

**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:**

Monday, 15 October 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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### Local News

Statement by Hon. Justice Benjamin Mutanga Itoe... / *PAO* Page 3

Special Court Seeks to Arrest, Try Johnny Paul / *Awoko* Page 4

*[Note: No newspapers were published in Sierra Leone on Monday due to the national holiday]*

### International News

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / *UNMIL* Pages 5-7

Can the World Stop Genocide? / *BBC* Pages 8-11

Linking Disarmament With Justice / *Africa Renewal (UN)* Pages 12-16



**Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
Press and Public Affairs Office

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 11 October 2007**

### **Statement by Hon. Justice Benjamin Mutanga Itoe Calling on Sierra Leoneans to Reconcile**

*The following statement was read out by Justice Itoe on 9 August 2007 prior to delivering the sentencing judgment on former CDF leaders Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa.*

“To the Sierra Leonean Community, my appeal is that after the finding of guilt and the sentencing today of the two Accused Persons to various terms of imprisonment, it is now, more than ever before, the time for all of you to bury the hatchet of war, to bury the hatchet of conflict, and to be reconciled with one another in the interests of peace, order and mutual existence with each other and with everyone.

“Let me say here that all those who have assumed respective roles, either as Prosecutors or Defence Counsel, were only performing their duty and no more than the duty they were hired to perform. The Prosecutors should, therefore, not be viewed or considered as enemies to the Accused Persons or to their relatives or dependants, nor should the Defence Counsel be perceived as having been unsympathetic to the victims or their relatives or even supportive of the crimes for which the Court has convicted and sentencing the two Accused Persons today.

“Having done their respective jobs, it is now time for reconciliation and forgiveness, time to forget the past. For all those who have been negatively affected by this conflict, the call to forgive the Accused Persons is directed to you. They, the Accused Persons, have openly expressed their remorse and their regrets and presented their excuses and sympathies to the families that were afflicted by the events and acts for which they have been convicted.

“For you, Mr. Moinina Fofana and Mr. Allieu Kondewa, your apologies and expression of remorse, amongst other factors, has been taken very seriously into consideration in mitigating your sentence.

“It is now for you to respect your word and engagement. It is now for you to restrain yourselves and to call on your supporters to equally restrain themselves, and to desist from any acts of revenge or recrimination against those who, in order to ensure that the facts are known for us to do justice in this Case, have testified against you in these proceedings.

“You would have broken your social pact that you signed with all Sierra Leoneans, particularly, and including those you may have been considering as your adversaries or enemies, if you do not live up to your words of regret and expression of remorse. which, as the Court has found, is sincere.

“May peace and reconciliation be the watchword for all so as to put this great and talented Country, irreversibly, on the path of peace, economic progress, and prosperity”.

In his statement, Justice Itoe also thanked the people of Sierra Leone for “their legendary hospitality”.

#END

Awoko

Friday, 12 October 2007

# Special Court seeks to arrest, try Johnny Paul



Johnny Paul Koroma

Friday October 12, 2007

AWOKO 12 OCTOBER 2007

# Special Court seeks to arrest, try Johnny Paul

By Betty Milton

The Prosecutor of the Special Court Stephen Rapp has said that they are monitoring reports over the whereabouts of the leader of the defunct Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Johnny Paul Koroma.

Speaking to journalists in Freetown, Prosecutor Rapp said "if Mr Koroma is alive we will seek his arrest under the arrest warrant that we have and we will seek to bring him to justice and try him at the Special Court for Sierra Leone."

The Prosecutor said "a great deal of information has been received concerning the

whereabouts of the former junta leader, most of which have been misleading.

"Some of them claimed said that JP Koroma is dead, killed by Charles Taylor's forces in Liberia while other reports state that he is alive and living in one country or another. We will continue to follow all reports to ascertain their accuracy."

The Prosecutor explained that they have three alternatives before his duties ends "firstly we will arrest him and try him at the Special Court. Secondly we have to confirm that he is dead through the use of forensic evidence just as we did with the case of Sam Mosquito Bockarie."

