

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:

Monday, 9 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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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 8 January 2006

Mongolian Peacekeepers Take Over Security at Special Court

Responsibility for the protection of the Special Court was formally transferred today from the United Nations Nigerian contingent (NIBATT) to the Mongolian contingent (MONBAT) of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).



General Tommy Goransson formally hands over to Lieutenant-Colonel Byambasuren Bayarmagnai; observed by NIBATT Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel J. Ismail.

In a brief ceremony in front of the courthouse, Brigadier-General Tommy Goransson, representing UNMIL Force Commander Lieutenant-General C.I. Obiakor of Nigeria, witnessed the handover of the Special Court Military Guard Force to Lieutenant-Colonel Byambasuren Bayarmagnai of Mongolia.

The Officer-in-Charge of the Registry, Joseph Poraj-Wilczynski, noted that various contingents of Nigerian peacekeepers had provided security at the Special Court since 2003, where they have served with professionalism and distinction.

The current Nigerian contingent is headed by Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel J. Ismail, and has been deployed in Freetown for just over a year.

extend their gratitude and thanks to the Commanding Officer and all ranks of NIBATT for a job well done," Mr. Poraj-Wilczynski said. "We wish them a safe and speedy return home to Nigeria."

"The Interim Registrar Mr. Lovemore Munlo and all staff members at the Special Court wish to

The MONBAT force will be housed both at the Special Court complex in New England and at the U.N. Camp near the U.N. headquarters in Aberdeen. The force will be under the military command of UNMIL headquarters in Liberia.

This is MONBAT's first peacekeeping deployment in West Africa, however individuals of the unit have served in U.N. missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Western Sahara, and Sudan. Other soldiers in the unit have taken part in peace-support missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

MONBAT personnel have attended a month-long training course to prepare them for their duties in Sierra Leone. The contingent will be equipped with heavy weapons and armoured personnel carriers.

The Mongolian contingent will conduct operational exercises with other elements of the UNMIL force, in particular with its Swedish and Irish contingents who are prepared to deploy rapidly by air, land and sea to support MONBAT if required.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the
Press and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
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Visit our website at www.sc-sl.org

MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2006

NEW CITIZEN

Mongolians Take Over Security At Special Court

The Nigerian peacekeepers in UNAMSIL have on Sunday handed over the security apparatus to the Mongolian peacekeepers on Sunday at a ceremony held at the New England Ville premises of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Out-gone Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago past Friday at the conference room of UNAMSIL, Mammy Yoko Hotel, Aberdeen while admonishing media practitioners, members of civil society and members of the public in a fraternal atmosphere disclosed that Mongolia peacekeepers would soon replace Nigerian peacekeepers at

the United Nations backed Special Court. While acknowledging the fact that the peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone was an outstanding success, he also revealed that the new United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) would have no military outfit and that only ten military advisers would liaise between Sierra Leone and the UN Mission in Liberia with the command structure in Liberia.

Daudi Mwakawago who at one time served as Information Minister in his native Tanzania was frank

and straightforward in his address when he stressed the important role of the media in society and further gave an insight of his own journey as head of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone.

He recalled that when he was appointed to head the mission in Sierra Leone he was not oriented in New York about the situation on the ground and that his maiden assignment on arrival was to deliver a condolence message to the families of the victims of the Benin plane crash in which some peacekeepers lost their lives.

He cautioned the media to report on

stories and follow such stories up to their logical conclusions.

Daudi Nwakawago observed further that the media in Sierra Leone is deficient in specialist areas such as science, medicine, economics, religion and technology and underscored, "the next stage now is peace consolidation not lamentation".

He maintained that the lowest point in his assignment in Sierra Leone was the June 2005 helicopter crash and regretted that up to the point he was leaving the country the report to unearth the cause of the crash had still not been established.

Special Feature

**The Responsibilities Of
The Special Court**

*-culled from the 2nd Annual Report of the President of
the Special Court for Sierra Leone*

FROM LAST EDITION

On 1 June 2004, prosecutor David M Crane and Trial attorney Joseph Kamara delivered the opening statement in the trial of the three CDF Accused. After some delay equised by the request a Accused Norman to dismiss his legal team and represent himself, the first witness to testify at the Special Court took the stand on 15 June 2004.

