

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Visitors from the Sierra Leone Prisons Service cluster around members of the Outreach Section on Tuesday during a tour of the Special Court.

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 at:

Wednesday, 13 June 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Institute for War and Peace Reporting

Tuesday, 12 June 2007

Leaving a Judicial Legacy in Sierra Leone

As the Taylor trial gets underway, the court that indicted him builds up the Sierra Leone judiciary as it prepares to wind down.

By Katy Glassborow in The Hague (AR No. 116, 12-June-07)

The trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor got underway in a flurry of high drama last week when the accused refused to attend court in The Hague, thousands of miles away from Sierra Leone and Liberia, the countries affected by crimes he is accused of supporting.

Journalists from around the world attended Taylor's Special Court for Sierra Leone, SCSL, trial, hosted by the International Criminal Court, ICC, on June 4, to see how proceedings would roll out, far from the SCSL's home in Freetown.

The SCSL is different from other courts backed by the United Nations, like the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia (ICTR and ICTY), which are located in Tanzania and The Hague respectively, because it is based in Sierra Leone.

It was established as an independent tribunal through an agreement between the UN and the Sierra Leone government, and it is the only international tribunal to sit in the country where the crimes it is trying took place, in an effort to make the justice it delivers real and tangible to the victims.

The court is a transitional justice mechanism with a primary mandate to prosecute war crimes, but it also seeks to build up the rule of law and support judicial institutions, which have been ground down by years of conflict.

Like the SCSL, the ICTs are winding down in the next few years after over a decade of activity, but concerns persist over the capacity of Rwandan and Balkans judiciaries to try the accused that international courts could not prosecute, due to time and resource limitations.

Despite successful prosecutions at war crimes chambers in Sarajevo and Belgrade, there are worries about bias and corruption, so to prevent this in Sierra Leone, Anthony Trioli, head of the SCSL's legacy programme, is working with the country's Bar Association to train defence and prosecution lawyers and judges.

Herman von Hebel, the acting registrar for the SCSL, told IWPR that the court staff want to develop the Sierra Leone judiciary and train legal professionals and even police officers, and work with other agencies on justice sector reform.

The court has already developed a young professionals internship programme for Sierra Leoneans interested in pursuing careers in the judiciary, and is working on a witness and victim protection and support system with the Sierra Leone police.

Trioli is also keen for Sierra Leone to get the best use out of the SCSL's purpose-built courthouse in Freetown - which will be handed over to the government after 2009. He and the authorities are discussing possible uses, such as a regional court or a legal training centre.

Before the war, Sierra Leone had a well developed justice system, and SCSL chief prosecutor Stephen Rapp told IWPR that one of his personal causes, "slightly outside of my bailiwick", is to work on capacity building for the national justice system.

He wants the facilities and resources set up by the SCSL to be used after the court winds down in 2009, but admits "this is a challenge" because the cost of maintaining the building is "beyond the government of Sierra Leone".

Rapp is calling for an international foundation to take control of the facility and make it available for local or regional hearings or training sessions.

In addition, he has talked to government officials to ensure that suspects the SCSL does not have the time or resources to prosecute are finally dealt with in national courts, and that the national system can deal with such cases.

He sees it as a high priority to "give national courts our evidence, and work with them in developing cases to the extent they can at national level".

But the court's attempts to deliver justice and strengthen the local judiciary may be undermined by the transfer of the SCSL's most high-profile accused for trial at the ICC in The Hague.

Charles Taylor, the elected president of Liberia for six years from 1997, was indicted by the SCSL in 2003 for 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and conscripting child soldiers to fight. He fled to Calabar in Nigeria for exile in 2003.

The Nigerian government handed him over to the SCSL in March 2006, but he was transferred to The Hague three months later because it was felt by senior court staff that a trial in Freetown could spark violence.

This decision was supported by the Security Council, which said Taylor's trial cannot be conducted anywhere in the region "due to the security implications".

But to have a lasting impact on justice in Sierra Leone, the case needs to be taken back to Africa, says lawyer Karim Khan, who represented Taylor until the opening day of the trial on June 4 when he was fired by his client who chose to represent himself, in a protest against what he sees as the inadequate time and facilities his defence had been given.

According to Khan, "there are no verifiable security concerns over a Freetown trial", and stressed that the SCSL is "very well organised and a credit to the country", while a Hague venue for the trial is "simply not working".

