

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:

Thursday, 12 January 2006

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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Contents

Sierra Leone Media

Norman Wants Kabbah at Special Court <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 3
That APC Visit to Norman <i>Salone Times</i>	Page 4
SLPP Vs APC – Norman in Trouble <i>Exclusive</i>	Page 5
Hinga Norman to Testify at Special Court <i>New Citizen</i>	Page 6
Foday Sankoh's Wives Released <i>Salone Times</i>	Pages 7-8

International Media

Who is Jewel Howard Taylor? (Excerpt) <i>Liberian Observer</i>	Pages 9-10
Snowe Questions Ellen's Majority <i>Liberian Observer</i>	Pages 11-12
UMMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 10-11 Jan. 2006 <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 13-15



Norman Wants Kabbah At Special Court

*President Tejan
Kabbah*

The defence team of former Internal Affairs Minister, Sam Hinga Norman, wants President Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to appear as witness in the on-going trial at the Special Court of Sierra Leone. The defence team says President Kabbah was De-

fence Minister and Head of State and that Hinga Norman was taking direct orders from him then as Deputy Defence Minister and National Coordinator of the Civil Defence Forces. This is not the first time that there has been calls for

President Kabbah to face the Special Court and it is not known whether he will honour the Special Court invitation. The Special Court of Sierra Leone says there is no immunity for anyone whether past or present Head of State.

That APC Visit To Norman

COMMENTARY By Phileas Jusu

Opposition leader in parliament, Hon. Ernest Koroma reportedly met detained war crime indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman at the Special Court Prisons last week.

who invited Ernest Koroma to a discussion that it was Hinga Norman *SEE PAGE 2*

COMMENTARY

that took two days (Monday and Friday). Though details of the key issues discussed are not yet available to the press, the common public opinion is that the talks revolved around the continued detention of Norman and possibilities of his release from prison. Just a week after the talks, the APC scribe, Victor Foh has been talking about the holding of a consultative conference which he refers to as Bintumani 111 "to address the thorny issue of the legitimacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone"(credit The New Tempo 11/1/06).

Quoting profusely from the Lome Peace Accord which was the basis for the peace process in Sierra Leone, the APC Secretary General stated that the setting up of the Special Court was a violation of the accord. But we wonder why the opposition is becoming aware of those provisions in the accord only now. The bill establishing the Special Court was introduced in parliament in 2001; two years after the Lome Peace Accord was signed- implying that the Act was always there to refer to while the bill was being approved by parliament. Surprisingly, no APC MP rejected the bill on the grounds that it did not conform to the provisions of the accord which offered amnesty to all combatants or fighting forces. The only MP on record to have rejected the bill was Hon. Ibrahim Sorie. Every MP of the APC present in parliament voted in support of the bill.

For the APC to question the legitimacy of the Special Court will therefore seem to us as a desperate move to make a political capital out of Hinga Norman's plight.

We therefore urge the APC leadership to come out with a clear statement on the secret meetings held with Norman as well as a clear position on the existence of the Special Court. Has the party's position on the Special Court changed in light of the fact that the actual indictees considered the big fishes slipped through the net of the Special Court and that the continued detention of Norman will not make much meaning to the peace process in the country? Let the APC be clear on these and stop making political manipulations.

Col. Ansumana Mambu, (009000)

SLPP VS APC

Norman



In

Trouble

tary General Hon. Victor Foh, for a national consultative conference to be held in the form of a Bintumani III to address the legitimacy or not of the special court and the continued detention of

on articles II, III and IX of the Lome Peace Accord of 1999 which granted a blanket amnesty to all the parties to our civil conflict.

SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

Special court indictee, former Deputy Minister of Defence, Minister of Internal Affairs, Chief Coordinator of the CDF militia and war hero, Chief

Sam Hinga Norman has hit the headlines again. This time it has to do with the call by the APC party through its Secre-

Chief Norman to the displeasure of many Sierra Leoneans. The APC firebrand based his arguments

"We the APC are very concerned over the security implications of the existence of the

Contd. page 2

Norman In Trouble

From front page

special court and the manner in which it functions in Sierra Leone... During our Leader's (Hon. Ernest Koroma's) last visit to Chief Norman in detention this month and during which the war hero accused the Government and the international community of gross violation of the Lome Peace Agreement.. We hope Government will address these concerns," Mr. Foh stated.