On 8 June 2004, Trial Chamber I granted a prosecution motion for renewed protective measures in the CDF case, recognising that witness protection issues in the CDF case were of concern and necessitated specific and increased measure. In July 2004, before the same Trial Chamber, prosecution Davis M Crane and Trial Attorney Abdul Tejen-Cole delivered the opening statement in the case against three accused members of the RUF. On 12 July 2004, the prosecution reduced the witness list in the trial from 266 to 173 witnesses. A total of nine prosecution witnesses were heard during the first session of this trial.

Even though the daily routine of examining prosecution witnesses was underway, there remained a good deal of other legal work for the Office. On 2 August 2004, Trial Chamber I denied a prosecution motions seeking leave to appeal its decision denying leave to amend the CDF indictment to include sex crimes.

On 30 August 2004, the prosecution filed an application to appeal that decision before the Appeals Chamber, which was denied on 19 January 2005. After the August judicial recess, the CDF trial resumed. On 1 October 2004, the prosecution reduced the number of core witness in the CDF trial from 154 to 100. Throughout the year, before and after the start of trial, the Office of the prosecution filed and responded to various motions before the Trial Chamber and Appeals Chamber.

Investigations

The first five months of the year saw the Investigation Section actively involved in providing investigative teams in the lead-up to the opening CDF and RUF trials.

In 2004, mission and financial investigation were conducted throughout Sierra Leone, West Africa, Europe and North America.

Outreach and diplomatic activities

In addition to overseeing investigation and guiding David M Crane was actively involved in maintaining relationships with the Sierra Leone public and civil society through outreach meeting, interviews with local and international media, and meetings with the diplomatic community.

In event organised by the Outreach Section, the prosecution held town hall meeting with schoolchildren, university students, war victims, police, military, and civil society organization throughout Sierra Leone. During these well-attended meeting, participants has an opportunity to ask prosecutor questions and to give him their thoughts on the Special Court.

In March 2004, the prosecution participated in the full calendar of events surrounding the official court opening, which many visiting dignitaries attended. Throughout the year, in Freetown and abroad, he and the Deputy prosecutor met with officials from various governments, international organisations and NGOs, as well as with journalist and academics. In November, the prosecutor joined his counterparts from the permanent International Criminal Court and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia at a colloquium in Arusha, Tanzania. At this first meeting of all four international prosecutors, a joint statement was issued which underscored the needs for the sustained political will of the international community to assist in making the tribunals effective.

The Case of Liberia's Charles Taylor

In June 2003, the prosecutor unveiled the indictment of Charles Taylor, then President of Liberia, whose indictment had been judicially approved and sealed in November 2003. The 17 count indictment accused Charles Taylor of being at the helm of a "policy of mass rape and other serious violations of international humanitarian law" in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. The Court issued the warrant of arrest against Taylor to the Government of Liberia and in November 2003. Pursuant to requests by the Special Court, the

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forces in a special occasion held at the court's premises .

In the picture above, Lt. Col . Byambasuren Bayarmagnai of the Mongolian forces , flanked on his left by Lt. J. Ismail of Nigeria and right by Brig. Tommy Goranssen (Representing UNMIL Force Commander Lt. Gen. C.I.Obiakor) answers questions from Sierra Leone journalists after the program. In the background facing the Colonel is veteran journalist, Clarence Roy-Macauley .

SPECIAL COURT SECURITY HANDED OVER TO MONGOLIAN FORCES

Sunday January 8, 2006

In Freetown today, soldiers in skeleton UN Peacekeeping Force left in Sierra Leone, after the whole force departed last month, handed over the security of the Special Court to Mongol

SLPP'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED : BY MUNDA TOMBO WRITING FROM BO

Sunday January 8, 2006

I have been following the comminiques released by the Rev. Sam Foray in America in respect of APC turn about face on the Hingha Norman Issue. My question is why only now ?

DISAPPOINTED AND ASHAMED ABOUT MY COUNTRY'S POLITICAL MESS

Suunday January 8, 2006

I am so dissappointed and very much ashamed for seeing my country in a deep political mess. Since i was born i have never seen sierra leoneans with smiling cheek when discussing politics of their country.

