

**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:**

Wednesday, 30 November 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248

# Contents

## **Sierra Leone Media**

The Dilemma of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Page 3-4  
*Exclusive*

## **International Media**

History Being Made or Repeated? Observer From Monrovia Pages 5-7  
*Financial Times*

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 29 Nov. 2005 Pages 8-10  
*UNMIL*

## The Dilemma of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf

### COMMENTARY

By John Momo-Kalzolu

The President-elect of Liberia, Mrs Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was on Wednesday, 23rd November, 2005 officially declared winner of the 8th November Presidential run-off elections held after she and the former international soccer super star, George Opong Weah failed, to secure the 55% votes needed to win in the first rounds.

The news of Mrs. Sirleaf's Victory announced by the Chairman of Liberia's National Elections Commission (NEC) Mrs. Frances Johnson-Morris at a public gathering of the Liberian political elite class, civil society as well as religious and traditional leaders was greeted with thunderous applause.

Responding, Mrs. Sirleaf described her victory as not only personal, but a victory for Liberian women in general and Africa in particular, after the 14-years civil strife. Mrs Sirleaf's inauguration is scheduled for January and was inaugurated; she will become Africa's first elected female President. This is not the only first in Mrs. Sirleaf's distinguished professional career. She was the first female ever to be appointed Finance Minister in Liberia and this happened long before the military intervention of 1980 that brought Samuel Doe to power.

In recent times, she was the first female to declare her intention to contest the Liberian presidency, an election that was later manipulated and won by Charles Taylor. Mrs Sirleaf was also the first African female to hold a significant post in the United Nations hierarchy at the UNDP and the World Bank. At a hurriedly convened press briefing that punctuated the announcement of her rise to power, Mrs, Sirleaf disclosed that she will not renege on her election promises to restore electricity and pipe-borne water to residents of Monrovia, since the facilities were destroyed by missiles beyond repairs in 1990.

This is where the dilemma will arise. The Euro-

pean Union (EU) is Liberia's principal donor to the water and hydro-electicity projects even before the war. This time around the EU has expressed interest in the rehabilitation and restoration of water and electricity to Monrovia and its environs but on the conditions that the authorities hand over Charles Taylor to the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone where he is wanted to answer to charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The issue of the extradition of ex-Liberian President Charles G. Taylor from Nigeria where he has been living as host of President Olusegun Obasanjo remains up to this day, a contentious one. What is at stake is the fact that President Obasanjo of Nigeria continues to justify Mr Taylor's stay in Nigeria through an accord ratified by ECOWAS that legitimised his asylum in Nigeria.

ECOWAS - TAYLOR accord materialized at the time Charles Taylor was still President at the Executive Mansion, and at a time when rebels of the Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) led by Sekou Dabute Conneh, were advancing towards the Mansion with threats that Taylor should step down and leave the country. According to the terms of the Taylor-ECOWAS accord, brokered by President Obasanjo and the ECOWAS Special Envoy on the Liberian Crisis Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Taylor was to step down and leave the country as demanded by LURD, but in exchange, he was to be granted political asylum in an ECOWAS country.

Taylor and his supporters are assuming that in the

absence of a truce which became official at the last ECOWAS summit of Heads of States in Accra, Ghana, that was attended by Charles Taylor, he would have preferred to hold on to power until the fall of the last soldier.

Interestingly, the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court at the time Mr. David Crane, issued the Warrant for Taylor's arrest during the Accra, Ghana summit. The Arrest Warrant, which was dispatched to the Ghanaian authorities through interpol was not acted upon and Taylor left Accra for Monrovia where he packed up and left for Nigeria.

Mrs. Sirleaf will be having her first shock by deciding on how to convince Obasanjo to release Taylor to the Special Court in exchange for EU assistance.

---

***The issue of the extradition of ex-Liberian President Charles G. Taylor from Nigeria where he has been living as host of President Olusegun Obasanjo remains up to this day, a contentious one. What is at stake is the fact that President Obasanjo of Nigeria continues to justify Mr Taylor's stay in Nigeria through an accord ratified by ECOWAS that legitimised his asylum in Nigeria.***

---

# Financial Times

November 28, 2005 Monday  
London Edition 1

## **History being made or repeated? OBSERVER FROM MONROVIA**

By DINO MAHTANI

So just two years after a 14-year civil war ended in 2003, strife-torn Liberia is making headlines for positive reasons: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was last week confirmed as the first female president in African history. What's more, she's a Harvard-trained former World Bank economist of the sort beloved of the developed world.

Alas, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is, especially in the west African country that has witnessed violence and conflict since the 1980s.

