

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Tuesday, 22 November 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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Awoko

22 November 2005

Witness Told Court...

“We Killed Civilians That Were Suspected to be Kamajors”

By Betty Milton

Led in evidence by Mr. Harrison of the prosecuting team at the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, witness TF1-045 yesterday revealed how they were ordered by Sam Bockarie alias Mosquito to kill civilians who were found to be Kamajors.

The witness said he was a member of the RUF who also took part in the killing of these civilians.

He stated that these civilians were captured by Mosquito and sent to Augustine Gbao in the eastern Kailahun to be investigated whether they were Kamajors. Upon investigation, the witness continued, Augustine Gbao told Mosquito that indeed they were all Kamajors so Mosquito ordered one Joe Jusu to kill them all.

TF1-045 said that since the people were so many the soldiers would count them in fives and would take some out to a particular junction where they would be killed with AK-47s, pistols and other weapons.

The witness maintained that when they were in Kenema, Mosquito ordered that every soldier should try and get whatever they wanted as he declared ‘Operation Pay Yourself’. During this time all soldiers were engaged in massive looting of civilian property.

The witness who was testifying in Krio said as they were heading for Kailahun, some women were captured together with some boys and girls. The boys he said were used for fighting and the women as bush wives.

Meanwhile, the Chief Prosecutor has ended the case of the AFRC trials in Chamber II after the Chamber had admitted the documentary evidence tendered by the prosecution on 16th November 2005.

The prosecution in view of this declared the closure of the case.

In response, the defence indicated their intention of Rule 98 on the motion of acquittal.

The Exclusive

22 November 2005

Johnny Paul is Dead

By Arthur Caulker Just From Liberia

The former AFRC (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Chairman, Johnny Paul Korma, is confirmed dead in Liberia. According to highly informed sources in the Liberian capital of Monrovia, who spoke to our reporter, Mr Koroma was murdered in 2003, on the expressed orders of the exiled Liberian President and Special Court indictee, Mr Charles Ghangay Taylor, when the former junta boss fled the country and went to seek refuge in Liberia, following the Wellington shooting incident in 2003, for which he was wanted by the police for questioning.

Our source said Mr Taylor already knew he would eventually be indicted by the Special Court considering the barrage of accusations levied against him by Sierra Leoneans and the international community, for his role in fueling the war in Sierra Leone. He therefore thought it necessary to eliminate all those key players in the conflict with whom he worked in destabilising the country to ensure that they disclose no vital information about him that would be of interest to the court should they be arrested. He said Mr Koroma was murdered by Mr Taylor's Anti-Terrorist Unit, while en route to the Ivory Coast, with body guards offered by Mr Taylor to accompany him out of the country.

As Prosecution closes its case...

59 witnesses testify against AFRC indictees

By Joseph Turay

As the trial of members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) continues against three indictees- Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Bobor Kanu, a total of 59 fifty-nine witnesses including three experts have so far testified in the proceedings.

The Prosecution headed by the Chief Prosecutor- Desmond de Silva Monday 21st November while addressing Judges at Trial Chamber No.2 submitted that

"subject to any matter upon which the Court may seek the assistance of the Prosecution, I close the case for the Prosecution against the AFRC.

" The Prosecution in a release from the Court states that "the Chamber has directed that the Defence must submit any motion for judgment of acquittal to the Court in writing by 12th December.

The Prosecution will then have three weeks to respond to the motions and Defence will be given five days to reply.

" In response to the Prosecutions submission, the Defence indicated that it have to file in a motion on rule 98 of the Rules and Procedures of the Court. Confirming the number of 59 witnesses that have testified in the matter, the Spokesman for the Court- Peter Anderson said it is now left with the Defence to tender its list of witnesses that would have to testify in the proceedings. It could be recalled that the trial of the three AFRC indictees started in March this year with all three accused persons- Brima, Kamara and Kanu facing a 14-count charge which ranges from war crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian laws committed during the civil war in sierra Leone.



Prosecution Closes Case in AFRC Accused Trial

Special Court for Sierra Leone (Freetown)

PRESS RELEASE

November 21, 2005

Posted to the web November 21, 2005

Freetown

The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Desmond de Silva QC, today officially concluded the Prosecution's case in the trial against the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) accused, Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu.

The three defendants each face a 14-count indictment for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Following a Court ruling on the admissibility of certain documents, Mr. de Silva QC concluded the Prosecution's case today after 97 days. In his final statement he told the Judges that "subject to any matter upon which the Court may seek the assistance of the Prosecution, I close the case for the Prosecution against the AFRC".