"Thirdly," he said "we will establish a mechanism that he can be tried here in Sierra Leone under some

arrangement with the Government in cooperation with the UN so that the case will not lapse when the Special Court ends its operations here."

Mr Rapp said, the work of the court would be completed by the end of 2009 and if the AFRC leader is arrested in the very near future his trial will be handled in Trial Chamber I.

But if the court closes before they arrest Mr Koroma, the Prosecutor explained, "then we will have to find a way to transfer his case to another court with a national system" adding "But that could be done here with a UN Resolution in the same way that our court has avoided the effects of the Lome Amnesty by having an International Statute implemented. So there are ways to do that but its something we will need to

negotiate."

In an assured mood, the Prosecutor said, "it is an unfinished business for us if we did not arrest and try Johnny Paul. It is my intention to finish that work because we were created to prosecute those with the greatest responsibilities for the crimes committed here during the

war." "In my view, as JP Koroma was the Chairman of the AFRC group, he is one of those individuals responsible for crimes committed here during the war. We have to go after those with the greatest responsibilities. We've indicted eleven

individuals, nine of whom are alive today. All nine are in one form or another in the process of long punishment for their crimes. It will be great legacy to this country finding and judging those who bear the highest level of responsibility during the horrific civil war" the Special Court Prosecutor stressed.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 11 October 2007

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

*There were no stories on Liberia in the international media today.*

### **International Clips on West Africa**

#### **Prosecution may appeal light terms for Sierra Leone militia chiefs**

FREETOWN, Oct 10, 2007 (AFP) - The prosecution at the UN-backed court for Sierra Leone Wednesday said it may appeal the light jail terms handed to two former militia bosses for atrocities during the west African nation's savage civil war. Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa, leaders of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) -- a notorious pro-government force which recruited traditional hunters to fight rebels during the 1991-2001 conflict -- were Tuesday jailed for six and eight years respectively.

#### **UN chief concerned over slackening of momentum in Ivorian peace process**

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 10, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned that the failure to achieve key benchmarks set out in a March peace agreement has led to a "slackening of momentum" which threatens the overall peace process and security conditions in Cote d'Ivoire.

In his latest report to the Security Council on the work of the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire, Ban said the overall peace process and the improved security situation "will remain fragile and vulnerable to reversals" unless it is underpinned by concrete progress in carrying out the accord reached between the country's rival political leaders.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **Taylor's Dreadful General Escapes Assassination in Togo**

*(National Chronicle)*

- *The National Chronicle* [a pro-Taylor newspaper] reports that Benjamin Yeaten, an exiled confidante of former President Charles Taylor is believed to be on the run following several assassination attempts by unknown men in a barrack in Togo. The Liberian Government in October last year declared Yeaten a 'wanted man' on the grounds that he [Yeaten] was plotting to assassinate key government officials.

#### **Police Crime Report Shows Rise in Rape Cases**

*(Liberian Express and New Democrat)*

- The latest crime report released by the Police indicates a steady increase in rape cases and a decrease in armed robbery over the last month. Speaking at UNMIL regular press briefing on

Wednesday, Liberia National Police Inspector-General, Beatrice Muna Sieh said that this trend is expected to continue as the sensitization campaign against rape gains momentum

### **Britain Poised to Support Liberia's Security Sector Reform**

*(The Inquirer)*

- The British Ambassador accredited to Liberia at the head of a high power delegation, on Wednesday paid a courtesy call on the Minister of National Defense, Brownie Samukai in Monrovia. The discussion between Minister Samukai and the British envoy was aimed at discussing security related issues and how the British government would work with the Ministry to strengthen the security sector of the country.
- Ambassador Sarah McIntosh and Minister Samukai discussed the challenges facing the Ministry of National Defense and the role that could be played by the British government in building the technical capacity of the new Liberian army. Ambassador McIntosh said that her country would contemplate on how it would begin to assist by providing support to the process.

### **Biomass Company Employs More Liberians**

*(Daily Observer and The Analyst)*

- An executive of the Buchanan Renewable Energies, a biomass concentrated company, says his group has employed more than 150 Liberians in the last couple and the number would rise to 450 in the coming weeks. Mr. Martin Greenwood in a statement issued Wednesday said the company's employment will target mainly people in the areas where the company is working.