SLPP REACTS

Reacting, an aide to the SLPP Secretary General Mr. Jacob Jusu Saffa told The Exclusive that "The APC are merely busy bodying... Ernest and Victor Foh are all looking for cheap popularity... short of new political ideas and strategies, the APC are going all out to woo SLPP antagonists like Charles Margai and Hinga Norman with the belief that they would return to power in 2007."

ANTI-KAMAJOR SLPP

In another development deemed as an anti-kamajor SLPP stance, the Chairman of the Law Reform Commission is accused of victimizing and illegally getting former Kassila CDF boss in Bonthe District, Mr. Morie Jusu Kamara jailed and banished ostensibly for poro society offences but in reality, for his avowed support for Chief Norman.

HINGA NORMAN TO TESTIFY AT SPECIAL COURT

A reliable source at the Special Court revealed yesterday that Special Court indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman has agreed to testify on his own behalf as a defense witness in the second segment of his trial for war crimes.

The source further stated that only on Tuesday did Hinga Norman agree to testify according to Special Court rules, a development which has also been interpreted to mean that he now recognizes the Special Court rules of procedure.

The source stated that Chief Hinga Norman's defense would commence on Monday 17th of January at the Special Court facilities on Jomo Kenyatta Road, Freetown. Chief Sam Hinga Norman and eight other Sierra Leoneans, from the RUF, CDF and AFRC, are standing trial for alleged crimes against



Hinga Norman

Cont. back page

HINGA NORMAN TO TESTIFY

known as Kamajors.

During the same period, Chief Norman also organized other groups to provide a robust resistance against the military junta of the AFRC.

After the end of the war, the government of Sierra Leone in collaboration with the United Nations set up the Special Court to try those people who carry the greatest responsibilities for perpetrating the violence that characterized the war years.

The arrest of Sam Hinga Norman in March 2003 became topical because many saw him as the brave man who led the resistance to stop the AFRC from continuing

to rule the country and at the time of his arrest: he was also the Minister of Internal Affairs, in the government

Last week, Hinga Norman received the President of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists, I. B. Kargbo during which meeting Hinga Norman pleaded that he wanted the media to inform the public about the plight of the indictees and also wanted the media to draw the attention of the international community to the provisions of the Lome Peace Accord.

He argued that he and the other indictees had been incarcerated unfairly as the Lome Peace Accord had granted blanket am-

nesty to all those who took part in the war.

A clearly angry Chief Hinga Norman said that if no action is taken to address his complaints, his CDF fighters and other fighters, including those of the former RUF would arrest any Minister that came their way and that the Ministers to be arrested would be tried in public for crimes against the people of Sierra Leone.

That Chief Sam Hinga Norman on Monday agreed to stand as a witness before the Special Court can only mean that he has had a change of heart.

FODAY SANKOH'S WIVES RELEASED

By Mohamed Kalokoh

Two women said to be wives of the late Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Foday Saybunah Sankoh, Jestina Davies a Liberian and Victoria Bataba Enah a Togolese who had been on trial for reasonable offences at the Freetown High Court No. 1 for the past five years were yesterday acquitted and discharged after they made their appearance before justice Patrick Hamilton with twenty eight other RUF accused persons.

SEE BACK PAGE



FLASHBACK: Sankoh in custody

Sankoh's Wives Freed

Before they were set free, Justice Hamilton said that the prosecution had concluded its findings and that it had no case against the two accused persons. He pointed out that, though the charges for which the accused person are standing trial are of serious nature, Justice must prevail.

After the Judge's pronouncement, the two wives embraced and jubilated openly from the court room to the fore court of the Law Courts Building.

They thanked their defence lawyer Cecil Osno Williams. According to Victoria Balaba, she had information of the arrival of her mother in town. "Oh my God, Oh my God thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus," said madam Balaba with tears running down her face.

Jestina Davis who was neatly dress expressed thanks and appreciation to prison officers who she said were treating her kindly during her detention at Pademba Road Prison.

SALONE TIMES learnt that the initial total number RUF accused persons was fifty seven and that they divided into two batches containing thirty and twenty seven each. It was further learnt that the thirty third accused person O'Bai Kana died in detention two weeks ago.