Irish Independent

January 6, 2006 Friday

TROOPS NOW ON STANDBY FOR DUTY IN SIERRA LEONE

Tom Brady
Security Editor

IRISH peacekeeping troops are on stand-by to deploy in strife-torn Sierra Leone following a reconnaissance mission there in the past week.

An 80-strong company of troops was sent to Sierra Leone from the existing battalion in Liberia to check out the safety of routes for convoys into the capital, Freetown.

Their report, submitted to military chiefs this week, paves the way for the Irish contingent to move immediately after contact has been received from the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The contingent is expected to comprise between 90 and 120 soldiers, under the control of a commandant. All of the troops will be drawn from the Liberian battalion and will be selected on rotation.

No additional soldiers will be sent out from here, although a team of experts from the operations section at Army headquarters in Parkgate took part in the reconnaissance mission.

Last month, the Dail gave approval for another contingent of peacekeepers to be sent to Liberia.

The 427-strong group will work alongside the Swedes in providing a quick reaction force for the UN mission.

Pulling out

The Defence Forces have been part of the mission since December 2003 but will be pulling out by the end of the year.

Tasks for the group to be deployed in Sierra Leone are expected to include:

- * Providing security in the capital for a special court set up by the UN and the local government to put on trial those charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity during the country's civil war between 1991 and 2002.

- * Evacuating officials in a security crisis.

The court, which includes an Irish judge and has been given backing of over 1m from the Government here, has already indicted 13 people, nine of them in custody, two are dead and one presumed dead.

Cocorioko website

http://www.cocorioko.com/news_plus

APC TAKES MORAL HIGH GROUND IN HINGA NORMAN WAR CRIMES CASE -
--Says Kamajor Spokesman Samforay
Saturday January 7, 2006

With the 2007 General Elections still a long way ahead, strange things continue to happen in the Sierra Leone political scene. The opposition All People's Congress (APC) , the party that is often blamed for the socio-economic and political mess the country in which the country is wallowing, which led to the 11-year civil war that created the Civil Defence Force (CDF), has assumed the moral high ground in the War Crimes case involving former Commander of CDF , Chief Hinga Norman.

With the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) allegedly taking no interest in the Norman plight , the irony of the APC battle to save Norman is not lost on the Spokesman of the CDF , Rev. Alfred Samforay.

READ SAMFORAY'S ASSESSMENT BELOW

Even as the ruling Sierra Leone People' Party (SLPP) and its erratic leadership take a hands-off role in the matter of Prosecutor versus Sam Hinga Norman, the opposition All Peoples Congress led by Ernest Bai Koroma and Victor Foh have taken the case against the former SLPP senior minister as a cause celebre.

In the nearly three years that Chief Norman has been arrested and incarcerated by the so-called special court for Sierra Leone negotiated for by the SLPP government, only once or twice has any leader of the SLPP visited the chief and that was in an attempt to dissuade Norman from pursuing a law suit against the party for alleged violations of the party constitution and relevant sections of the All Political Parties Act and most importantly the national constitution. The case of Samuel Hinga Norman versus the SLPP, Jah, Saffa and Carew is scheduled for hearing before the Sierra Leone Supreme Court next month.

Meanwhile, in the past several weeks, the opposition APC and its leaders have held several meetings with Chief Norman at the New England Detention Center where Norman along with two other leaders of the government-sponsored Civil Defence Forces (CDF) are being held on eight counts each of War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and other serious violations of ordinary humanitarian laws. It is to be recalled that the CDF along with other international and regional forces were responsible for twice returning the SLPP to power after being removed by rebels on May 25, 1997 and on this very day on January 6, 1999.

While the SLPP considers the so-called special court as independent of government and the party, the APC leaders consider the case against Chief Norman a national problem beyond partisan politics. As such, Party Leader Ernest Koroma and Secretary General,

Victor Foh, have taken upon themselves to take the Norman issue to the public and the international community. The party blamed for largely for being responsible for the deterioration of the conditions of living in the country culminating in the civil war, now appears to have taken the moral high grounds.

Largely as a result of intervention of Bai Koroma and Victor Foh, a statement that was to be released this week by Chief Norman on a wide range of issues including his trial and the case against the SLPP has been postponed for early next week.