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

### **Police Chief Announces Increase in Rape Cases**

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)*

### **Government Launches National Eye-Care Programme Today**

- According to the head of the National Eye-Care Programme Dr. Edward Gizzie, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare will today Wednesday launch a national eye-care campaign in collaboration with the World Health Organization and Sight-Saver International to prevent further blindness in Liberia. Dr. Gizzie added that the campaign will give affordable treatment to all including the estimated 1 percent of Liberia's blind population.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)*

### **Government Gives Money to Support National Agriculture Fair**

- Agriculture Minister Dr. Christopher Toe told reporters in Monrovia yesterday that the Government allotted some US\$75,000 to support the upcoming National Agriculture Fair to be held in Bensonville in Montserrado County, adding that the overall objective of the Fair is to appreciate, celebrate and identify with farmers to stimulate competition among producers and stakeholders to the agriculture sector.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)*

### **African Union Envoy Says UNMIL Troop Cuts Signify Return of Security**

- In an interview, African Union Ambassador to Liberia Noumou Diakite said that the start of UNMIL troop drawdown next year signified that the Country has improved in terms of security and that Liberians should not only think about peacekeepers leaving but also on what they can do to improve their lives.
- Ambassador Diakite noted that as security of any country was impossible to be 100 percent, he urged Liberians to unite and forgive one another while praising the Government for creating the awareness that has enabled parents to send their children to school.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)*

### **Community Radio Producers Trained in Basic Journalism Skills**

- About 12 community radio producers recruited from six community radio stations from Nimba, Lofa and Margibi Counties completed a training workshop in basic journalism skills focusing on interviewing, digital editing, preparing and conducting roundtable discussions and

radio programme production. Correspondents said that Ms. Jacqueline Marick, Foreign Desk Reporter of the VPRO Radio of the Netherlands facilitated the training.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)*

### **Church Groups Remove Drug Addicts from the Streets**

- Correspondents said that some drug addicts who have been taken off the streets and camped by church group, declared that they would work with the Government in its fight against drug trafficking and in so doing, expose those including highly placed personalities, who are involved in the narcotic drug trade. The head of the Living Tabernacle Church, Pastor Oliver Kpan, hinted that his church set up the rehabilitation camp in Paynesville to collaborate with the Government in the fight against drug addiction.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS 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](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

## BBC

Saturday, 13 October 2007

### **Can the world stop genocide?**

A conference in the Canadian city of Montreal has been discussing ways to prevent genocide. BBC world affairs correspondent Mark Doyle, attending the meeting, asks whether this can be done.

The 75-year-old woman sat on stage in front of hundreds of United Nations officials, legal experts and academics.

The day before, Marika Nene had travelled from Hungary to Canada - the first plane she had ever taken on her first journey outside Hungary.

She was not intimidated by the gathering. Her long hair was lit up by a stage light and her facial features were strong.

But the strongest thing about Marika Nene, a Roma - or Gypsy - woman who was trapped in the anti-Gypsy pogroms during World War II, was her determination to tell her story.

"I had no choice. I had to give myself up to the soldiers," Marika Nene said through a translator.

"I was a very pretty little gypsy woman and of course the soldiers took me very often to the room with a bed in it where they violated me. I still have nightmares about it".

Many members of Marika Nene's Roma family died in the work camps and the ghettos.

She had travelled to Montreal to give a reality check to the experts and UN officials at the "Global Conference on the Prevention of Genocide".

We do not need to have a legal finding that genocide has been committed in order to take preventive action

She was joined by other survivors - from Rwanda, Cambodia and the Jewish holocaust. They all told their horrific stories bravely.

But there was something especially extraordinary about the elderly Roma who had transported herself from a village in eastern Hungary into the glare of an international conference in one of the most modern cities in the world.

It was an example of what Nigerian Nobel Prize-winning author Wole Soyinka would later describe to me as one of those points where people meet each other in a spirit of "egalitarian awareness".

Six million Jews or one million Tutsis are just numbers. But this strong Roma woman was a human being who was not ashamed to tell her story.

