

**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 at:

Thursday, 23 August 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News	
Amputees / <i>Cotton Tree News</i>	Page 3
International News	
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 4-6
Respect for the Rule of Law is Cornerstone of Poverty Agenda, Says UN Envoy / <i>UNMIL</i>	Page 7
'Curse' of Liberia's Resources / <i>BBC</i>	Page 8
City of Peace and Justice / <i>Radio Netherlands</i>	Pages 9-10
Probe into Rwandan Darfur General / <i>BBC Online</i>	Pages 11-12
Rwanda Defends Proposed Darfur General Against Human Rights Charges / <i>VOA</i>	Page 13
Special Court Supplement	
Monday's Taylor Trial Status Conference in The Hague, in Pictures / <i>PAO</i>	Page 14

Cotton Tree News

Wednesday, 22 August 2007

Amputees

Written by Bassie B Kanu

Amputees living at the resettlement camp in Mattru on the Rail say life for them has become very difficult. Mattru on the Rail is a village situated in the Tinkonko Chiefdom, in Bo District. The resettlement camp was built by the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Abdulai Lombie is one of the elders in the Camp. He told CTN that they were finding it difficult to get food, safe drinking water and medical attention. He said the organization which relocated them to their new residence was no longer giving them support.

Mr. Lombie said that they were receiving little support from their relatives to keep life going. He added that the facilities provided by the village Health Centre were expensive and inadequate. He said he was calling on the next government and non-governmental organizations to pay attention to their plight.

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 22 August 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

THE IRISH TIMES August 22, 2007

Soldiers face Liberia 'mock' firing charges

A military police investigation has recommended that charges be brought against three serving members of the Defense Forces in relation to footage showing two Irish soldiers "mock" aiming their weapons at a group of local people in Liberia.

International Clips on West Africa

August 22, 2007

Opposition leads in Sierra Leone polls, run-off set for next month

Nairobi/Freetown, Sierra Leone (dpa) _ Sierra Leone's opposition party led in the polls Wednesday, with 97 per cent of the votes counted and one day before final results of landmark elections were set to be released. With Ernest Koroma of the All People's Congress winning 44 per cent of the vote - not enough to be declared a clear winner - a run-off is set to take place next month. Incumbent Solomon Berewa of the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) garnered 38 per cent of ballots.

Local Media – Newspaper

World Bank Gants Liberia US\$37 Million

(The News, New Democrat and The Inquirer)

- Liberia's Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh and World Bank Country Director Mr. Mats Karlson on Tuesday signed a US\$37 million project aimed at supporting the Liberian Government's efforts in reestablishing basic infrastructure and reviving agriculture activities. The project which is funded through an International Development Association grant brings to a total the Bank's current contribution in Liberia to of US\$160.5 million.

Chief Justice Issues Judicial Order

(The Inquirer and The Plain Truth)

- Chief Justice Johnnie Lewis has issued a Judicial Order on the issuance of surety bond in civil and criminal cases in the country. The Order provides new minimum requirements for surety. The action, according to the Order, is intended to give meaning and interpretation to civil and criminal procedure laws of Liberia.

UNMIL Boss Says Justice is Essential to Poverty Reduction

(The Inquirer, New Democrat and The Analyst)

- Speaking Tuesday at the opening of a two-day round table conference for employees of the Ministry of Justice, the head of the UN Mission in Liberia Mr. Alan Doss says the justice system in Liberia is a major arm in terms of delivering massive interim poverty reduction

strategy to the people of the country. Mr. Doss said that the civil and criminal laws of Liberia are weak and therefore need urgent overhauling to meet up with present realities.

- He proposed the establishment of a law reform commission that will help overhaul the criminal and civil laws. His proposal is apparently on the basis that Liberia still has on the books laws which are "antiquated."