The AFRC trial began on 7 March 2005, shortly after the swearing-in of the Judges of Trial Chamber II. Alex Tamba Brima and Brima Bazzy Kamara were indicted on 7 March 2003. Santigie Borbor Kanu was indicted on 15 September 2003.

In all, 59 witnesses, including three experts, gave evidence for the Prosecution.

The Chamber has directed that the Defence must submit any Motions for Judgment of Acquittal to the Court in writing by 12 December. Prosecution will then have three weeks to respond to the motions and Defence will be given five days to reply.

Should the motions fail, the Defence will proceed to present their case early next year.

This is the second of the three ongoing trials in which the Prosecution has completed its case. Prosecutors completed their case in the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) trial on 14 July 2005. Defence Counsel for the CDF accused are scheduled to open their case on 17 January 2006.

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Cokorioko website

http://www.cocorioko.com/_news

HINGA NORMAN'S POLITICAL AMBITION IS STILL ALIVE --Says Spokesman of his Campaign Team

Monday November 21, 2005

Chief Hinga Norman's political ambition is still on course, the Spokesman of his Campaign team , Rev. Alfred Samforay told COCORIOKO yesterday. Presently, Rev.SamForay went on, the Chief 's Legal Team is working on Part 2 of the Hinga Norman Vs. SLPP saga.

It must be recalled that though being tried presently by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity, Chief Norman (Pictured Right) announced his intention to contest the 2007 Presidential Elections under the banner of the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), but his plan was scuttled and he decided to form his own party. It seems however that he is still not done with the SLPP

SAMFORAY'S RESPONSE TO COCORIOKO'S ENQUIRIES

The Chief is fine. I believe he and his lawyers are busy preparing for Norman vs. SLPP II before the Sierra Leone Supreme Court. Oral arguments are expected shortly. They are confident they have covered all the loopholes the SC might use to pass on their constitutional responsibilities once again to some silly Party Commission for which Kabbah has nominated two sets of commissioners to Parliament simultaneously. I am working on a piece on that issue and will address you presently.

The Steering Committee to Elect Hinga Norman and their coalition partners are also pursuing their own agenda. According to his legal adviser, Dr. Jabbi, neither the court battle nor the political activities are in conflict with each other. I suppose the so-called special court is still around some where. With no money from donors coming their way soon, they are pinning their hopes on Ellen Johnson and Chief Obasanjo to deliver the RUF godfather, Charles Taylor, to them to rejuvenate the near-banekrupt tribunal.

God must have a great sense of humour. Look at all the goalballs he placed at our disposal for leadership.

A. SamForay.

Forum demands Habre, Taylor extradition



Written by Ramatoulie Charreh

Monday, 21 November 2005

Participants at the just-concluded forum on the participation of NGOs in the 38th ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) have passed a resolution requesting the ACHPR to demand the extradition of Hussein Habre and Charles Taylor to Belgium and Sierra Leone respectively to face justice.

The forum noted that Habre and Taylor, former leaders of Chad and Sierra Leone respectively had committed genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity during their regimes and should not be allowed to get away scot-free.

The Senegalese government should respond favourably to the 19 September extradition order issued by the Belgian government for the trial of Hussein Habre, the forum urged. According to the resolution, the Nigerian government should arrest and surrender without further delay Charles Taylor to the UN Special Court of Sierra Leone for his trial.

The former Chadian dictator Hussein Habre, the forum recalled, stands accused of thousands of executions that took place during his regime. Similarly, Charles Taylor has been indicted on a 17-count charge of war crimes and crimes against humanity, the forum added.

Accordingly, the forum recommended to the African Union to urge its member states to condemn and reject impunity and ensure that perpetrators of crimes against humanity do not go unpunished.

Last Updated / Monday, 21 November 2005

Close Window



Ellen's Position On Taylor

The Analyst (Monrovia)

NEWS

November 21, 2005

Posted to the web November 21, 2005

Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has not been officially declared winner of the run-off elections although she accumulated the highest votes, but yet there is a rising tension from many quarters on the issue of former President Charles Taylor. Against this backdrop, she may as well be preparing herself for the challenge and has made her position known.

The Unity Party (UP) Standard-bearer, who is likely to be announced the winner of the November 8 run-off elections Wednesday, says several options were being considered on the issue of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor who is in Nigeria on asylum.

According to her, Liberia was a founding member of the United Nations, thus subjecting it to abiding by the UN resolutions and regulations thereto.

As if she understands the standpoint from which the European Union (EU) spoke on the issue of Taylor, she said the EU was trekking the path of the United Nations which also wants to see Taylor turn over to Sierra Leone.