Almost inevitably for a female leader, she has been dubbed the Iron Lady. But many Liberians worry about what lies behind the campaign facade. What of the presence in the background of shady associates of Charles Taylor, the ex-warlord-turned-president who has been indicted by a United Nations-backed court for alleged crimes against humanity in the war in neighbouring Sierra Leone? How will she carry out her pledge to bring in well-qualified "clean" officials while retaining the loyalty of Taylor?

Sirleaf denies reports that she helped fund Taylor's rebellion but admits she initially gave it moral support to topple the regime of dictator Samuel Doe. While Doe was the first indigenous Liberian to take power, Sirleaf is descended from the freed American slaves who founded the country in 1847 and form the traditional elite.

Given that she lost out to Taylor in elections in 1997 and was indicted for treason under his regime, one would not expect there to be any love lost. But she does not seem too concerned about bringing him home from Nigeria to face justice.

"Taylor was not indicted by any court in Liberia," she said, explaining that he would first have to be tried by the UN special court in Sierra Leone.

### **Taylor of Liberia**

Some of the former Taylor associates who have publicly backed Sirleaf include Jewel Howard-Taylor, the ex-president's wife. She has been elected as a senator for Taylor's former ruling party, the NPP.

Those said to back Sirleaf more quietly include senior officials and military officers of Taylor's regime.

Sirleaf won a landslide victory in Nimba county, seen as a key "swing state" and the fulcrum on which Liberia's war turned.

The two senators elected in Nimba reflect old ethnic and political loyalties. Prince Johnson, who led a breakaway faction of Taylor's rebellion and filmed the execution of former president Doe by his cronies, was one senator elected in Nimba. The other was Adolphus Dolo, known as "Peanut Butter" when a top general under Taylor during the war.

Peanut Butter, who is known to favour Sirleaf, has been a key player in a legal saga that ended with Mittal Steel, the world's largest steelmaker, winning a concession for the huge iron ore deposits in Nimba county. The unpredictable Johnson initially gave his support to George Weah, the former international soccer star who ran against Sirleaf, but has since softened the tone of his support.

How Sirleaf will reconcile the "Taylorites" with some of the former rebels in her entourage is a mystery.

### **Big brother**

Sirleaf made a flying visit to regional powerbroker Nigeria in late October, between the first and second round of voting, for the funeral of Stella Obasanjo, wife of Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria's president, who died after cosmetic surgery.

Obasanjo had offered Taylor asylum in Nigeria on condition he stepped down. He has been understandably reluctant to hand his guest over for trial in Sierra Leone.

"We also have to respect and find a way to work with the west African leadership, particularly the president of Nigeria," a sympathetic Sirleaf has since said.

After her visit to Nigeria her fortunes began to look up. Newspapers suddenly started backing her and she buzzed around electorally crucial Nimba county in a helicopter of unknown provenance.

None of the funds for her slick campaign could have come from any Nigerian, however. Only Liberian citizens can make donations.

### **Weah woe**

Protesters who marched on the US embassy after what they claimed were rigged elections got a taste of the neutrality that the international community prides itself on.

They were beaten back by UN police from Jordan, who lashed out with truncheons and fired tear gas into the fleeing crowd. This despite their commanding officer, who slapped one policeman on his helmet for being too zealous as Observer clutched handkerchief to mouth.

Election observers say the result was fair and Sirleaf was declared the winner. Weah has said he will continue with a legal challenge. But don't expect any surprises. The election commission's boss, Frances Johnson-Morris, is no fan of the star.

She accused him of being "reckless and irresponsible" and of "trying to hijack the electoral process" for claiming he had won 62 per cent of the vote in the first round. The public rebuke came while polling stations were still open.



---

## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 29 Nov. 2005

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

#### **Liberian president arrives in Ivory Coast on goodwill visit**

ABIDJAN, Nov 29 (AFP) - Liberia's new president-elect Ellen Johnson Sirleaf arrived in Ivory Coast Tuesday for a brief "friendship visit" of a few hours, part of a lightning tour of states in the region which will also take her to Nigeria, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

She was met at the airport by Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo and the prime minister of the government of national reconciliation Seydou Diarra. Her staff said she would hold talks with Gbagbo on the "effects of the Ivorian crisis on the region" before meeting senior members of a consultancy specialising in major building projects.

#### **Liberian president-elect to discuss Taylor's future**

By Peter Murphy

ABIDJAN, Nov 29 (Reuters) - Liberia's president-elect, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, said on Tuesday she would discuss the future of former president and warlord Charles Taylor with West African leaders as she began a four-nation tour of the region.

"Allow me to have consultations with West African leaders, whom I am visiting, to take guidance from them before we take a position on that," Johnson-Sirleaf said shortly after arriving in Ivory Coast when asked about Taylor.