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

President Sirleaf Graces Close of Peace-building Programme in Kakata

- An Executive Mansion release said that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf yesterday participated in the end of a community peace-building programme in Kakata, Margibi County with the Liberian leader calling on Liberians to take ownership and responsibility for their own development while reaching out to individuals and organizations with knowledge to accelerate their targeted programmes.
- United States Ambassador Donald Booth assured the Liberians that the United States Government will continue to assist in the rebuilding of Liberia in line with the development priorities of Government.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Lawmakers to Participate in Reconciliation Process

- Correspondents said that members of the House of Representatives have resolved to participate in training programmes of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is meant to strengthen and expand the Commission's work to help reconcile and peacefully resolve conflicts by articulating and bringing to the public a clear understanding of how the aims can be achieved.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Police Arraign Two Men on Charges of Statutory Rape

- Police sources said that Varney Brown, 35 and Boima Fahnbulleh, 31 have been arraigned after being charged with Statutory Rape for allegedly raping a 15-year-old girl in the Barnersville area. The victim reportedly told police that she had been sexually abused by the two men sometimes last year, but the two men denied the allegation.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Britain Reports Reduction in Number of Liberian Asylum Seekers

- According to a dispatch from the Liberian Embassy in the United Kingdom, the British Home Office reported a reduction in the number of Liberians seeking protective status in the UK, stressing that 25 Liberians applied for asylum in the UK in the first two quarters of 2007 as compared to 405 in 2006.
- Liberian Ambassador to the United Kingdom Wesley Momo Johnson stated that the reduction was an indication that peace has finally returned to Liberia and that the Country was safe.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Peacekeepers Commission Crops Multiplication Site in Western Liberian

- At an elaborate ceremony in Medina, Grand Cape Mount County, the Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, Lt. /Gen. Chikadibia Isaac Obiakor commissioned a 5-acre cassava and yam plantation in the area and called on Liberians to see the cultivation of cassava and yam as important to food security in to their country.
- Agriculture Minister Dr. Christopher Toe promised to work along with the citizens of Grand Cape Mount County to improve their agricultural activities in the County, calling on the people of the area to produce more than they can eat.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

New Ministry Officials Warn against Mischief and Crisis Journalism

- Speaking at a programme to formally take their offices, two Information Ministry officials warned against what they called "mischief and crisis journalism".

- The new Deputy Information Minister for Administration Cletus Sieh warned mischief-makers to stop planning mischief saying that the administrative ship was sailing and whosoever wanted to be onboard will sail along. He stated that information is a right and that it would be a disservice for anyone to report "half-truth".
- For his part, the new Assistant Information Minister for Information Services Abu Kamara warned that "too much crisis journalism" can have negative effect on the State and appealed to the media to show some empathy and work with the Government in the overall interest of the Liberians.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Lawmakers Summon Police Inspector-General

- Correspondents said that the Plenary of the House of Representatives summoned Police Inspector-General Beatrice Munnah Sieh for allegedly ordering the beating of some relatives of Representative Rufus Neufville at his residence. The Lawmakers want the Police Chief to produce the police officer only identified as "Satellite" who led the beating of the relatives of Representative Neufville.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

Defense Ministry Extends Recruitment of Cadets to Rural Liberia

- Speaking at a programme to commence a nationwide recruitment for soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Defence Minister Brownie Samukai said that the recruitment process is an on-going effort by the Liberian Government and partners to complete the over 1,000 soldiers needed for the new AFL.
- He said that some 500 new AFL recruits would graduate early next month as the second batch of recruits since the recruitment process began while the training of an additional 500 recruits will commence in November.

(Also reported on Star and ELBC Radio)

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.

Respect for the rule of law is cornerstone of poverty agenda, says UN Envoy

Monrovia, Liberia – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Mr. Alan Doss, recently was present at the workshop organized by the Ministry of Justice aimed at ensuring that ministry officials contribute to the achievement of the rule of law goals of the interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (iPRS).

In his opening remarks, Mr. Doss stressed the importance of the rule of law in ensuring continued stability in post-conflict Liberia. “Liberia’s future peace and prosperity depends on developing all aspects of the rule of law including the strengthening of the administration of justice, instilling a culture of respect for human rights, reforming the police, and revamping the penal system,” the SRSG stated.

The UN Envoy stressed the link between the rule of law and poverty reduction. He stated that it was no coincidence that most of the world’s poorest countries were mired in conflict or just emerging from one. In those countries the rule of law had collapsed. Mr. Doss added that “People will not save and invest unless that they feel safe and their investments, however small, are secure. And without saving and investment poverty will persist. So ensuring the rule of law will most certainly help to eventually end poverty”. He further stressed that “strengthening the rule of law is a major priority for the Government and the international community.”

In her remarks, the Minister of Justice, Mrs. Frances Johnson-Morris explained that “without adequate appreciation of the importance and the key role of the poverty strategy those entrusted with the responsibilities to administer justice cannot help in achieving the objectives of the poverty reduction strategy, hence the idea to sensitize the personnel of the Ministry of Justice.”

The interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (iPRS) is a national plan endorsed by the Government of Liberia focused specifically on poverty reduction. It guides the management of the development process in Liberia for the period July 2006 through July 2008. In the iPRS, the Government has prioritized key development issues in four pillars under the leadership of the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee. This includes enhancing national security; revitalizing economic growth; strengthening governance and the rule of law; as well as the rehabilitation of infrastructure and delivering basic services. The pillars encompass the main areas for strategic intervention to address the poverty challenge in Liberia.

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BBC Online

Wednesday, 22 August 2007

'Curse' of Liberia's resources

A few miles outside Monrovia, capital of the West African state of Liberia, the humid scrubland gives way to seemingly endless vistas of tall, geometrically spaced rubber trees. This is one of the largest rubber plantations in the world. Drive on, and after a few hours you will find yourself in deep virgin forest full of tropical hardwoods. It is the largest remaining portion of the once-great Upper Guinea Forest, which used to spread across west Africa. Look carefully through the forest cover and you will find miners panning for gold and diamonds.

Soon enough, you will then come across a railway that was built solely for the evacuation of iron ore. It leads to a vast iron-ore mountain range in the north of the country that is currently being rehabilitated with a \$1bn investment. Welcome to a resource-rich, but still dirt-poor Liberia. The peace however remains fragile, threatened... most importantly, by the unresolved issue of who will exploit and who will benefit from Liberia's...

Radio Netherlands

Wednesday, 22 August 2007

City of peace and justice

The Hague to host yet another international tribunal
by Sebastiaan Gottlieb*

"I am proud that the Netherlands will host the Hariri tribunal," said Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen after the announcement that The Hague would indeed house the court. One month ago, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon officially asked the Netherlands to host the tribunal, citing the poor security situation in Lebanon.

From the outset, the Dutch political world reacted positively, but a number of details had to be settled before the proposal could finally be accepted. Agreements have now been reached on financing the tribunal and on the detention of convicted defendants. Any jail sentences will be served outside the Netherlands. The tribunal, with the mandate to try those suspected of the murder in 2005 of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri, is expected to begin next year.



Obvious choice

The choice of the Netherlands to house the Hariri tribunal was an obvious one as a number of international tribunals are already based in The Hague. Boutros Boutros Ghali was the first to call The Hague "the legal capital of the world" in 1993 while serving as UN secretary-general. The city's founding claim to the title came in 1899, when the Permanent Court of Arbitration was established there; it was followed by the International Court of Justice in 1945. Both courts are housed in the Peace Palace and rule on disagreements between sovereign states. The building was constructed in 1913 thanks to a huge donation by the American millionaire Andrew Carnegie.

The Yugoslavia Tribunal

However, it is the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, set up in The Hague in 1993, which has attracted the most attention, especially with the trial of former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic. It was the first time in history that a former head of state had been arraigned for crimes against humanity and genocide. Mr Milosevic died in his cell just before the verdict after a trial lasting four years. The Yugoslavia Tribunal has so far sentenced 51 defendants to prison terms, and proceedings against about a further 50 are ongoing. Four suspects are still at large, including Bosnian-Serb general Ratko Mladic and the former president of the self-proclaimed Bosnian-Serb Republic of Srpska, Radovan Karadzic. The tribunal is due to cease functioning in 2010.

International Criminal Court

After the Yugoslavia Tribunal, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is the next most prestigious judicial institution in The Hague. It was set up in 2002, after more than 60 countries ratified the Rome Statute establishing the court's remit. It was the first time a permanent international court had been established to rule on cases of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. After the Second World War, the reasonably successful trials of war criminals before ad hoc tribunals in Nuremberg and Tokyo led to calls for a permanent court. The last-minute withdrawal of the United States' support for the ICC proved a major disappointment. Thomas Lubanga is the first suspect to be indicted by the court. He is accused of recruiting children to serve as soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is temporarily using the ICC facilities for former Liberian president Charles Taylor's trial, which has been moved from Sierra Leone to The Hague for security reasons. Mr Taylor has been held in The Hague since June 2006 and the trial proper is due to begin in January 2008.