Stating what she would do with the issue of former President Charles Taylor going to the UN-backed war crime court in Sierra Leone, she said she would consult with West African leaders before a decision can be taken.

"What we want to do before we can come up with a course of action is to consult with West African leaders because they have had a very important role in bringing peace to our country," she said.

She spoke to journalists Saturday in Kolma Town, upper Montserrado County that a final solution will be reached which she hopes will satisfy the international community, EU, UN and West African leaders.

The European Union (EU) recently threatened to withhold any assistance to the incoming government unless it turns over Taylor to the Court in Sierra Leone. The EU statement may be in line with previous commitment made by the Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo that he would turn Mr. Taylor over to an elected Liberian government.

His statement was against the backdrop of intense international pressure, particularly from the US government and the United Nations being mounted on Nigeria to turn Taylor over.

The issue of the next government ensuring former President Taylor being taken to Sierra Leone is undoubtedly a hotbed, observers say and a Unity Party-led government with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf serving as president stands to face an uphill battle.

Most political analysts are suggesting that recent alliances reached between most of Taylor's fanatics, especially his wife Jewel Howard Taylor, now a senator-elect representing Bong County, during the run-off elections may as well have its toll too.

More besides, others are of the opinion that Madam Ellen may not be able to contain the Taylor going to Freetown issue because of the past relationship between them. Others are contrarily arguing that taking a decision in favor or against Taylor's going or not going to Freetown may not be any hard decision for Madam Ellen because she respects both national and international laws.

In other news, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has reaffirmed her commitment to fighting corruption, indicating that her government would establish "code of conduct" which everybody will abide by

"If you violate the public trust, there is a penalty." she said and noted that if she takes the oath of office, 25% of corruption will stop.

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Daily OBSERVER

Ellen Seeks Corruption-Free Officials

By **Abdullah Dukuly**

Published: **21 November, 2005**

MONROVIA, November 21 --As she prepares to take office on January 16, 2006, President-in-waiting Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, says officials wishing to work in her government will have to abide by a code of conduct that will guide them against corruption, dishonesty, inefficiency and human rights abuse.



Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
Official photo

"Anybody who will work for the government will have to abide by that code of conduct," she told reporters Saturday in the village of Korma, her ancestral home, over 15 kilometers northwest of Monrovia, where she had traveled to thank the people "for standing behind me" in her quest for the presidency.

"If they (officials) violate public trust through dishonesty, inefficiency and human rights abuse, they will be penalized in accordance with the law as prescribed by the code of conduct."

The primary aim of the code of conduct, aides say, is to help stamp out corruption that continues to flourish under Charles Gyude Bryant, the power sharing transitional leader making it difficult, if not impossible, for the transitional government to raise international support for the restoration of the infrastructure and basic services that will stimulate growth and attract foreign investment.

But Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf appears set not to allow her administration to let the sleeping dogs lie. "Once I take the oath of office, I think 35 per cent of the corruption will stop right there, because I think they know me already," the Harvard-trained economic administrator said. Aides to her also hinted that the incoming government is apparently looking for honest people who will work in the government.

On how the new government will likely tackle the ease of exiled former president Charles Taylor, she said West African leaders are currently working out a deal that could determine the fate of the former president. The regional leaders and the

presidents of South Africa and Mozambique whisked Taylor out of the country to seek refuge in Nigeria after rebels closed in on him in the capital, Monrovia in August 2003.

Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf said the mechanism being worked out by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) "is a final solution that will satisfy everybody", including the international community, the European Union, the United Nations and West Africa. "Just give me a little time to consult with them. They are working on it now," she assured the public.

Asked whether Taylor still poses threats to Liberia and the sub-region, she said the threats are diminishing. She said certainly the people no longer want to seek Taylor back to Liberia. "Liberians want to consolidate the peace and get on with the job of development, and we wouldn't want any kind of distraction. So Mr. Taylor has to be dealt with by the international community.

On whether the incoming government would be able to prosecute Taylor she he be repatriated by Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, president-elect Johnson-Sirleaf quickly responded, "He cannot be repatriated to Liberia because he was indicted not by a Liberian court by a special court supported by the United Nations for the crimes committed in Sierra Leone. That's an international problem."

On the question of domestic crimes Taylor might have committed, she said, "When we cross the bridge, we'll reach to it. Let him settle the first problem."

Speaking about her immediate priorities when she assumes power early in January, the president-elect said she would give prompt attention to the needs of the war-affected youths. "We'll try to get these thousands of thousands of the war-affected youths into skill training so that they can earn incomes to make them productive and constructive citizens again..

