

**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:**

Tuesday, 27 November 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
Martin Royston-Wright  
Ext 7217

**Local News**

UN In Sierra Leone Works With Civil Society to Observe... / *The News* Page 3

**International News**

For Women, War's Over But Violence Goes On / *IRIN* Pages 4-5

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / *UNMIL* Pages 6-8

25 African Nations Involved in Armed Conflict / *Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation* Pages 9-10

UN Launches Internet Campaign on Ending Violence Against Women / *Voice Of America* Pages 11-12

The News

Tuesday, 27 November 2007

## UN in Sierra Leone works with Civil Society to observe 16 days of Activism against Gender-based Violence

The United Nations System in Sierra Leone, in partnership with international and local Non-governmental Organisations, supports the 16 Days of Activism, a global campaign against Gender Based Violence (GBV). The theme for this year's commemoration is "Demanding implementation, challenging obstacles: End Violence against Women."

The initiative is carried forward under the umbrella of the Coalition on Women's Rights in Sierra Leone from 25 November through 10 December, which is the

International Human Rights Day – thus creating a symbolic link between violence against women and human rights violations. Activities include awareness raising workshops on the three Gender Acts recently adopted by the House of Parliament – the Domestic Violence Act; the Evolution of Estates Act; and the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act. Radio discussion programme and a fundraising dinner and solidarity walk are to draw the attention of policy makers to the need for protection mechanisms for victims of gender based

violence. These events will take in the provincial towns of Makeni, Bo and Kenema, as well as in Freetown.

After Sierra Leone has submitted its initial country report to the UN on the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), women activists will draw during the 16 Days campaign the attention of the Government to the needed support for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs. This is to make headway towards the full

implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and the recommendations by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

In this year's message marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, the UN Secretary-General states: "Violence against women is always a violation of human rights; it is always a crime; and it is always unacceptable. Let us take this issue with the deadly seriousness that it deserves – not only on this International Day, but, every day."

## UN Integrated Regional Information Networks

Monday, 26 November 2007

### **For Women, War's Over But Violence Goes On**

Freetown

Musu, 23, does not want more children. She has trouble feeding the three she already has. She has paid for this decision with regular beatings and rape by her 45-year-old husband.

"The man was beating me every day, forcing me to give sex every day," Musu told IRIN from the Sierra Leonean capital Freetown, where she is staying with a distant relative after fleeing her husband.

"He wanted me to have more children. He beat me and beat me. I'm tired."

Musu said the local chief disregarded her pleas about abuse by the man she was forced to marry at age 16. She has not gone to the police "because I don't have any money... They always ask for money". Despite recent laws aimed at boosting women's legal status in Sierra Leone, powerlessness in the face of violence remains an everyday fact of life for countless women like Musu.

In a 1 November report Amnesty International said the legacy of the "unimaginable brutality" against women during the country's 1991-2002 civil war feeds violence against them today. During the war, some 250,000 women and girls - about a third of the female population - were brutally raped, tortured and kept as sex slaves, the report said.

"Rape is the only war violation that continues to today," Amnesty's Sierra Leone researcher Tania Bernath told IRIN.

While experts in Sierra Leone say women are increasingly coming forth to report rape and domestic violence to the police, such crimes are rampant and usually go unpunished.

That is partly for lack of resources for pursuing offenders, but mostly it is custom, rights advocates say. Musu said she reported her situation but was shunned. "Whenever you talk to the chief he will say 'the man is always right'," she told IRIN. "That's the custom."

It remains the prevailing attitude, according to Jamesina King, chairperson of Sierra Leone's Human Rights Commission. "It's typical," she said of the chief's reaction to Musu. The rights commission was recently in the north to educate communities about violence against women, and members found that many people are still unaware of women's rights or disregard their grievances.

Before running away to Freetown, Musu had fled several times to her parents' home near where she lived with her husband - in the northern town of Kabala some 170km from the capital - but they reprimanded her and persuaded her to return home.