The other remaining batch of twenty six will make their appearance Friday.

It could be recalled that the accused persons were arrested and charged to court after the May 2002 demonstration by civil society groups at the residence of the late RUF leader Foday Sankoh at Spur Road, Freetown

Liberian Observer

28 December 2005

Who Is Jewel Howard Taylor? (Part II)

By Boto K. Bradford

Published: 28 December, 2005

In part two of our exclusive interview with Jewel Howard-Taylor, wife of ex-President Charles Taylor, she vehemently defends her husband's role in the 14-year civil war.

-SNIP-

D.O: Would you support your husband's extradition to Sierra Leone?

I've always said that I think we've had problems in Liberia. I think we need to go through a process and realize what happened. A process is not an event. People have asked me that question a million times; and I keep saying if I'm asked to give a vote to send Charles Taylor to Freetown that I will not. Because I believe that after all we've come through, we need to take a different path.

Can you image what would have happened in South Africa if Nelson Mandela had decided after he became president to persecute the Afrikaans? It would have thrown that country into a serious crisis situation. They were still strong even though the government had been turned over to the Africans. They were still in control; they had the economic power. They would have destroyed that beautiful nation you see today.

But we as Liberians, what are we willing to do? And who's innocent? I wonder if someone can tell me if there are any innocent Liberians. If you were an ex-combatant you were part of the war. If you went to a meeting where people discussed killing Liberians and you [decided not to] say anything about it, you were part of the war – you acquiesced. If you went to a meeting and you gave five dollars as a part of the war effort, you were part of it. If you worked in an office and you knew that you shouldn't be stealing government funds and you stole to deprive someone else of their benefits, you were a part of this process. So if someone can give me a group of Liberians that are innocent of all of the atrocities we've gone through, then I don't have a problem.

Are we prepared to take all of us to Freetown? Because it's not one person – the problems of the conflict that we faced were not of Charles Taylor's making.

It was a result of the history of this nation where some people had all and over 90 percent of the population that was always left out. And it was the dissatisfaction, the high level of poverty and illiteracy that created the situation where someone could come into Liberia, the most peaceful African country and [be prepared to] die to change it around.

So who's responsible? All of us are responsible – by acquiescence, by being a part, by acting as if we were not involved – but we were all involved in one way or another.

So are we prepared to take the whole of Liberia to a Freetown, Sierra Leonean Court? Or are we prepared to go and talk about this at the truth and reconciliation process and find out what the real stories are? Where do we start? Where do we end? Are we starting with the David Coleman family? Are we starting in 1980? Because it's definitely not about 1989. That was just the tip of the iceberg!

D.O: Would you prefer a Truth and Reconciliation Commission or a War Crimes Tribunal?

JHT: I would go for the Truth & Reconciliation Commission because I think we need to know the stories. We need to find out those perpetrators; but we also need to set a new agenda. We've lost so many lives, we've destroyed this beautiful nation, and we need to move forward into the future. Everyone else is moving forward but us. We somehow find ourselves stuck at a particular point. And if we want to create a new start for our children, if we want to provide opportunities to give the younger generation a chance to take the helm of leadership in this nation, we must see where we come from, make corrections and move forward. I think that is the best way forward.

D.O: Do you think Mr. Taylor's case should be handled by a West African tribunal or an international court?

Well that's an international thing, and I think that is beyond Liberia. I don't think the Liberians were asked if Charles Taylor should go into exile. A foreign president got up and decided Charles Taylor must leave Liberia and he must leave now. It was not the wish of the Liberian people. We were not asked what our opinion on the matter was. Can someone go and find out what Liberians want at this point in time? It's going to be something that all of us are going to have to talk about in collaboration with the international community, especially the African Union and ECOWAS because this is a regional matter. And it must be something that will set the right standards and help us move forward because in the end, what are measures taken for? Either to correct or to move forward. What do we want as Liberians?

-SNIP-

Daily OBSERVER



Edwin M. Snowe Representative-elect for Montserrado
Snowe Questions Ellen's Majority

By Cheechiay Jablasone

Published: **10 January, 2006**

MONROVIA January 10 -- A key contender for the post of Speaker of the House of Representatives, Montserrado County representative, Edwin Snowe says President-elect, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf nearly half a million votes gained in the runoff is not a majority of the 1.3 million registered voters.