Her second priority, she said, is to get the government machinery functioning effectively without corruption and restore basic services to stimulate growth and foreign investment.

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US Rep Renews Call for Taylor to Face Justice

The Analyst (Monrovia)

NEWS

November 21, 2005

Posted to the web November 21, 2005

Calling the democratic presidential election in Liberia a renewed opportunity to ensure that Charles Taylor faces justice, United States Representative Ed Royce (R-CA-40) has sent a letter to President-elect Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

The letter is asking Ellen to immediately call upon the Nigerian government to transfer former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the custody of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, where he faces 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"I congratulate Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf and the Liberian people on this electoral achievement. The election was historic. This exercise in democracy represents an opportunity for a new start for Liberia, and for Charles Taylor to be brought to the bar of justice," said Royce.

Royce noted Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo's commitment to considering the request of a democratically elected Liberian President to turn Taylor over to the Special Court.

"Even in his Nigerian asylum, Charles Taylor is a threat to the people of Liberia. As long as he remains out of the reach of the Special Court, the future of West Africa will be in jeopardy. History would look well on Johnson-Sirleaf if she uses her new status to press President Obasanjo to immediately transfer Taylor to Sierra Leone," said Royce.

Royce chaired the House Subcommittee on Africa for eight years. He is currently the vice-chairman of the panel. Below is the full text of the letter:

"I am writing to congratulate you on your historic election victory, and respectfully request that you immediately call upon the Nigerian government to transfer former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the custody of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"Without doubt, your election promises a new beginning for Liberia. Your fellow citizens have enthusiastically demonstrated their faith in the democratic process, turning out in large numbers to vote, marking the freest and fairest election in Liberia's history. The United States strongly supports this democratic achievement and has an abiding interest in Liberia's well-being. Many in the Congress look forward to working with you as you confront Liberia's many challenges.

"I would be considerably more optimistic about Liberia's future, however, if Mr. Taylor faced the consequences of war crimes and crimes against humanity for which he has been indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The United States and many other governments strongly support the Court and its mandate, and I urge you to do likewise.

"Please understand that I do not make my request of you lightly. I chaired the Subcommittee on Africa for eight years, focusing much of my attention on West Africa. In my view, progress in Liberia, and the international community's considerable investment in your country, remains in jeopardy as long as Mr. Taylor is permitted to elude justice. Of equal importance, justice must be pursued for the Sierra Leonean people.

"I firmly believe that as long as Mr. Taylor continues to enjoy safe harbor --while remaining active in Liberian politics from a distance-- the livelihoods and democratic rights of millions of West Africans, and the post-war re-construction of Liberia and Sierra Leone, will remain at risk.

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has resisted numerous calls, including by the United States Congress, to transfer Mr. Taylor to the custody of the Court. Nevertheless, I request that you call for the Nigerian government to deliver Mr. Taylor immediately to the Court, so that justice can be done and Liberia can enjoy better prospects for prosperity.

"Madame President-elect, it is the hope of many that you use your strong democratic mandate to affirm that the use of violence to achieve political ends is no longer acceptable in West Africa - and usher in a new era for the rule of law in the region. Mr. Taylor must be held accountable for his past actions, and achieving this end will require your decisive and immediate action.

"Again, please accept my congratulations on your election. I thank you for considering my views." the letter concluded.

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UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 21 Nov. 2005

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International Clips on Liberia

21/11/2005 07:28:14

Pan-African Parliament congratulates Liberia's new leader

Johannesburg (dpa) - The election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president of Liberia is an indication that gender equality is taking root in African politics, Pan-African Parliament (PAP) president Gertrude Mongella said on Monday.

Mongella was speaking at the opening of the fourth ordinary session of the PAP in South Africa, which was attended by 200 members of parliament, intellectuals and foreign diplomats.

Congratulating Johnson-Sirleaf on behalf of the African institution, Mongella, a Tanzanian, said: "This demonstrates that Africa is on the way to realising that women are as capable to lead as men are."

Los Angeles Times 21 November 2005

Lend Liberia a hand

Chris Fomunyoh and John Prendergast

AT A POLLING station in northern Liberia, a 60-year-old, megaphone-wielding elder, dressed in a grease-stained auto mechanic's uniform, shouted instructions. He was in charge of keeping people in orderly voting lines. "We have suffered terribly," he told us. "But this is our last chance. I am here today to save my country." His weathered hands spoke to a life of hardship. But despite obvious exhaustion, he was eager to carry out what he saw as his civic responsibility. Hundreds of Liberians, young and old, lined up to cast their ballots, and poll workers tallied results into the night, aided only by tiny lanterns and their determination to have a credible election process. There was aggressive oversight by the U.N., but Liberian citizens were the main protagonists.