"It's definitely a man's world, it's definitely a chief's world," Amnesty's Bernath said. She said that chiefs have considerable power and those eager to help bolster women's rights are scarce.

Even in cases where a chief considers domestic violence or sexual assault charges, the approach is generally to mediate in what is considered a family dispute. "There is still this idea that cases should be kept in the family," Bernath said.

In its recent report Amnesty said this only feeds the problem. "Mediation in rape cases contributes to impunity and facilitates state evasion of the obligation to ensure that violence against women is prosecuted."

Sierra Leone is a signatory to a number of international conventions including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The gender bill passed in July was hailed as giving women unprecedented rights. But Sierra Leone has a long way to go before laws on paper translate into changes in women's status.

Sierra Leone is one of many countries around the world observing '16 days of activism', beginning on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women until 10 December, International Human Rights Day.

Rights advocates say Sierra Leone is making some progress. Just the fact that communities are talking about violence against women as a problem to be addressed is a significant step forward, the Human Rights Commission's King said.

[ This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations ]

## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 26 November 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

11/26/2007 11:21:47

#### **Highlighting Importance of Rule of Law, Top UN Envoy Hands Over Courthouses**

Source: All Africa Global Media Date: November 26, 2007

Nov 26, 2007 (UN News Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The top United Nations envoy to Liberia has handed over recently renovated Circuit and Magistrate's courts in the southeast of the war-torn nation, underscoring the importance of the rule of law which he characterized as "the firmest pillar of good government." The courts are in Maryland County, close to the once war-shattered nation's border with Cote d'Ivoire, and were renovated by the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) through its Quick Impact Projects Initiative.

#### **Monkey Meat at Center of NYC Court Case**

TOM HAYS

Associated Press Writer

Source: AP Online Regional - US

Date: November 25, 2007

NEW YORK\_From her baptism in Liberia to Christmas years later in her adopted New York City, Mamie Manneh never lost the longing to celebrate religious rituals by eating monkey meat. Now, the tribal customs of Manneh and other West African immigrants have become the focus of an unusual criminal case charging her with meat smuggling, and touching on issues of religious freedom, infectious diseases and wildlife preservation. The case "appears to be the first of its kind relating to that uniquely African product," defense attorney Jan Rostal wrote in a pending motion to dismiss. "Unfortunately, it represents the sort of clash of cultural and religious values inherent in the melting pot that is America."

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

11/25/2007 14:19:47

#### **Work begins on Ivory Coast oil pipeline**

Source: AFX International Focus Date: November 25, 2007

ABIDJAN (Thomson Financial) - Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo has inaugurated construction of an oil pipeline linking the economic capital Abidjan with the country's interior, the presidency said Friday. The pipeline will be built at a cost of 110 bln CFA francs (167 mln euros) and will stretch some 385 kilometres (241 miles) in length. It will have a capacity of 1.6 mln cubic metres annually. State-owned oil company Petroci will finance the project. The pipeline is expected to be put in service in January 2009 and will allow for the replacement of transport by tanker trucks.

## **Local Media – Newspaper**

### **UNMIL Chief abhors LAC incident – promises to do more in ensuring security in Liberia**

(Public Agenda, New Vision, The Informer, Heritage, New Democrat, Plain Truth, The Dairy, National, Liberian Express and The Analyst)

- Speaking Saturday at the Pakistani Medal Presentation ceremony held in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss said the murder of a Belgian plantation manager in Grand Bassa County 'clearly demonstrates that there is a lot more needed to be done in Liberia in terms of ensuring security.'
- Mr. Doss said that Liberia has not fully escaped from the shadow of conflict and violence and that the Mission cannot tolerate such lawlessness at the Liberian Agricultural Company (LAC).