### **Betrayal**

The Montreal conference drew personalities from the UN, academia and the legal profession.

The general aim was to build pressure on politicians to take mass killings - even in far-off places about which we know little and sometimes care less - far more seriously.

If that sounds like a fuzzy and vague ambition, Canadian Gen Romeo Dallaire, who commanded a UN peacekeeping force in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide, begged to differ.

Gen Dallaire led a force in Rwanda which was betrayed by UN headquarters in New York - his mission was starved of resources and so forced to observe genocide rather than stop it.

Since that failed mission, he has made a career out of lobbying politicians to do better on issues like peacekeeping, abolishing the use of child soldiers and nuclear disarmament.

"This conference is aimed especially at young people," said Gen Dallaire from a hotel surrounded by the campus buildings of McGill University, which organised the conference.

"If these young people became politically active," he continued, "they could dictate a whole new concept of what national interest should be and what humanity should be."

### **What is genocide?**

Payam Akhavan, professor of international law at McGill and a former prosecutor at the UN war crimes tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, said defining genocide mattered from a legal point of view - but that analysing how it could be prevented was the real point.

"The legal definition of genocide is contained in the 1948 Genocide convention," he told me.

"In simple terms, it is the intentional, collective destruction of an entire human group based on national, racial, religious or ethnic identity."

"But the key point", Mr Akhavan continued, "is that we do not need to have a legal finding that genocide has been committed in order to take preventive action."

That is because, of course, by the time the lawyers have decided a mass killing fits their definition, it is usually too late to act.

The Iranian-born professor said it was necessary to think about the ingredients of genocide, which he listed as:

- incitement to ethnic hatred
- demonisation of the target group
- radicalisation along ethnic or religious lines
- distribution of weapons to extremist groups
- preparation of lists of those to be exterminated

### **Similarities**

As someone who personally witnessed and reported on the Rwandan genocide, I found it quite disturbing to read about other mass killings.

It was not the details which I found shocking, but the spooky similarities that kept cropping up across the world.

The lists prepared by the Hutu extremists in Rwanda, for example, were mirrored by the obsessive recording of the details of victims by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.

The yellow identity stars Jews were forced to wear in World War II were the equivalent of the ethnic identity cards every Rwandan had to carry.

This is the grim opposite of Wole Soyinka's "egalitarian awareness". It is the social science of genocide, which appears to have common features across history.

The conference aimed to isolate and analyse Mr Akhavan's "early warning" factors to raise awareness.

But what to do with the information?

As speaker after speaker reminded the Montreal conference, the US government, among others, has asserted that genocide is being committed right now in the Darfur region of Sudan.

It was continuing even as we sipped our coffee in softly carpeted rooms and nibbled our Canadian canapes.

Everyone has known about it for several years but virtually nothing had been done to stop it.

A dissident voice

So all the talk about "early warnings" and "United Nations peacekeeping forces" and "the will of the international community" could be said to amount to little.

The US and others have said a genocide is unfolding in Darfur  
At this point, a controversial scholar intervened with comments which challenged the entire conference.

French author Gerard Prunier, like the proverbial ghost at a wedding, said genocides could not be prevented by the international community.

"When you see a dictatorial regime heating up, everyone starts talking, talking, talking ... and by the time the talking stops, either matters have quietened down or they have happened."

And that is the crux of the matter, according to Mr Prunier - it is difficult for politicians or the military to intervene in a situation that has not yet evolved into a crisis.

### **Give war a chance?**

So what is Mr Prunier's solution?

"Genocides can only be stopped by the people directly involved - and usually that means people involved in the war that accompanies most mass killings."

And if it is the government committing the genocide, the solution is "arm the rebels", he says.

"It won't be clean - it will be messy," the French author said, "but it is more likely to stop the mass killing than international intervention."

To a large extent, Mr Prunier has history on his side. The Holocaust only ended when the allies destroyed Hitler's regime.

The killing fields of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge were only stopped when the Vietnamese army moved in. And the genocide in Rwanda only ended when the Tutsi rebels overthrew the extremist Hutu regime.

Against this, it could be argued that some interventions have worked - for example the Nigerian intervention in Liberia, which was followed up by a UN peacekeeping mission.

