although 11 defendants have been indicted, two key suspects are still missing - Johnny Paul Koroma and Charles Taylor.

Koroma is the former leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and Taylor is the former president of neighbouring Liberia.

Taylor, who faces 17 charges related to supporting the insurgency and providing arms and training to the RUF, is being protected by the government of Nigeria, which refuses to surrender him.

Desmond Silva, the chief prosecutor, said: "At the moment we can only operate diplomatically, because the Court... do (sic) not have any power to compel Nigeria to surrender Mr Taylor."

According to Silva, the court is likely to fulfil its task within the next 18 months.

Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, said at a press conference last week that the United Nations has largely met the security goals it set out six years ago.

Once 17 000-strong, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone is now down to 2000 troops. Since peace was consolidated in 2002, the government has disarmed 70 000 combatants, and nearly 9500 police have been trained and equipped.

Mwakawago told IPS: "What is important from all the accounts and publicity the proceedings have received in the country is that the question of impunity is now being challenged, which is a significant contribution of the court."

Another pledging conference for Sierra Leone will be held in London at the end of November. The United Nations estimates the country needs \$1,7-billion (about R11-billion) to begin tackling issues like poverty and corruption.

Mwakawago expressed concern about the 40 percent unemployment rate and 70 percent illiteracy rate, especially among young people, many of whom were caught up in the civil war.

"We cannot continue peacekeeping - we need peace-building now," Mwakawago said.

"So my opinion is that the country is ready now for the next phase of development."

Press freedom is another burning issue in Sierra Leone with the government's jailing of journalist Paul Kamara, who was accused of "seditious libel" for articles criticising President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

Kamara was convicted in October 2004 and jailed for two years. Local and international press freedom groups have repeatedly called for his release.

"President Kabbah's government should not hold Paul Kamara in prison one day longer," said Ann Cooper, director of the New York Committee to Protect Journalists.

"Sierra Leone is one of the very few countries in Africa that has sentenced a journalist to prison for doing his work.

"This is not what one expects to see in a democratic country." - Sapa-IPS

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Court moves against Uganda rebels

The International Criminal Court has issued its first arrest warrants, for five leaders of the Ugandan rebel movement, the Lord's Resistance Army.

No names have been revealed, but the leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, is believed to be among them.

The LRA is accused of widespread murder and torture during nearly 20 years of fighting against the army. They have kidnapped thousands of children.

Human Rights Watch welcomed the move as an "historic development".

"It stamps the accused... as indicted war criminals by an international court. That has not happened before," International Justice Programme director Richard Dicker said.

The BBC's Will Ross in Kampala says the arrest warrants will put an end to peace talks.

Many northern Ugandans had hoped negotiations would solve the conflict, in which thousands have been killed and 1.5 million people forced from their homes.

Child victims

Uganda asked the Hague-based court to investigate violations in northern Uganda last year.

The request was the first time a state had asked the court to take up a case.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

First permanent court to try individuals for genocide, war crimes and other human rights violations

Rome Statute set up in July 1998, when 120 countries adopted the treaty

Came into force in April 2002 after ratification by 60 countries

Uganda and DR Congo investigations began in 2004

Inquiry in west Sudan's Darfur region began in 2005

The head of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo told a news conference the Ugandan government had been informed of the warrants.

William Swing said Congo and Sudan, where some of the rebels are based, had also been notified.

The LRA are known for abducting young children, to become fighters or sex slaves.

Human rights groups also accuse them of murder, mutilation, torture, rape.

"Victims have been suffering at the hands of the LRA for near... 20 years in northern Uganda," Mr Dicker said.

But he added that he hoped the court would also investigate the Ugandan army, which is also accused of abuses against civilians during its war with the rebels.

The Ugandan ambassador to the US welcomed the news.

Edith Sesempala told the BBC the arrests would be good for peace and human rights in northern Uganda.

Peace talks

Earlier this year some Ugandans expressed fears that such a move could derail negotiations between the LRA and the government.

The peace talks, backed by several Western countries, produced a historic face-to-face meeting between government ministers and senior LRA rebel commanders last year.

However, diplomats at the UN have suggested that the peace effort may have run its course.

Observers accuse both sides of not putting enough effort into negotiating an end to the war, our correspondent says.

Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/4317852.stm>

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INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune

The butcher and the ballot

By Ken Shulman International Herald Tribune
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2005

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone On Oct. 11, after two years of ineffectual interim rule and two decades of dizzying, demoralizing conflict, Liberians will go to the polls to elect a new Parliament and president.