Liberians punctuated their efforts to change their country when they chose Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard-trained economist who previously worked for the World Bank and the United Nations, as their leader. The election results have been challenged (even that process has been orderly and peaceful), but it seems probable that Johnson-Sirleaf will be Africa's first elected female president. When a phoenix begins to rise, it is important to comprehend from what ashes it is emerging. The U.N. publishes a roster every year that ranks countries in terms of a "human development index." Liberia isn't even listed. Few people live past the age of 40, and unemployment hovers around 80%. There's no central electricity. Hospitals, roads and schools have crumbled.

The United States has been the largest financier for disarmament and security-sector reform so far, but it will have to do even more -- and get other donors to help the government

build the economy and establish the rule of law. Liberia has taken the first step toward bettering itself; it needs international help to make a full recovery.

If the international community fails to come through, and the U.N. peacekeepers use the success of the elections as a justification to leave, Liberia could roll back into war by the end of the decade. Lest we forget, broken promises to ex-combatants in 1997 left a vacuum that Taylor's autocratic regime was only too glad to fill.

Local Media – Newspapers

CDC Witnesses Testify in Run-Off Fraud Hearing

(Daily Observer, The News, The Inquirer and Heritage)

- Testifying in the run-off fraud hearing Saturday, CDC National Secretary Eugene Nagbe said that National Elections Commission Chairman Frances Johnson-Morris's previous remarks describing CDC standard bearer George Weah as "irresponsible" for claiming 62 percent of the votes cast in the 11 October elections was a campaign against Mr. Weah. CDC poll watcher Sandra Worjloh testified that the number of voters at an IDP camp exceeded the number of persons that registered in the camp, and that amounted to fraud.

European Civic Educators Call for Grassroots Participation in Voter Education

(The Independent)

- At a workshop to share the experiences learned from participating in civic education activities during the election process, the European Union (EU) Bilateral Elections team recommended the involvement of grassroots organizations in civic education exercises in future elections.

Ghanaian Peacekeepers Awarded UN Medals

(The News, The Telegraph)

- Presenting medals to 130 officers of the Ghanaian contingent serving with UNMIL, Special Representative of the Secretary General Alan Doss said that Ghana has demonstrated its commitment to international peace and security by supporting the peacekeeping operations of the UN.

Civil Society Groups to Protest against Unlawful Possession of Vehicles by Departing Lawmakers

(The Independent)

- Addressing a news conference Saturday, the Chairman of the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations, Dan Saryeh, vowed that the group would lead a mass protest if the outgoing lawmakers insisted on possessing the Cherokee Jeeps assigned to them. Mr. Saryeh added that the coalition would exert effort to prevent the legislators from further exploiting the Liberian people.

Lawmakers to File Complaint against United States Ambassador to Liberia

(Daily Observer, The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, The Telegraph, The Independent and National Chronicle)

- In an interview with Star Radio, Acting National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA) Speaker George Koukou said that the NTLA would file a formal complaint against United States Ambassador to Liberia Donald Booth for meddling in the domestic politics of the country.

Local Media – RADIO VERITAS *(News monitored yesterday at 06:45 pm)*

Civil Society Groups to Protest against Unlawful Possession of Vehicles by Departing Lawmakers

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Outgoing Lawmakers to File Complaint against United States Ambassador to Liberia

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

ELBS RADIO *(News monitored yesterday at 19:00 pm)*

Local Officials Entreat CDC to Accept Run-Off Result

- Speaking to journalists, Grand Bassa County Superintendent Robert Vonyeegar and Buchanan City Mayor Obediah Zangar urged the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) to accept the run-off results because Liberians have spoken through their votes and have elected a president. They encouraged the losers to work with the winners for the betterment of Liberia.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Fishermen Warn Population against Eating Dead Whale

- Fishermen in Sinkor--a neighbourhood of Monrovia--yesterday warned residents of the area against eating a whale which had been found dead ashore the Bernard Beach. But journalists that visited the site said that the residents did not heed.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

European Foundation Holds Workshop for Legislators-Elect

- Briefing reporters, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Country Director Henz Jockers indicated that the foundation would today commence the holding of workshops for legislators-elect on parliamentary procedures, human rights and separation of powers.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(Culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Foreign Researchers Arrive to Study Forests in Liberia

- Forest researchers from Africa, Europe and the United States have arrived in Liberia to join their Liberian counterparts to study three forest sites in Lofa and Gbarpolu Counties.

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.