Chicago Tribune 29 November 2005 (Commentary)

#### **Liberia's 2nd chance; Much remains to be done before country can get off critical list**

By Chris Hennemeyer

Two years ago, Liberia was no longer a functioning nation, rebel forces were approaching the capital and then-President Charles Taylor had just been indicted for crimes against humanity. Remarkably, the world stepped up vigorously to the plate, notably the United States, Europe, the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States. A cavalcade of relief agencies, bolstered by 15,000 blue-helmeted UN troops, descended on the country with encouraging results. Much remains to be done before Liberia can be taken off the critical list.

Virtually all neutral observers agree that these elections were well-conducted and that Harvard-educated economist Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf won. Unfortunately, her opponent, former soccer star George Weah, has been contesting the outcome, claiming fraud and manipulation. The stark fact is elections do not a democracy make, and it will take time for Liberian political culture to fully absorb the concepts of inclusion, compromise and fair play.

Another possible threat to this nascent democracy is ethnic tension. There is strong but credible anecdotal evidence that many Liberians cast their votes along ethnic lines. While



may be human nature to vote for one's own kind, it is an ominous element in a country where the wounds of war are still fresh, and where many people still think of themselves as Gios, Krahn or Mandingos first, and as Liberians second.

Finally, Liberia's next president will have to face the issue of what to do about Charles Taylor. While most ordinary Liberians want to put the horrors of war behind them and focus on rebuilding the economy, infrastructure and social services of the country, real healing will not occur until those responsible for tearing Liberia apart are called to account.

*Chris Hennemeyer is Africa Regional Director for IFES, an international non-profit group that supports the building of democratic societies*

## **Local Media – Radio Veritas** *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

### **President-Elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Visits Liberia's Neighbours**

- President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf today departed for Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria as part of her efforts to consolidate ties with Liberia's immediate neighbours and sub-regional partners, Unity Party sources said yesterday.

### **Special Representative Urges Ex-Combatants to Be Studious**

- At the official launch yesterday of the second cycle of formal education program for ex-combatants, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss challenged the beneficiaries to work hard and stay in school because education is the way forward for the new Liberia. He said that the program is an opportunity that may never come again.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio)*

### **UNMIL Chief Orders Prompt Investigation of Rape Allegation**

- Speaking to Radio Veritas yesterday, Special Representative Doss said that he had ordered an immediate investigation into an alleged rape involving an UNMIL peacekeeper from Nigeria. He added that the probe would be conducted in accordance with the United Nations Mission's zero tolerance policy.

### **UNMIL Medical Doctors Uncover Lassa Fever in Liberia**

- At a UN-sponsored workshop on Lassa Fever yesterday, UNMIL said it is strengthening local and international cooperation to fight against the disease of which over 100 cases have been discovered in Liberia.
- The Mission added that it had discovered 10 cases since it started work in Liberia with the victims being soldiers from Bangladesh and Jordan.
- The workshop which is intended to create awareness on infection control among UNMIL and its partners, has brought together UN Chief Medical Officers from Mano River Union Countries, DR Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Elections Commission Defers Run-Off Fraud Hearing**

- National Elections Commission (NEC) Presiding Officer Joseph Bliidi said that he was adjourning until Wednesday, the hearing into the CDC's electoral fraud claims against the NEC in response to the party's request for time to review a document subpoenaed from NEC.
- The CDC legal team said that it had noticed many discrepancies between the original documents produced by the NEC and the photocopies in the possession of the party.

### **Liberia Water Suppliers Face Fuel Shortage**

- In an interview yesterday, Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) Deputy Managing Director for Operations Peter Solo said that the LWSC was unable to

replenish its fuels because its debtors had not settled their arrears. He added that UNMIL, the U.S. Embassy, the National Port Authority, Mercy Ships and the Liberian government owe the Corporation.

### **Liberia Observes Birthday of 18<sup>th</sup> President**

- National Transitional Government of Liberia Chairman Charles Gyude Bryant yesterday declared today, November 29 National Holiday to commemorate the 110th birth anniversary of Liberia's late President William V.S. Tubman. He recalled that an Act of the National Legislature had declared the day a National Holiday.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

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

#### **River Gee Citizens Pledge Support to President-Elect**

- Responding to River Gee County citizens who yesterday pledged their support for her administration, President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf said her administration would provide equal opportunity and social justice, and evenly distribute the country's wealth. She called on every Liberian to participate in the rebuilding process.

### **STAR RADIO** *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

#### **Bong County Police Hold Suspected Drug Trafficker**

- According to a Star Radio correspondent, the Police Commander of Totota, Bong County Kolleh Livingstone, said that the police have arrested a truck driver and charged him with drug trafficking when they discovered a barrel of narcotic drugs at the back of the truck heading for Monrovia.
- Commander Livingstone added that the driver, Samuel Dekay said that he was unaware that narcotics were in the barrel.

*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](mailto:armahj@un.org).*