Alfred SamForay,
Hinga Norman-CDF Defence Fund.



Politics: Sierra Leone Touted As Success in War-Torn Continent

Inter Press Service (Johannesburg)

NEWS

January 4, 2006

Posted to the web January 5, 2006

By Thalif Deen
United Nations

When the 1,700-strong U.N. peacekeeping force was withdrawn from Sierra Leone on Dec. 31, the United Nations hailed the mission as one of its major political success stories in a continent ravaged by war and ethnic conflicts.

"The (U.N.) mission was able to overcome a number of serious political and military challenges to become an effective peacekeeping operation that leaves Sierra Leone much better off today than it was five years ago." U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan boasted last week.

But the political success may be overshadowed by a rash of economic problems that threaten the West African nation.

"Poverty remains the main threat to stability of the country," says Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago, U.N. special representative in Sierra Leone. "With an unemployment rate of 70 percent, especially among the youth, the challenges to security are quite evident.."

Therefore, more local savings, private sector development and direct foreign investment will be needed in order to offset the major decline in donor funding that is anticipated in the light of competing demands for resources worldwide, Mwakawago told the Security Council last week.

In a report to the Council, Annan has warned that "an expected decline in foreign aid due to the phasing out of humanitarian and post-conflict recovery assistance, as well as perceived high levels of corruption, could result in a substantial reduction in foreign inflows".

"This would have a negative impact on the balance of payments, macroeconomic stability and the investment needed for growth," the report said.

The study also said that the national poverty gap -- the average person's level of consumption below the poverty line -- is 29 percent, while the depth of poverty is concentrated in rural areas.

Oxfam's Sierra Leone acting country director Marcus Thompson is relatively more optimistic.

"We are confident that Sierra Leone will remain peaceful, giving a stable and secure environment in which it can continue to develop, in partnership with the international community," he told IPS.

"Sierra Leone now has the chance to prove to the world that it is committed to peace, committed to human

rights and committed to its own future as a productive and capable member of the global community," Thompson said.

As the U.N. Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) closed up shop last week, the United Nations said its many achievements included the successful disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of more than 75,000 ex-combatants involved in the country's civil war during 1991-2002.

The U.N. mission, whose troop strength at one time reached as high as 17,500, also played a central role in the preparation and conduct of the 2002 and 2004 elections and assisted the government in reasserting its control over diamond-mining, and providing protection to the Special Court for Sierra Leone to try war criminals.

Mwakawago said that over the last two years, revenue from diamonds has increased dramatically, primarily as a result of reforms and the overhaul of the industry.

Diamond exports increased from 10 million dollars in 2000 to 130 million dollars in 2004. And by November, Sierra Leone had exported 131 million worth of diamonds in 2005, according to the latest U.N. figures.

"Among the remedies needed," Mwakawago said, "are tightening of security, reviewing the licensing system, combating illegal sales, tackling child labour, sustaining the equitable distribution of benefits from mining, and resolving the persistent boundary disputes among local communities."

With presidential elections scheduled for 2007, the United Nations is expected to assist in the restructuring of the National Electoral Commission and the de-limitation of constituencies.

"It is therefore my conviction that the holding of a free and credible poll in 2007 will constitute a key benchmark in the achievement of long term stability of Sierra Leone," Mwakawago said.

Beginning January, the United Nations has established a new U.N. Integrated Office in Sierra Leone, which will oversee the post-UNAMSIL period and help consolidated the peace.

The government of Sierra Leone has also inherited most of the equipment left behind by the departing UNAMSIL troops, including 25 light vehicles and hundreds of communication equipment.

The international community has volunteered to help Sierra Leone rebuild its armed forces, with trucks from Switzerland, three patrol boats from the United States and one from China, and military vehicles from the Netherlands.

Annan has said that UNAMSIL's success will be followed as a model by other peacekeeping missions currently in operation.

The secretary-general has also called upon "all Sierra Leoneans to take advantage of this unique opportunity to build on the success they have made with UNAMSIL's help, as the future of the country belongs to them".

Asked about Oxfam's assessment of the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, Thompson said: "Oxfam has every intention of remaining in Sierra Leone to continue its development work."

"We are committed to helping the people of Sierra Leone through human rights, poverty reduction and water and health programmes and will continue the work we have been doing with partners since 1961, in both relief and development assistance," he added.