Mr. Snowe said the President-elect also won just 19 percent of the vote in the first round. He said Madame Sirleaf's win in the second round of voting did not enjoy the support of about 825,000 of the eligible voters.

The former son-in-law of exiled former President Charles Taylor said he is the one to represent the voice of those who did not vote for the President-elect.

Although he comes from an electoral district where he won a few thousand votes, Snowe said he would be the voice of defeated presidential candidates, including Varney Sherman, Charles Brumskine, Roland Massaquoi and others.

The oil company's manger that is being accused of buying votes amongst his colleagues latched out at the Unity Party's attempt to take the Speaker post when he talked to the press at the Capitol Building Monday.

Snowe however said he would work with everybody. He said he would also work with Madame Sirleaf. Observers believe Snowe's frustration to question the President-elect majority comes in the wake of calls from the public that the legislators-elect choose their leaders on the basis of competence and character.

The 35-year-old legislator-elect is currently on the UN sanction list for travel ban and assets freeze. Recently, the UN to travel Accra, Ghana last week with colleagues to attend a weeklong World Bank sponsored training denied him exit visa.

Meanwhile, Mr. Snowe has criticized the UN sanction regime as not being a "verdict". He criticized the UN for allowing those who committed excess human rights violations and "killed president to walk about freely" but has chosen to deal with others for "receiving telephone calls from Charles Taylor".

Snowe fell short of saying who it is that has committed gross human rights violations is not on the UN travel ban list.

The UN anyway did not impose "smart sanction" on the Taylor regime five years ago only on the violation of human rights in the Liberia crisis. The World body first imposed sanction on regime for its involvement in Sierra Leone by handing down a travel ban and a sanction on exportation of the country's diamonds.

Owing to the Taylor's regime insensitivity toward the Liberian people and the rampant corruption in the government, further sanctions were imposed to include one on timber and later freezing of the assets of Charles Taylor, his wife, family members and closer associates.

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UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 10-11Jan 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Source: AP WorldStream English 11/011/2006 07:29:56

Chinese foreign minister heads to Africa on weeklong tour of oil-rich continent

By TODD PITMAN, Associated Press Writer

DAKAR, Senegal China's foreign minister flew to Africa on Wednesday, kicking off a weeklong tour aimed at bolstering China's growing energy interests on the oil-rich continent, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said. Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing left Beijing on Wednesday for Cape Verde, an island nation perched off the western coast of Africa. Li travels next to Senegal, Mali, Liberia and two of Africa's leading oil producers, Nigeria and Libya, where he wraps up the trip Jan. 19, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told reporters Tuesday in Beijing.

Security to top agenda at West African summit

By Boureima Hama

NIAMEY, Jan 11, 2006 (AFP) - Leaders of the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are due to meet here Thursday for their annual summit, with regional security set to dominate the agenda. The gathering of heads of state and government comes in the wake of successful elections in war-scarred Liberia and the formation of a broad-based transitional government in Ivory Coast, which has been militarily and politically split in two since a rebellion in late 2002.

Local Media – Newspapers (10-11 January)**Snowe Leads Race for Speaker**

(Daily Observer, The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, New Democrat, Heritage, The Independent, The Informer and The Forum)

- Representatives-elect yesterday showed strong support for the candidacy of independent Representative-elect Edwin Snowe in the race for Speaker of the House when they gathered at the Capitol Building for an election, which was postponed. Staff of the Capitol Building also reportedly demonstrated in support of Mr. Snowe.

President-elect Selects Cabinet but Names Not Revealed

(The News 10 January edition)

- A source close to the Transition Nominee Committee headed by Vice President-elect Joseph Boakai told *The News* this week that President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had approved for cabinet and other positions the names of individuals who have satisfied the criteria for competence, honesty and clean human rights record.

Demobilized Soldiers Loot Military Barracks

(New Democrat 11 January edition)

- Demobilize soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia who were ordered to leave Camp Schiefflin to allow the barracks to be prepared for the restructuring of the new Liberian army have engaged in the massive looting of the barracks facilities.