Khan told IWPR that on the opening day of the Taylor case, he had phone calls from people in Freetown who were trying to watch the proceedings on television, but "could not see the picture or hear sound clearly".

So, he said, the people who have suffered cannot follow the trial and have to rely on "edited highlights on television.

Nonetheless, said Khan, Taylor's trial has the potential to have a huge beneficial impact on Sierra Leone's justice system and the whole of society by establishing the pre-eminence of the rule of law.

Rapp told IWPR he is keen to ensure that as the case unfolds in mainland Europe, everyone in Sierra Leone, Liberia and the region is aware of what occurs in the courtroom, including key players in the nation's justice system.

He has pledged to support the local justice system once SCSL trials wind down in 2009, and plans to hand over evidence, files and witness contacts to investigators and prosecutors in Sierra Leone.

After its abortive June 4 opening in The Hague, Taylor's trial is supposed to resume on June 25.

But with Khan now out of the picture after Taylor's defiant no-show and insistence that he will represent himself until a defence team is afforded proper time, facilities and resources to be able to do their jobs, it is unclear who will be sitting opposite Rapp in the defence bench to put Taylor's case on June 25.

Katy Glassborow is an IWPR reporter in The Hague.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 12 June 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Auditor General Says Corruption Rampant in Sirleaf Government

VOA News, June 12, 2007 - Liberia's new auditor general says his efforts to fight corruption are being frustrated by government ministers and agency directors. John Morlu The Second was recruited a little over a month ago by the European Union and later approved by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to serve as auditor general of Liberia and help fight corruption. Now Morlu told VOA that government officials facing possible audit are making his and other financial experts' job more difficult.

Liberia's president says she expects Taylor to get a fair trial

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP), June 12, 2007 - Liberia's president assured citizens Tuesday that she expects a fair trial for Charles Taylor, the former leader of the war-decimated West African nation who has been charged with war crimes by neighbouring Sierra Leone.

Why Taylor Should Pay His Lawyers

The Nation (Nairobi)
OPINION
12 June 2007

By Chege Mbitiru
Nairobi

Liberia's former President Charles Taylor doesn't seem to realise how lucky he is. Otherwise, he would subdue cocky insolence. Last week he boycotted the first hearing of his trial at The Hague. By all accounts, a court hearing isn't necessary to ascertain Mr Taylor earned notoriety waging war against another notorious leader, the late President Samuel Doe. He embellished that by supporting rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone. Yet the international community, through the Special Court for Sierra Leone, wants to give him a fair trial for the sake of an orderly world.

The Trial of Charles Taylor

The Guardian (Nigeria). [Op-Ed]. Patrice Nganang 11/06/2007.

AS far as 'fin-de-r?gne'-scenarios are concerned, Africa has witnesses (or should/must we say: suffered?) them all. But the one scenario from which the continent has been weaned most severely is as 'green' as justice itself. Take, for example the case of Lansana Conte, president of Guinea, whose end of reign has been going on for so long that it might look like a soap opera - to the outside observer - with truly hilarious scenes, were it not that the fate

of an entire country is at stake. Or take the case of the former president of Cameroun, Ahmadou Ahidjo, who found himself in exile in France, was condemned to death in absentia by his junior and successor, Paul Biya, then amnestied by the same. The latter, however, in the company as his former adversaries Ouandie, Um Nyobe, the ones whom he is said to have killed and then locked up in blocks of concrete.

International Clips on West Africa

Leaving a Judicial Legacy in Sierra Leone

By Katy Glassborow in The Hague (AR No. 116, 12-June-07)

As the Taylor trial gets underway, the court that indicted him builds up the Sierra Leone judiciary as it prepares to wind down. The trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor got underway in a flurry of high drama last week when the accused refused to attend court in The Hague, thousands of miles away from Sierra Leone and Liberia, the countries affected by crimes he is accused of supporting.

Clinic for 40 Commercial Sex Workers

By Mohamed Massaquoi
Freetown

Concord Times (Freetown), 12 June 2007 - Sierra Leone Distance Education Programme (SILDEP) in collaboration with National AIDS Secretariat and Kenema City Council last week organized a two-day workshop for 40 Commercial Sex Workers (CSW) in Kenema. The programme took place at the Ministry of Youth and Sports conference hall in Kenema.