### **Four Lawmakers claimed they were prevented from leaving Liberia**

(New Democrat, The News, and Liberian Express)

- Addressing a news conference recently, four members of the House of Representatives claimed that state security personnel and UNMIL prevented them from flying at the Roberts International Airport (RIA) over the weekend.
- Representatives George Mulbah, Rufus Neufville, Ketterkumehn Murray and Saah Gbollie were due to attend a parliamentary meeting in Ethiopia when they were allegedly stopped from leaving the country. However, New Democrat quoted security and other sources at the RIA saying that the four lawmakers actually arrived at the Roberts International Airport very late and therefore could not check-in.

### **Montserrató's Bendu Parker Wins Miss Liberia**

(The News, The Analyst, The Inquirer, New Vision and Observer)

- Ms. Bendu Tita Parker of Montserrató County on Sunday emerged winner of the prestigious Miss Liberia 2007/2008 Beauty Crown following what many local dailies termed, a closely contested competition among seven other contestants.
- There are mixed public reactions in the media regarding the outcome of the contest. While some observers expressed satisfaction over the result, others termed the contest as being stage-managed and said they were disappointed with the verdict of the judges.

### **NEC Announces Arrival of Ballots for Gbarpolu By-Elections**

(The Inquirer, Heritage)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) has announced the arrival of 30, 000 ballot papers in the country for the Gbarpolu Senatorial by-election slated for December 4, 2007. The commission said the ballot papers arrived in the country from Ghana and are now secured until the preparations are finalized to have them taken to Gbarpolu and subsequently distributed to the 90 polling places spread across 43 voting precincts.

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

### **Radio Veritas Says Lawmakers arrived at Airport Late**

- According to an investigation conducted by Radio Veritas, Representatives George Mulbah, Rufus Neufville, Ketterkumehn Murray and Saah Gbollie who claimed that they were stopped from leaving Liberia by UNMIL and State security, actually arrived at the Roberts International Airport late and therefore could not check-in.
- Security and other sources at the RIA told Radio Veritas on Sunday that the airline used two hours for the passengers to check-in but the Lawmakers arrived at the airport when passengers were already boarding the aircraft.

**Rape Suspect Hangs Himself**

- Correspondents said that 46-year-old Arthur Johnson allegedly hung himself in Sinkor after he was charged for allegedly raping a 12-year old girl.

**IMF Chief Advises Liberia against Commercial Borrowing**

- Speaking during a meeting with officials of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (G-CAP/Liberia) over the weekend, the International Monetary Fund Country Representative Michael Tharkur advised Liberia against borrowing commercial loans than to seek more grants at this stage as the Fund was working with the Liberian Government to strengthen fiscal institutions and governance in order to allow donors to give more grants to the Government.
- Meanwhile, the National Coordinator of G-CAP/Liberia, Mr. Samuel Quainmulleh said that it was an irony that the IMF was acknowledging the numerous economic benefits that debt cancellation would bring to the Liberian people while at the same time delaying the process.

\*\*\*\*

## Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation

Monday, 26 November 2007

<http://www.kbc.co.ke/story.asp?ID=46652>

### **25 African nations involved in armed conflict.**

Written By: John Muoki

Almost 300 billion dollars has been used on armed conflict in Africa in the past 15 years, a new study has revealed.

The report by the International Action Network on Small Arms, Saferworld and Oxfam International describes the use of such a colossal amount of money for such a purpose as a waste of resources.

Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf says in the introduction of the report that the money, which translates to 18 billion dollars a year, would have been enough to address the problems of HIV/ AIDS, TB and Malaria and provide education and water in Africa.



The report says 23 African nations were involved in armed conflict between 1990 and 2005.

The list includes Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.

In effect, 38% of the world's armed confrontations took place on African soil.

In addition, the report highlighted that "the average annual loss of 15 percent of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) represents an enormous economic burden-this is one and a half times average African spending on health and education combined."

"This is money Africa can ill afford to lose," Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf stated in the introduction of the report.

"The sums are appalling; the price that Africa is paying could cover the cost of solving the HIV and AIDS crisis in Africa, or provide education, water and prevention and treatment for TB and malaria.

Literally thousands of hospitals, schools, and roads could have been built, positively affecting millions of people. Not only do the people of Africa suffer the physical horrors of violence, armed conflict undermines their efforts to escape poverty."