Police Assures Maximum Security for Inauguration

(The News and Heritage)

- Liberia National Police (LNP) Spokesman Col. Peter Zaizay told journalists in Monrovia recently that the LNP, in collaboration with UNMIL Civilian Police, was prepared to provide maximum security across the capital for the duration Monday's inauguration of the new administration.

Benin Pledges Strong Ties with Liberia

(The Analyst)

- In a congratulatory letter to President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Benin's President Matthew Kerekou pledged to work assiduously with Madame Johnson-Sirleaf's government and the people of Liberia to assist the sub-region's agenda for peace, and to fight against poverty, ignorance and disease.

Congress for Democratic Change Partisan Wants President-Elect to Encourage George Weah to Attend Inauguration

(Daily Observer and The Inquirer)

- Speaking to journalists on Monday, Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) Political Advisor Gabriel Baccus Matthews said that President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf should encourage the party's standard bearer George Weah to attend her inauguration.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored Monday and Tuesday at 18:45 pm)*

Transitional Assembly Rejects Request of New Legislature to Be Inducted Today

- At its plenary session yesterday, the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA) voted against a request from the new Legislature for the NTLA to give way to the new Legislature today. The NTLA argued that it would not dissolve itself ahead of the official turnover of the transitional government.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Liberia National Police Deploys for Inauguration

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Seminar to Revise National Population Policy Ends in Monrovia

- Speaking at the closing ceremony of a seminar in Monrovia to revise the National Population Policy, Deputy Foreign Minister Abel Massallay said that Liberia has been facing the problem of providing shelter since the population policy was enacted in 1988. He said that the policy was revised to improve government's provision of basic services.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Congress for Democratic Change Partisan Wants President-Elect to Encourage George Weah to Attend Inauguration

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Human Rights Group Wants Credible People to Head New Legislature

- Liberia Democratic Institute Executive Director Dan Saryea has challenged members of the new Legislature to eschew partisanship as they elect their leaders. He added that the track record of individuals must be carefully examined before electing them.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Mercy Ships Engineers Recondition Pumps at Water Plant

- According to sources, engineers of the humanitarian medical organization Mercy Ships have commenced repair work on the two main water pumps of the Mount Coffee water plant at White Plains to help restore water supply to the city of Monrovia. The sources added that the repair is being carried out with financial assistance from the European Commission.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

ELBS RADIO *(News monitored Monday and Tuesday at 19:00 pm)*

Belle Yella Citizens Urge Government to Relocate Maximum Security Prison

- In a press statement Monday, the citizens of Belle Yella Township in Gbarpolu County say they want the government to remove the Belle Yella Maximum Security Prison from their Township because maintaining it has deprived them of development opportunities such as roads, safe drinking water, and health and educational facilities.

Bong County Representative-Elect Frowns at Delays to Induct Them

- Addressing a news conference Monday, Bong County Representative-elect Tokpah Mulbah said that it is a deliberate attempt to delay the induction of the newly elected Legislature.

Representative-Elect Calls for the Election of Local Administrators

- Nimba County Representative-elect David Manneh stressed the need for County Superintendents and Commissioners to be elected in the new democratic dispensation as opposed to the past when the President of the country appointed them. He said that the election of the local leaders will provide the opportunity for the local population to play a part in the selection of their leaders.

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website Tuesday and Wednesday at 09:00 am)*

National Muslim Council Encourages Colleagues to Support the Peace

- National Muslim Council Chairman Alhaji Fumba Sheriff has urged members of the faith to remain united to sustain the peace in Liberia, according to a press statement to mark the Muslim holiday of Eid-Adha yesterday.

Commercial Drivers Accuse Firestone Security of Unlawfully Impounding their Vehicles

- In an interview, the spokesman of some commercial drivers plying the routes in the Firestone Rubber Plantation area, Anderson Tamba said that the company's protection force had illegally impounded their vehicles for about two weeks.

Liberian Organizations in the Diaspora Congratulate President-Elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf

- In a joint message of congratulation, the Conference of Liberian Organizations of the South-western United States and the European Federation of Liberian Associations described as a victory for the women of Africa and the world over the election of Madame Johnson-Sirleaf as President of Liberia.

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