Burkina Faso to broker peace in Ivory Coast

AFP , ABIDJAN, June 12, 2007 - Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore meets today with leaders from Ivory Coast's factions in a bid to boost the peace process. The meeting in Yamoussoukro will be Compaore's first trip to Ivory Coast since 2000 and marks the change of attitude since 2002 when a newspaper close to Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo accused him of fomenting the civil strife that ended with the country split between the rebel-held north and the government-controlled south.

Local Media – Newspaper

'Taylor's Fair Trial in Doubt'

(The Liberian Diaspora)

- [sic:] An apparent conspiracy by the Special Court for Sierra Leone to deny former Liberian President Charles Taylor a free and fair trial has been uncovered by his principal defender, Vincent O. Nmhielle. Barrister Nmhielle's concerns are contained in June , 2007 interoffice memorandum address to Taylor's lead counsel, Karim Khan in which he writes extensively of the Court Registrar's sustained efforts to inhibit his ability to perform his role as principal defender of Mr. Taylor.

2007-2008 Fiscal Budget Generates Mixed Reactions

(New Democrat, The News, National Chronicle and Daily Observer)

- The suggestion by the General Auditing Commission which calls on the National Legislature not to approve the budget appears to be gaining the approbation of the

National Legislature. As *New Democrat* reports, members of both Houses are poised to return the budget to the Executive for review as recommended by the Commission.

- The General Auditing Commission recently recommended a review of the draft fiscal budget on the basis of 'lack of substantive information'.
- According to *National Chronicle* a concerned citizens group, Citizens United to End the Suffering of the Liberian People said the lawmakers should speedily pass the budget and undo the analysis of the Commission because any delay in the process could stragulate government functionaries and increase the suffering of Liberians.

Women Residents of GSA Road Community to March against Rape

(Daily Observer)

- Women residents of the GSA Road Community in Paynesville are planning to march on President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in order to seek her prompt intervention into the continuing rape against Liberian Women.
- The women's planned action resulted from an incident in which gunmen supposedly stormed the GSA Road residence of a woman and raped her after seizing several valuables and money from her.

Local Media – Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 9:45 am)

Civil Society Coalition wants Hold on Allocation of Timber Concession

- A Coalition of Civil Society and Environmental groups is warning government against allocating new timber concession this year for commercial logging in the absence of a forest management strategy.
- In an interview, the Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority, John Woods said government would begin giving out timber concessions this year.
- The group however said government was going ahead to grant timber sales agreement despite calls for government to prioritize development of the forestry management strategy a prerequisite for granting concessions. The coalition said this threatens to violate government's forestry law and jeopardize the future of Liberia's forest.

Justice Ministry Official Dismissed in Connection with Container Smuggling

- [sic:] A Justice Ministry letter in the possession of Radio Veritas has confirmed a report of a big container smuggling scandal linking the Joint Security Coordinator at the Justice Ministry, Col. Arthur Kandakai.
- [sic:] Col. Kandakai was recently investigated by the Liberia National Police (LNP) for his alleged role in giving clearance for shipment of thirty 20ft containers of scrap materials.
- [sic:] According to Justice Ministry sources, he has now been dismissed for what the ministry said was his admission during police preliminary investigation.

Star Radio (News monitored today at 8:35 am)

Police Investigates Alleged Police Brutality in Rivercess

- Authorities of the Liberia National Police have launched an investigation into reports of widespread Police brutality in Rivercess County after a complaint was filed by three members of the Legislative Caucus.
- In an interview, Senator Jonathan Bannie claimed the Police Commander in the county and three others are linked to the flogging of peaceful citizens and said some of those allegedly brutalized are in Monrovia currently under going medical treatment.

President Johnson-Sirleaf Promises Support for Liberia National Red Cross

- Speaking yesterday when she was conferred a title of Chief Patron of the Red Cross, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf said she would support the Liberia National Red Cross Society in its humanitarian mission and commended them for the quick response to natural disasters and other humanitarian crisis across the country.
- The President also called for the Red Cross to put in place a preparation mechanism to be ready to respond to any unforeseen situation.

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. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.

ICTR

Monday, 11 June 2007

ICTR Prosecutor Requests Transfer of First Case to Rwanda

On 11 June, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) requested transfer of the case of Fulgence Kayishema to Rwanda for trial. It is the first request for transfer of an ICTR case to the Rwandan national jurisdiction.

Kayishema is among the 18 fugitives indicted by the ICTR who are still at large. The indictment that was confirmed on 3 July 2001, charges Kayishema with genocide, complicity in genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity.