It seems that resolving dramatic human rights abuses may require some of the diplomacy and the "international good will" that flowed so freely in Montreal.

But as well as what Winston Churchill called "Jaw Jaw", some situations, it seems, may only be resolved by "War War".

## Africa Renewal (United Nations)

Thursday, 11 October 2007

### **Linking Disarmament With Justice**

By Ernest Harsch  
Kinshasa

After years of war, hundreds of former militia fighters are coming out of the forests of Ituri, in the far northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). "The time of war is over," declared Col. Mathieu Ngujolo, a militia commander, as members of his group disarmed in the village of Kobu. "Now is the time to rebuild our country."

In this latest phase of the DRC's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme, a total of 4,500 members of three Ituri militia groups that signed an accord with the government in late 2006 are set to demobilize. They will join more than 100,000 combatants from other factions who, under earlier peace agreements, either returned to civilian life or joined the new national army.

Meanwhile, about a dozen trials are under way nationally of accused Congolese war criminals. One prominent militia commander from Ituri, Thomas Lubanga, is currently facing trial before the UN-backed International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. But so far the total number of accused is relatively low, in a country where 3-4 million people, the vast majority of them civilians, are estimated to have perished during the decade-long conflict. And like their demobilized predecessors, very few of the Ituri fighters will likely appear in court for crimes they may have committed during the war.

For many residents of Ituri, peace is enough, for now. "We lived through the war. We lost our parents, our brothers and sisters. We suffered the worst atrocities," commented John Tibamwenda, a district chief in Bunia, the provincial capital, during a demobilization and arms-destruction ceremony. "It's now time to turn the page."

Yet in the DRC, as in other African countries emerging from war, many people are also wondering whether peace must come at the expense of justice. Do disarmament and demobilization necessarily mean impunity for those who pillaged, raped, killed and terrorized? Are communities that were victimized expected to welcome back those who victimized them?

In contrast, might prosecuting the worst perpetrators more vigorously jeopardize peace efforts, as some mediators and analysts fear? Would combatants hesitate to hand in their arms?

Villagers at a grassroots "gacaca" court in Rwanda: Justice in local communities is especially important for building reconciliation.

### **Different aims and constituencies**

Seeking ways to resolve such dilemmas was one of the challenges facing participants in the Second International Conference on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stability in Africa, held in Kinshasa, the DRC's capital, 12-14 June (see box). Organized by the Congolese government and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the meeting drew DDR experts and practitioners from across Africa and from various UN and other international agencies.

Hoping to improve the effectiveness of DDR in the continent, the participants focused on several shortcomings in existing programmes, including the relationship of DDR with post-war justice initiatives.

While many peace processes in Africa now include some form of DDR operation, efforts to bring perpetrators of war crimes and human rights violations to justice have tended to lag, reports Alpha Fall, a senior associate of the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), a non-governmental organization based in New York.

In part, Mr. Fall notes, this lag has come about because disarmament and demobilization are considered immediate security priorities - and peacekeeping missions thus seek to quickly implement them - while mechanisms for "transitional justice" take some time to get off the ground, especially in war-ravaged countries with weak court systems and many other pressing needs. (The term "transitional justice," as used by many human rights advocates, refers to efforts to address the legacies of massive human rights abuses, most often in the transitional period after a war has ended or a dictatorship has been ousted.)

The gap also results from the different aims of DDR and transitional justice undertakings. "DDR programmes benefit ex-combatants," observes Mr. Fall, "while transitional justice initiatives focus on victims. In addition, these constituencies themselves have different objectives: Victims seek accountability. Ex-combatants for the most part seek to minimize or reduce accountability."

Nevertheless, Mr. Fall adds, DDR and transitional justice efforts have common long-term goals: reestablishing the rule of law, rebuilding trust, preventing renewed violence and reconciling communities. Greater coordination between the two processes should help to advance those goals, while also minimizing possible trade-offs and tensions that may arise.