"We thank UNAMSIL for its hard work in helping Sierra Leone to secure and maintain peace and are confident that Oxfam can continue to make a contribution in a stable and peaceful environment," he added.

LIBERIA: Charles Taylor's wife has divorce petition granted

06 Jan 2006 18:26:06 GMT

Source: IRIN

MONROVIA, 6 January (IRIN) - Jewel Howard-Taylor, the official wife of notorious former Liberian leader Charles Taylor, has had her application for divorce granted, according to court documents obtained by IRIN on Friday.

A Liberian Circuit Court document revealed Howard-Taylor, the former first lady who was elected as senator in the recent parliamentary elections, had cited UN sanctions and her husband's limitless exile in Nigeria as reasons for the divorce.

"The prevailing circumstances including the imposition of a travel ban, banishment of Taylor from Liberia and his confinement ad infinitum, have deprived her of the conjugal benefit, consortium and companionship of their marriage to the extent that marital life between them had become impossible," the divorce document said. "It is legally prudent to decree the dissolution of said marriage."

Howard-Taylor filed for divorce in July 2005, but the court only ruled last week, finally dissolving her marriage with the warlord-turned-president, who is widely accused of fomenting civil strife across West African and is wanted on 17 counts of crimes against humanity by the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The pair married in January 1997, when Taylor was still waging his rebel campaign and was six months away from being elected president. They have one son.

When, with the rebels baying for blood at the gates of Monrovia, Taylor was finally pressured into stepping down from power and taking asylum in Nigeria in August 2003, his wife went with him.

Howard-Taylor spent some nine months in his heavily-guarded and luxurious compound in Calabar, before returning to Liberia in mid 2004, and was then stopped from further travel by the UN ban.

More recently the travel ban - imposed by the UN Security Council for "on-going ties with Charles Taylor - has proved a frustration to Howard-Taylor, who was elected as senator for Bong County in the landmark elections last October.

Earlier this week, she was barred along with three other newly-elected parliamentarians from travelling to Ghana on a week-long World Bank training program for Liberia's new assembly.

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 Jan 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberia's Iron Lady vows iron fist for war-mongers

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA, Jan 6 (Reuters) - Liberia's "Iron Lady", Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who takes office this month as Africa's first elected female president, says she will live up to her nickname if former warlords try to drag her country back into civil war. "They should not be fooled because I am a woman ... I am going to be tough," the 67-year-old former Finance Minister told Reuters in an interview late on Thursday at her Monrovia home. She will be sworn in on Jan. 16.

01/06/2006 11:43:18

Liberian war widows block streets over payments

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA, Jan 6 (Reuters) - Hundreds of widows of soldiers killed in Liberia's civil war blocked roads and lay down in the streets of the capital Monrovia on Friday, bringing traffic to a standstill to press their demands for benefits and pensions.

BBC 06/01/2006

Liberia denies \$30m is 'missing'

Liberia's interim government has challenged a United Nations report alleging that millions of dollars is unaccounted for by its administration. Information Minister C William Allen admitted some discrepancies but said most of the \$30m was being transferred between departments. He said the government was preparing a full response to the allegations.

06/01/2006

Liberian analysts paint dim picture of war-torn country

Monrovia (dpa) - A team put together by Liberian president-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to assess the effects of a 14-year civil war on the country has painted a gloomy picture of the nation's infrastructure, institutions and manpower. The team of 26 committees, one per sector of activity, found regression to be the norm since a democratically-elected president, William Tolbert Jr., was overthrown in a bloody coup in 1980.

International Clips on West Africa

IRISH INDEPENDENT Date: January 06, 2006

Troops now on standby for duty in Sierra Leone

Tom Brady, Security Editor

IRISH peacekeeping troops are on stand-by to deploy in strife-torn Sierra Leone following a reconnaissance mission there in the past week. An 80-strong company of troops was sent to Sierra Leone from the existing battalion in Liberia to check out the safety of routes for convoys into the capital, Freetown.

Local Media – Newspapers

U.S., Nigeria and Ghana Provide VIP Security to Johnson-Sirleaf

(Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The Analyst and The Telegraph)

- A Unity Party press release issued in Monrovia yesterday said that U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had seconded a team of security personnel from her security detail at the State Department to Liberia to beef up VIP security protection for President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The press release said that Nigeria and Ghana had also pledged additional security assistance to the new administration.