President Johnson-Sirleaf understands the huge loss it represents for the continent, including her own country.

Since 1991, Liberia has been one of the African nations that has been the target of armed combat and widespread civil strife.

Although conditions for peace in the country were established in 2003 after President Charles Taylor left office, Liberia continues to experience political and economic perils, including the challenge of accommodating thousands of Liberian refugees who have returned to their homeland since the war ended.

However, it is not only robbed human lives and financial resources stolen in conflict that continue to cause the most damage to the continent, but the intangible daily mental and physical effects felt by the people themselves, and in some cases, other nations around them not directly involved in the conflict itself.

According to the report, African countries involved in conflict have on average, "50 per cent more infant deaths, 15 percent more malnourished people, life expectancy reduced by five years, 20 percent more adult illiteracy, 2.5 times fewer doctors per patient, and 12.4 per cent less food per person."

In the report, experts conclude that the majority of the problem lies in poor regulation of arms movement across borders, an approximately "95 per cent of Africa's most commonly used conflict weapons come from outside the continent." These include the Kalashnikov assault rifle, more commonly known as the AK-47.

Also of primary concern is the tendency for regionalized conflicts to be magnified into international ones. According to the report, the situation in Darfur has already "drawn in neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic," and other clashes in the area have caused similar situations.

Additionally, the economies of countries in armed skirmishes become intertwined.

"In 2002, when fighting in Cote d'Ivoire made access to the key Ivorian seaport of Abidjan virtually impossible, foreign trade was disrupted in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger," the report stated.

And in Somaliland and Mozambique, informal economies that provided a basic means of survival in wartime have been partly responsible for the collapse of formal rural market networks and have been an obstacle to post-conflict resolution, the report said.

## Voice of America

Monday, 26 November 2007

### UN Launches Internet Campaign on Ending Violence Against Women

By Victoria Cavaliere  
New York

The U.N. Development Fund for Women has launched a new advocacy campaign to end violence against women. The fund has recruited Hollywood actress Nicole Kidman to help promote the campaign, which is an internet-based initiative that asks people to sign a "virtual book" that promotes women's rights.

The U.N. Fund says violence against women is the most pervasive human rights violation around the world. Women are subjected to domestic violence, trafficked across borders, and the victims of systematic rape in conflict zones.

The United Nations estimates that one in three women will be a victim of violence in her lifetime.

The Development Fund for Women seeks to bring global attention to the issue and promote gender equality.



AP Photo

At a news conference, actress Nicole Kidman said she was proud to serve as a goodwill ambassador for the U.N. Fund. She says the new internet campaign called "Say No to Violence Against Women," will increase global awareness of the issue.

"We know that violence against women is a problem, but we know there is also a solution," said Kidman.

The acting executive director of the U.N. Development Fund for Women, Joanne Sandler, said a growing number of organizations and governments are taking steps to end violence against women and have also pledged their support for the new

internet campaign and website, [www.saynotoviolence.org](http://www.saynotoviolence.org).

Sandler says the website will serve as source of information on the issue. She says the virtual book will amplify the number of voices urging governments to take serious steps to end violence against women.

Sandler says at least 89 countries now have laws on domestic violence. But, this means more than 200 nations have no such protections.

"Implementation is inadequate," said Sandler. "Impunity for perpetrators is still the rule rather than the exception. That is why so many women still fear to speak out."

The U.N. organization also manages a trust fund that awards money and technical assistance to countries that implement anti-violence campaigns. Sandler said 35 countries, including Rwanda and Peru, will be given grants for women-based programs this year.

Sandler said the trust fund is an invaluable tool to help promote gender equality, but struggles to stay afloat financially.

"Despite the scope of the problem, and unlike for instance the trust fund to end HIV, AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which has billions of dollars, the trust fund to end violence has struggled to secure \$5 million for grant making last year, while receiving well over \$100 million in requests."

The launch date of the new internet-based campaign was chosen to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.