### **Amnesty or prosecution?**

The greatest controversy has revolved around the granting of amnesty. Amnesties have been common in peace pacts in Africa, Latin America and elsewhere, often intended as inducements to warring factions to join a peace process. In South Africa, following the end of apartheid in 1994, amnesties were offered to those who publicly confessed their crimes, as a means of uncovering the truth and fostering national reconciliation.

During the latter years of Algeria's civil war, the government's offer of amnesty to individual rebels succeeded in getting thousands to lay down their arms. Similarly, some form of amnesty featured in peace talks in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the DRC and other countries.

In 2000, Uganda adopted an Amnesty Act, guaranteeing those who renounced violence a resettlement package and a promise to not bring charges against them. By December 2006, about 21,000 members of a half dozen rebel groups had agreed to accept the offer, including some 15,000 from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which for years has caused widespread destruction and displacement in northern Uganda. In communities where violence has subsided, many people have regarded the amnesty as an important tool for peace and for recovering children who had been kidnapped by the rebels.

Human rights activists, however, argue that failing to prosecute those who committed the worst atrocities ignores the suffering of their victims, hinders long-term reconciliation and perpetuates a culture of impunity that can contribute to future abuses. They also point out that under international law there can be no amnesty for war crimes or crimes against humanity.

During an initial peace accord in Sierra Leone in 1999, the negotiators agreed to a sweeping, general amnesty for all factions and combatants. But citing international law, the UN specifically disavowed the

amnesty provision. A later - and more successful - peace agreement included a limited amnesty, but also established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to gather information about atrocities, and a Special Court for Sierra Leone to try a number of those most responsible.

There is some evidence that the threat of prosecutions may complicate demobilization efforts, however. A study of Sierra Leone by the ICTJ cited an instance in which representatives of the Special Court were barred from a demobilization camp because peacekeepers feared that ex-combatants would abandon DDR. In neighbouring Liberia, some fighters hesitated to join the DDR process there because they thought the Sierra Leone court's jurisdiction might extend to them. (Former Liberian President Charles Taylor is in fact currently facing trial before the Special Court for his role in the Sierra Leone war.)

### **Striking a balance**

In practice, peace negotiators and DDR practitioners have sought to strike a balance. In the DRC, explained Daniel Kawata, national coordinator of the DDR commission, any commanders suspected of "heavy criminal business" were subject to arrest. But such arrests were limited in number, he told Africa Renewal in 2005, so as not to "lose the possibility of demobilizing a whole bunch."

When the ICC first announced several years ago that it was opening investigations into war crimes by the LRA in northern Uganda, a sharp public debate erupted. Some local communities sent a delegation to The Hague to warn that indictments could hamper peace efforts. Justice Peter Onega, chairman of the Amnesty Commission, says he told the ICC "that those warrants, once issued, may not help in the amnesty process." Indictments, he explained to Africa Renewal during the DDR conference in Kinshasa, could lead LRA combatants to "fear that if they came out [of the forests], they would be tried."

For a time, the ICC delayed publicly issuing warrants, so as to give the talks a bit more of a chance. But in October 2005 the ICC unveiled international warrants for the arrest of Mr. Kony and several other LRA commanders. Despite initial fears, peace talks between the LRA and Ugandan intermediaries in the southern Sudanese city of Juba did not collapse.

One option now under consideration is to empower the Ugandan courts to try Mr. Kony and his colleagues on charges similar to those they face before the ICC, to avoid an international trial, Mr. Onega explains. "It is the duty of the government of Uganda to put in place the necessary laws that would enable a trial along the lines that the ICC would find acceptable." Whether the LRA leaders would agree to face a Ugandan court remains to be seen, but for the moment the idea remains on the negotiating table in Juba.

### **Communities at the centre**

Aiming to reconcile Africans' desires both for peace and for some measure of justice, a "break out" session on transitional justice during the Kinshasa DDR conference proposed that peace negotiators avoid blanket amnesties. It also recommended carrying out trials and other judicial proceedings in a balanced fashion, so as not to give an impression that justice is being dispensed solely in the interests of "victors."

Formal trials in national or international courts are not the only means of ensuring accountability, conference participants noted. They recommended that in countries with truth and reconciliation commissions, ex-combatants be encouraged to participate.