Transitional Government Provides US\$1 Million for Inauguration

(Heritage, National Chronicle, Poll Watch and The Diary)

- Information Minister William Allen told journalists following a cabinet meeting in Monrovia yesterday that the transitional government had made available US\$1 million instead of the US\$1.3 million earlier requested for the inauguration.

Public Disapproves of UN Travel Ban

(Poll Watch, The Inquirer and The Independent)

- A survey conducted in Monrovia recently by *Poll Watch* revealed that the Liberian public is opposed to the continued imposition of the UN Security Council travel ban because of the new threat it poses to officials of the incoming government, especially lawmakers.

Transitional Government Concerned About Travel Restrictions

(The Inquirer)

- According to Information Minister William Allen, the transitional government yesterday deliberated on the UN travel ban, focusing on how the matter can be resolved.

Interim Legislature Passes Bill for Auditing of Transitional Government

(The News and New Democrat)

- The National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA) yesterday passed a binding resolution that empowers the new government to conduct a financial audit of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), which has been accused of corruption.

Shortage of Hotel Rooms for Inaugural Guests

(New Democrat)

- Unity Party sources said yesterday that about 2,000 foreign guests are expected to arrive for the inauguration but that there are far fewer hotel rooms available to accommodate them. Information Minister William has therefore appealed to citizens to help out in the situation.

Newspaper Honors UN Envoy

(Poll Watch, The Diary and The Independent)

- In keeping with an end-of-the-year tradition in the Liberian media, *Poll Watch* today named Special Representative of the Secretary-General Allen Doss as Man of the Year 2005 for "splendidly" superintending the affairs of UNMIL.

Chinese Foreign Minister to Attend Johnson-Sirleaf's Inauguration

(National Chronicle)

- Foreign Minister Thomas Yaya Nimley said in Monrovia yesterday that China's Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing will attend Madame Johnson-Sirleaf's inauguration on 16 January.

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

Transitional Government Allots US\$1 Million to Inauguration

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Political Party Official Foresees Danger with a Unity Party House Speaker

- In a press statement issued in Monrovia yesterday, Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) Assistant Secretary-General Acarous Gray observed that it will be a dangerous precedence to have a Unity Party (UP) candidate or sympathizer elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives, predicting a “rubber stamp organ” if such a person was elected.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

United States Embassy Confirms President Bush’s Wife Will Attend Inauguration

- The wife of United States President George Bush will join other dignitaries, including U.S. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, to attend the inauguration of Madame Johnson-Sirleaf signifying President Bush’s support for the war-torn country, a U.S. Embassy press statement said.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Japan to Donate US\$2.2 million to Fund Children Projects in Liberia

- According to a press release yesterday, the United Nations Children Educational Fund (UNICEF) said that the Government of Japan will provide US\$2.2 million to protect the children of Liberia against malaria and acute respiratory infections.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

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

Lawmakers Pass Binding Resolution to Audit Transitional Government

- Briefing journalists yesterday, National Transitional Legislative Assembly Executive Committee Chairman Mohammed Sheriff said that the assembly has passed a Resolution authorizing the incoming government to audit the transitional government.

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

Chief Medical Officer Calls for More Subsidies to Run John F. Kennedy Hospital

- In an interview, John F. Kennedy Hospital Chief Medical Officer Samuel Dopoe said that for over four months the government has been unable to subsidize the hospital, negatively impacting the morale of the doctors and other employees.

Narcotic Drugs Missing from Court Custody

- According to Gbarnga Magisterial Court sources, over 134 kilograms of marijuana allegedly disappeared from the court. But Gbarnga City Solicitor Prince Jackson described as “mad” journalists that contacted him to verify an allegation that the drug and the suspects had been handed to him following their arrests.

Gardener Discovers Arms in His Cassava Patch in Bong County

- Speaking to journalists yesterday in Gbarnga, Bong County, gardener Isaac Holder said that he found a huge quantity of arms while weeding at his backyard to plant cassava, and has since turned the weapons over to UNMIL Bangladeshi peacekeepers.

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.