Kayishema was born in 1961 in Kivumu commune, Kibuye Prefecture of Rwanda. During 1994, he was the inspector of police in the same commune. He allegedly conspired with Father Athanase Seromba and others to prepare and carry out a plan to exterminate the Tutsi population in Kivumu commune and elsewhere in the Kibuye. It is alleged that in implementing their plan, thousands of Tutsis, including those that had sought refuge at Nyange Parish, were exterminated.

The Government of Rwanda has expressed its willingness and readiness to accept and prosecute the Accused, with assurances that he will receive a fair trial, that in the event of conviction, the death penalty will not be applied and that Rwanda will comply with all the conditions required by the Trial Chamber in its Referral Order.

According to the Prosecutor's submission, Rwanda meets the requirements set out in the Tribunal's Rule 11 bis to merit transfer of the case for trial. In addition, Rwanda's legal framework guarantees all the Rule 11 bis safeguards, including the protection of witnesses and allowing for the monitoring of the proceedings by monitors appointed by the Prosecutor. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has accepted the responsibility to monitor the trial on behalf of the Prosecutor.

The Prosecutor asked the Trial Chamber to require the ICTR Registrar to designate a defence counsel to represent the interests of the Accused in the referral proceedings. He also asked the Trial Chamber to issue a new warrant of arrest requiring states to cooperate in arresting Kayishema and transferring him to Rwandan authorities.

Assisting the Prosecutor is a referral team led by Dr. George Mugwanya, Senior Appeals Counsel.

ICTR Indicts Witness for False Testimony

On 11 June, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) issued an indictment against a witness for giving false testimony during the trial of Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda. Judge Jai Ram Reddy (Fiji) confirmed the indictment and issued a warrant for arrest of the witness code named GAA.

This is the Tribunal's first prosecution for contempt of court and false testimony. The case arises out of an investigation by the Office of the Prosecutor on the direction of the Appeals Chamber when it upheld the conviction of Kamuhanda on 19 September 2005. Witnesses in the trial were allegedly induced to give false testimony under oath.

The confirming judge issued the indictment on the basis of the written material submitted by the Prosecutor.

BBC Online

Wednesday, 13 June 2007

Khmer Rouge trials ready to start

The long-awaited Khmer Rouge trials in Cambodia are ready to start, after a panel of judges approved ground rules.

The deal was reached in a week-long meeting, after a delay of more than six months because of disagreements between local and UN-appointed legal officials.

The tribunal is expected last for three years, with trials starting in 2008.

As many as two million are thought to have died during the four years of Khmer Rouge rule in the late 1970s, but no-one has ever faced charges.

The movement's former leader, Pol Pot, died nine years ago.

But the regime's former head of state, Khieu Samphan, and Foreign Minister Leng Sary have both been living freely in Cambodia.

Tribunal co-prosecutor Robert Petit said the rules had been agreed unanimously by the panel.

"These rules will ensure us fair and transparent trials," he told reporters.

Almost a third of the court's three-year mandate has already passed, but Mr Petit says the time has not been wasted.

"Given all the complexities and after intensive work and consultations, we are pleased to have finalised the rules in a reasonable time. It has been a worthwhile process and it has been essential to take time to prepare this draft."

The local and international legal officials had struggled to find ways to incorporate international law into proceedings that fall under Cambodian jurisdiction.

But after months of negotiations, they have settled their differences, says the BBC's Guy Delauney in Phnom Penh.

Foreign lawyers will now be allowed to represent defendants and victims may file complaints to the courts as long as they do so as a group.

It means the courts will be able to move forward with the process of prosecuting former Khmer Rouge leaders.

The prosecutors say they will be ready to hand over the files to the investigating judges within weeks, our correspondent adds.

Official confirmation of which former Khmer Rouge leaders will be charged should follow.



Two million people are believed to have died under the Khmer Rouge

KHMER ROUGE TRIBUNAL

Will try cases of genocide and crimes against humanity
Five judges (three Cambodian) sit in trial court
Cases decided by majority
Maximum penalty is life imprisonment
Budget of \$56.3m

Long hiatus

A meeting in November last year ended in disarray - and the future of the process looked bleak.

But this time the mood was cordial.

Earlier, officials told the BBC that there were no serious disagreements during the meeting.

Many of the legal officials have had little to do during the long hiatus caused by the dispute, although prosecutors have continued to compile evidence.



A similar meeting last year ended without agreement