The problems facing the war-torn West African nation are legion. Liberia's physical infrastructure is gutted, its civil and political institutions eviscerated. Eighty percent of all Liberians live below the poverty line; 85 percent are unemployed, including thousands of idle former combatants with easy access to arms.

Still, Liberians are enthusiastic, with voter registration close to 90 percent and thousands of expatriates returning home to participate in the democratic process. While few voters and analysts expect the October vote to effect a miracle cure, the upcoming elections can clearly serve as the first ritual step in what promises to be a long and tortured trail toward recovery.

Unfortunately, next month's democratic ritual will be sterile so long as Charles Taylor remains at large. Since accepting asylum in Calabar, Nigeria, as part of an August 2003 cease-fire agreement, the former warlord turned Liberian president continues to meddle in Liberian and regional politics.

Human rights groups claim that Taylor helped spark deadly riots in Monrovia in October 2004, that he orchestrated an assassination attempt on President Lansana Conté of Guinea in January 2005, and that he funds at least 36 autonomous groups across West Africa, including a small, rapid-action military force.

These same groups charge that Taylor controls or influences at least nine of the 22 current Liberian presidential candidates. Taylor's former generals, allegedly on his orders, actively recruit their former soldiers to fight in insurrections in the Ivory Coast and Guinea, further destabilizing an already volatile region.

"He is like a vampire," said Jacques Klein, a former United Nations special envoy to Liberia. "Until you drive a stake in his heart, he won't die."

There is no war crimes tribunal in Liberia, where Taylor would undoubtedly be indicted for excesses and abuses committed against his countrymen. But there is one in neighboring Sierra Leone.

In June, 2003, one year after its creation, the Special Court for Sierra Leone issued an indictment for Taylor on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Taylor was cited as having "the greatest responsibility" for having helped found, fund, and arm Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front - a ghastly assembly of rebels, mercenaries and child soldiers who distinguished themselves during Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war through wanton sexual violence, murder and amputations. He is the court's most visible defendant; the trial is meaningless without him.

Thus far, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria has refused to surrender Taylor to the Sierra Leone tribunal, despite a volley of resolutions and appeals from the U.S. Congress, the European Parliament, human rights groups and regional leaders.

Obasanjo cites his obligation to respect the terms of the accord that brought Taylor to Nigeria, and denies the charges levied against his undistinguished guest - charges, that if verified, would constitute a clear violation of the terms of his asylum.

If anything, the Nigerian president's resolve is hardening. Last week, at the airport in Abuja, operatives of Nigeria's State Security Service arrested two printers for possessing posters with the words "Wanted: Charles Taylor." The printers, under contract with the Coalition Against Impunity - a broad alliance of nongovernmental organizations across the globe

dedicated to Taylor's extradition - were held incommunicado for three days. Their posters were confiscated, and their workshop shut down.

Like free and fair elections, justice is often more significant as ritual than remedy. No punishment meted out by the special court, however harsh, could redeem the many lives lost or ruined in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Yet placing Taylor on trial in Freetown, in the custody of the court, would at least blunt his influence. Even more, the spectacle of Taylor having to acknowledge and answer for his crimes would help regenerate a faith in justice, a faith as necessary to a democratic society as its faith in the ballot box.

So long as Charles Taylor remains beyond the reach of justice, the Liberian elections can be neither free nor fair. They can only be farce.

Ken Shulman was a media fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2003-2004.

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Peacebuilding : EU action throughout the world

The EU's contribution to peacebuilding consists of a wide array of activities and instruments largely unknown to the public

From peace negotiations, to disarmament, de-mining, civil administration and good governance, democratisation, strengthening the rule of law, justice reform, rehabilitation and reconstruction operations, election observations, etc. The EU is active on all fronts and all around the world!

In human rights matters, for instance, the EU has helped to reinforce the role of the human rights mediator in Guatemala right after the civil war.

The EU also supported the creation of a strong and efficient International Penal Court to make sure that war crimes do not remain unpunished. Likewise, the Union also contributed financially to the creation of special tribunals, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Since 2000, the EU has deployed a total of 34 election observation missions, with the help of thousands of observers, in countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

The EU is also strongly involved in de-mining operations in Colombia, Cambodia and Angola.