International organisations

Besides these major international judicial institutions, dozens of international organisations, such as the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Biological Weapons, are based in The Hague. The city is also home to important educational and research institutions in the field of international law, including the Asser Instituut and The Hague Academy of International Law and to establishments such as Europol and Eurojust, which work towards fuller European co-operation in the fields of policing and justice.

In fact, about 150 international organisations are based in The Hague, making "legal capital of the world" too narrow a description of the city. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan thinks a better title would be "the city of peace and justice".

** Translated from Dutch (mw)*

BBC Online

Wednesday, 22 August 2007

Probe into Rwandan Darfur general

The United Nations is investigating claims that a general set to head its force in Sudan's Darfur region, participated in the Rwandan genocide.

UN spokesman Yves Sorokobi said human rights groups should submit evidence inking Rwandan General Karake to any alleged crimes.

The African Union approved General Karake to become the deputy commander of the AU-UN hybrid force in Darfur.

Some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

A Belgium-based Rwandan exile group has accused General Karake of supervising the killings of civilians during the genocide in Rwanda and the DR Congo.

Key role

"We are taking the allegations very seriously and we have invited the groups to forward them so that we can do an independent background check," Mr Sorokobi told the BBC's Network Africa programme.

Rwanda's Foreign Ministry has dismissed the claims as a mere fabrication and an attempt to tarnish Rwanda's image.

"Major-General Karake is a well-trained and experienced senior officer who has ably served in various senior command staff roles in the Rwanda Defence Forces and rightly deserves the post," the statement said.

The UN Security council has approved a 26,000 strong joint AU-UN peacekeeping force to protect more than two million civilians displaced by the fighting in Darfur region.

Rwanda sent 2,000 of the 7,000 AU troops currently in Darfur.

At least 200,000 people are estimated to have died and more than two million have fled their homes in Darfur since fighting broke out in 2003.

Sudan's Arab dominated government, and the pro-government Janjaweed militias, are accused of war crimes against the region's black African population - although the UN has stopped short of calling it genocide.

Sudan has always denied backing the Janjaweed militias and argued that the problems in Darfur were being exaggerated for political reasons.

Rape

Meanwhile the UN has asked the Sudanese government to investigate allegations of rape and sexual slavery committed during raids on nine villages in eastern Darfur last December.

A report by the UN Human rights commission says 50 women were abducted and raped by members of the Sudanese



African Union soldiers in Darfur are to be joined by new troops



7,000 - existing AU force
1,000 - pledged by Senegal
800 - pledged by Malawi

Other pledges:

Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Egypt
Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh
26,000 - total planned

Africa's Darfur bombshell

Army and allied militia in Jebel Marra region.

"The women were subjected to multiple rape and other forms of violence which constitute war crimes," the report from the office of Louise Arbour said.

The Sudanese government had pledged to investigate the allegations last April when the report first emerged but no action has been taken.

During the attack 36 people were killed at Deribat, one of the nine villages raided by the soldiers.

The UN says the force in question was loyal to a commander who was appointed governor of West Darfur in February this year.

The accusations could increase Sudanese government fears that the planned UN peacekeeping force could arrest those allegedly involved, and take them to the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 21 August 2007

Rwanda Defends Proposed Darfur General Against Human Rights Charges

Rwanda's government is defending a general accused of human rights abuses who has been nominated to be deputy commander of the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur.

A Rwandan exile group, known as the United Democratic Forces-Inkingi, has accused General Karenzi Karake of supervising extra-judicial killings before and after Rwanda's 1994 genocide, and masterminding the assassinations of numerous politicians.

In a statement Tuesday, the Rwandan Foreign Ministry said General Karake is a well-trained and experienced officer who deserves the post of deputy commander.

The ministry said the charges are a "mere fabrication" as well as an attempt to discredit the Rwandan government and confuse the international community.

The U.N. is seeking more information regarding the accusations.

The African Union has confirmed General Karake's appointment. But U.N. sources indicate the world body has not approved the nomination.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide, in which some 800,000 people died, remains a bitter point of dispute among Rwandans both inside and outside the country.

Some politicians, including President Bush, refer to the situation in Sudan's Darfur region as a genocide.

Four years of fighting in the region have killed an estimated 200,000 people and displaced more than two million others. The U.N.-AU peacekeeping force of 26,000 will have the job of protecting civilians in Darfur.

Special Court Supplement
Photos from Monday's Taylor Trial Status Conference in The Hague