They also cited the example of Rwanda, which is in the midst of hearing several hundred thousand cases stemming from the 1994 genocide in that country. Modeled on traditional village assemblies, Rwanda's local gacaca courts enable villagers to directly confront those accused of atrocities. Sometimes suspects confess and apologize for their actions. They may be forgiven or sentenced, including to community

service. The most serious cases are referred to the regular courts. So far, notes Mr. Fall of the ICTJ, the Rwandan government's commitment to prosecution does not seem to have hampered its efforts to reintegrate ex-combatants, some 54,000 of whom have given up arms since 1995.

In Uganda, many of those who were granted amnesty have also participated in traditional rituals known as timo-kica or mato oput (forgiving, reconciling), in which they publicly acknowledge some responsibility for their past actions. "Once this is done," Mr. Onega explains, "it is understood that this person is once again accepted back into the community and all animosity toward this person must stop."

Overall, participants in the Kinshasa conference proposed, DDR programmes should pay more attention to the needs of the communities that are receiving ex-combatants, in order to facilitate their reintegration. In Ituri, the former militia fighters will each receive \$100 plus a kit with saucepans, shoes, a radio, fabric and other supplies. If poor villagers do not also get some support for rebuilding, then the imbalance in assistance can breed resentment and convey an impression that the ex-fighters are being "rewarded" for their past violent behavior.

Providing reparations for the victims of past atrocities can also help improve attitudes towards ex-combatants, argues Mr. Fall. Unfortunately, he notes, while 22 countries have had some form of DDR programme, with benefits to demobilized soldiers, none has implemented a reparations programme for victims.

Ultimately, prosecutions can also aid long-term community reconciliation, Mr. Fall adds. "Even in situations of massive human rights crimes, prosecution of militia leaders can help draw a distinction between those who have most responsibility for crimes, and lower-level offenders." This in turn may "increase the prospects for trust between ex-combatants and the communities where they choose to reintegrate."

### **'African ways and voices' on DDR**

Returning former combatants to civilian life is one of the most complex and important factors in consolidating peace in countries just emerging from war, and requires greater commitment and collaboration by African stakeholders and their international partners, declared participants in a 12-14 June conference in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Organized by the government of the DRC and the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Second International Conference on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stability in Africa drew nearly 200 participants from some 20 African nations and a number of donor countries, international and regional organizations and non-governmental groups to share ideas about how to better implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes.

Africans must be at the forefront of DDR efforts in their continent, the participants agreed. The conference provided an occasion for "African ways and African voices" to be better incorporated, observed Mr. William Lacy Swing, special representative of the UN Secretary-General in the DRC. Mr. Swing, who co-chaired the event, stressed that the process of networking stimulated by the conference would help build the capacity of African DDR experts and partners, following the first such conference held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in June 2005.

Despite wide differences in national experiences, virtually all participants agreed that the greatest challenges revolve around the final "R" - reintegration. By their nature, DDR programmes generally focus on ex-combatants' disarmament and demobilization and provide them with some short-term assistance. Sustainable reintegration, however, requires much more, including support for community recovery initiatives. Reviving national economies was the focus of a special plenary session that highlighted ways

in which national businesses, both large and small, can help create jobs for former combatants and other citizens.

In addition, the conference participants concentrated their discussion on several "critical issues" confronting DDR programmes in Africa. Four thematic topics were highlighted: children and women associated with fighting forces; combatants operating on foreign soil; DDR and security sector reform; and transitional justice.

The participants emphasized a number of broad recommendations, including:

The national ownership of DDR programmes should be enhanced by supporting the efforts of all national stakeholders, including governments, civil societies, warring factions and others.

Africa's international partners should assist community rehabilitation, poverty reduction and other development priorities so that society as a whole benefits and ex-combatants are successfully reintegrated.

Regional perspectives should be included in the design and implementation of DDR programmes, with particular attention to disarming and repatriating combatants from other countries and combating illicit flows of small arms.

The special needs of children, women, the disabled and other groups associated with warring factions should be adequately included in the planning and implementation stages of any DDR effort.

DDR programmes should take greater account of community interests and concerns, to help create a more welcoming environment for returning fighters.