Following the numerous conflicts in Africa, the Union decided in 2003 to establish a peace facility for Africa. With a budget of €250 million, this peace facility aims to reinforce the African Union's ability to launch peace-making and peacekeeping operations, as in Darfur (Sudan), for instance.

More information:
European Commission

Related EU Grant Loans Programme(s):

- ⊕ To support activities in the fields of human rights, democratisation and conflict prevention
- ⊕ Grants to wide-scale Human Rights projects within a specific field
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Spokesman Calls for Investments in S. Leone

By Jeff Miller

Posted: 10/6/2005 10:36 AM

(Rapaport...October 6, 2005) The countdown to United Nations peacekeeping withdrawal from Sierra Leone is moving fast, but peacekeepers said the six-year-long mission is hardly complete.

Sierra Leone faces extensive poverty, illiteracy, and finding employment for the vast majority of unemployed young men, most of whom are former child soldiers, said United Nations representative Daudi Mwakawago.

"We have kept the peace, but the country is fragile. We can't continue with the peacekeeping. We need peace building," Mwakawago said.

The United Nations estimates that Sierra Leone requires about \$1.7 billion in investments to end corruption and build good government institutions. A two-day donors conference is scheduled in London on November 29, 2005.

Mwakawago calls the current state of Sierra Leone "very explosive," and that the former soldiers know only those skills trained from war, "and we don't want them to go into that trade" again.

War broke out in Sierra Leone in part to control the country's diamonds and natural resources. Since year 2000 diamond exports have risen from \$10 million to \$130 million. Mwakawago said half of diamond exports and diamond mining is still not under control.

The United Nations Security Council voted to withdraw peacekeepers from Sierra Leone on December 31, 2005. Mwakawago contends that it is unlikely the country will revert to war because most of the nation's 5 million are "tired of fighting" and the scars of war live as daily reminders across the country.

Breaking News

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◆ **Ministry: ALROS to form Coopera**

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Fecha publicación: 03/10/2005
Tiempo de lectura: 2 min

As peacekeepers depart Sierra Leone, numerous challenges remain – UN official

/noticias.info/ Sierra Leone faces a spectrum of challenges, from explosive youth unemployment to legitimate control of its rich mineral resources, as the United Nations peacekeeping mission winds the next phase of the West African country's development begins, the mission chief said today.

"We were there to keep the peace. We've kept it. So we want the peace-builders to come now and with the people" on such challenges as 70 per cent of the 5 million population living on less than \$ and 70 per cent illiteracy, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Daudi Mwakawago, told a news conference at UN Headquarter

In the development phase, helped by the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), the country need \$1.7 billion to kick-start its economy in line with its national poverty reduction strategy. A plenary conference, also called a Consultative Group Meeting, would take place in November in London, he

Reviewing the benchmarks for success that the Security Council had given UNAMSIL, he said over course of its six years of operations, the mission had helped the Government expand its reach throughout the country, as well as demobilize and reintegrate more than 70,000 ex-combatants.

It had assisted with recruiting and training 9,300 out of the 9,500 police officers expected to be deployed by the end of the year, while the Government had found no need to ask for help since taking over responsibility for security from UNAMSIL in September of last year.

UNAMSIL had helped raise the earnings from diamond exports to \$130 million last year from \$10 million in 2000 by reducing smuggling, although 50 per cent of the industry was yet to be brought under Government control, Mr. Mwakawago said. He noted that in addition to its gold and diamonds, the pre-war country could export bauxite, iron ore, rutile, timber, coffee, cocoa and rice.

The mission had scored a number of successes in improving governance, he said, noting that the Kingdom was poised to start its \$37 million programme to improve the country's judicial, correctional and immigration capabilities. At the same time, he warned that reducing corruption would take many years.

Through the efforts of the UN-affiliated Special Court for Sierra Leone, impunity for those who had committed serious crimes had been challenged and the standard of adjudication raised, he said.

But he cautioned that while that Court was well-resourced and its staff well-paid, the local courts take over adjudication in the coming years were very poor.

Asked whether Sierra Leone could slide back into conflict, he said the people were tired of war. In to the many lives lost, the numerous amputees and war-wounded in the population provided a cor reminder of the devastation wrought by fighting.

The presence of UN peacekeepers in neighbouring Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire added an extra element of stability by checking the free cross-border flow of bad elements in the area, he said. With those men already in the region, it would not take long to mobilize a force if a new conflict arose in Sierra Leone.

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 Oct 2005**

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

10/06/2005 10:54:02

Taylor still instils fear as Liberia goes to polls

By Nick Tattersall and Katharine Houreld

MONROVIA, 6 Oct (Reuters) - Ex-president Charles Taylor instils fear in his homeland more than two years after fleeing Liberia into exile to end a conflict that left 250,000 dead.

Candidates at elections next week for the job he vacated are unwilling even to say if the former warlord should face justice.

"I cannot turn Charles Taylor over because I have not accused Charles Taylor, my country has not accused Charles Taylor," leading candidate George Weah told Reuters.

"Charles Taylor has his problem with the international community, not with me," said LURD chairman Sekou Conneh, dressed in a pin-striped suit and wearing a large gold ring.

10/06/2005 07:39:37

Two Liberian candidates stand down to prevent delay of election

Monrovia (dpa) - Two Liberian presidential candidates formerly barred by the country's electoral commission decided to stand down in order to allow the smooth running of the upcoming elections, Liberian media Thursday quoted former Nigerian president Abdul Salami Abubakar as saying.

LIBERIA: Polls get go-ahead for 11 October after mediator ends legal spat

MONROVIA, 6 October (IRIN) - Liberia's first elections since the end of civil war will take place as planned on 11 October after three barred candidates abandoned the fight to have their names belatedly put on the ballot papers, a top mediator has said.

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.



Court: Arrest Ugandan cult leaders

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) -- The new International Criminal Court has issued arrests warrants for five leaders of a Uganda cult notorious for raping, maiming and killing children, a U.N. official has said.

The warrants against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) are the first ever issued by the ICC, based in The Hague, Netherlands. The tribunal, which began functioning in mid-2003, is the world's first permanent global court set up to try individuals for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"I know they have issued arrest warrants for five people," said William Lacy Swing, the American diplomat who heads of the U.N. mission in the Congo.

He told a news conference that notifications went out last week to the governments of Uganda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where a remnant of the LRA took refuge last month.

Nineteen years of warfare by the LRA, led by a Christian mystic, Joseph Kony, has devastated northern Uganda and uprooted more than 1.6 million people. More than 10,000 children have been kidnapped by the rebels, based in the Sudan, and forced to become fighters, laborers and sex slaves.

Swing said he could not reveal the names of the five. But Kony is certain to be among them. The warrants, court observers said, follow sealed indictments against the LRA leaders.

In Kampala, Uganda's internal affairs minister, Ruhakana Rugunda, told Reuters: "I have no specific information on whether warrants have been issued or not. All I can say is, if they have been issued, it would not be a surprise to me."

A spokesman for the ICC in The Hague declined to comment.

On Sept. 18, Swing said 320 fighters and 80 family members entered the Congo from Sudan and were in Aba, in the northeast Haut Uele district of Orientale Province, near the Sudanese and Ugandan borders. The group is believed to be led by Vincent Otti, a deputy to Kony.

Congo President Joseph Kabila is dispatching two battalions to the area and U.N. peacekeepers have airlifted about a thousand troops "to make sure they have the force there to take care of the problem," Swing said.

Richard Dicker, an attorney for the New York-based Human Rights Watch, said the arrest warrants gave the victims of LRA crimes a first opportunity for justice.

"It stamps the accused, not just as people associated with horrific acts, but as indicted war criminals by an international court. That has not happened before," he said.

Dicker said the indictments were a first step and needed the cooperation of governments.

He said he hoped that the ICC prosecutor, Argentine Luis Moreno-Ocampo, would not limit himself to crimes committed by the LRA but look into abuses by the Uganda army. The military is accused by human rights groups of beating and killing civilians they were supposed to protect from the LRA.

Kony is believed to be hiding in the mountains of southern Sudan where his fighters also terrorize remote communities. He was originally given support by the Sudanese military during its conflict with Uganda.

The LRA received international notoriety in 1996 when it abducted 152 teen-age girls at St. Mary's College, a boarding school in northern Uganda. Nuns pursued 200 armed men and 109 girls were released while "the prettiest" were taken as "wives."

Unlike other tribunals, the ICC has no time limit. Its indictments remain in force until the suspect is tried, dies or runs out of hiding places.

The ICC is conducting investigation in the Congo and in Colombia. The U.N. Security Council earlier this year authorized the ICC to probe crimes against civilians in Sudan's Darfur region. The United States, which opposes the tribunal, did not use its veto to stop it.

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