

**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:

Friday, 21 December 2007

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

Local News17 Feared Dead in Gas Explosion / *New Citizen*

Page 3

International NewsLiberia: Security Council Renews Sanctions for Another Year / *UN News Centre*

Page 4

Portugal agrees to enforce sentences...UN War Crimes Tribunal / *UN News Centre*

Page 5

Uganda LRA Rebels Given Ultimatum / *BBC*

Page 6

New Citizen
Friday, 21 December 2007

17 Feared Dead In Gas Explosion

By Abu Kalokoh and Aminata Khumala

Individuals of different nationalities yesterday perished in what was described as a gas-explosion in a four-storey building in one of the busy streets in Freetown, Free Street that left

a deep hollow in the building.

Eye-witness accounts could not confirm the exact number of deaths as most of the victims were busy shopping second-hand goods for the

Christmas holiday.

A source confided at the scene, "an inferno, which began in the early hours of yesterday morning at No. 6 Free Street, was swiftly extinguished by personnel of

Contd. page 8

17 Feared Dead

From page 1

the National Fire Force. However, due to the intense heat that emanated from the quenched fire, a gas in the shop suddenly exploded and in the process killed an estimated 17 people, 16 males and a female, injuring several others."

42 other casualties are admitted at Wards 1 and 7, one at the Intensive

Care Unit, Connaught Hospital while three others are reported to be responding to treatment at the Emergency Hospital, Goderich.

At the mortuary, thousands thronged the scene in an effort to catch a glimpse of the victims and at the same time identify their relatives and loved ones as some of the dead have already been identified.

Vice President Samuel

Sam-Sumana, Defense Minister Paolo Conteh, Deputy Minister of Information and Communications, Mohamed B. Koroma, some Members of Parliament including Hon. Chernor Bah and Hon. Cecil Osho-Williams and the Inspector General of Police, Brima Acha Kamara visited and sympathized with the hospitalized at Connaught Hospital, the mortuary and also the scene of the accident.

[Note: Nearly all local newspapers carried versions of this story.]

United Nations News Centre

Friday, 21 December 2007

Liberia: Security Council renews sanctions for another year

19 December 2007 – Having assessed the progress made so far in meeting the conditions for lifting the sanctions, the Security Council today renewed the arms and travel embargoes imposed against Liberia for another 12 months.

Unanimously adopting resolution 1792, the Council also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts monitoring the sanctions until 20 June 2008 to conduct a follow-up mission to the region to investigate implementation of the measures.

The Panel was appointed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in July to renew investigations into whether UN sanctions against Liberia are being broken, after learning of allegations that former President Charles Taylor may still have access to considerable wealth.

As they noted in their most recent report, the experts were invited by Nigeria to visit the country to investigate the allegations. While the Nigerian authorities informed them that they were unable to find conclusive evidence of any funds, economic assets or investments made by Mr. Taylor in Nigeria, the Panel was unable to confirm this since it had not yet received copies of the Government's reports.

With regard to the arms embargo, the Panel stated that it had not found any evidence of arms flows across Liberia's borders. However, it expressed concern over the dramatic increase in armed robberies involving firearms and felt the issue should be looked at by the Security Council committee monitoring the arms embargo imposed on Liberia.

The Panel is also tasked with assessing the implementation of forestry legislation signed into law last October by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, and with gauging the Government's compliance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, a mechanism established to keep "blood diamonds" from reaching world markets.

In the resolution adopted today, the Council encouraged the Liberian Government to invite the Kimberley Process to conduct a review visit within a year of Liberia's full participation in and implementation of the Scheme. It also encouraged the Process to inform the Council of its assessment of progress made.

Meanwhile, the UN mission in the West African nation, known as UNMIL, is launching an update to the atlas of humanitarian and recovery activities in Liberia that it produced in January. Providing a snapshot of "who is doing what and where," the atlas will make it possible to quickly identify humanitarian needs and gaps and improve coordination among all actors assisting vulnerable populations.

In another development, UNMIL announced that Moses Swaray is the winner of a two-month musical talent search conducted by the Mission and the Liberian Government. Chris Watson and Frances Ewu came in second and third in the contest – "A Star is Born" – which drew about 1,000 applicants nationwide.

United Nations News Centre

Wednesday, 19 December 2007

Portugal agrees to enforce sentences imposed by UN war crimes tribunal

19 December 2007 – Portugal today became the thirteenth European country to agree to enforce a sentence imposed by the United Nations war crimes tribunal that was set up to deal with the worst crimes committed during the Balkan wars in the 1990s.

Anyone convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and given a jail term can now serve that sentence in a Portuguese prison after an agreement was signed in The Hague in the Netherlands, where the ICTY is based.

Italy, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Austria, France, Spain, Germany, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Ukraine have already entered into similar agreements with the Tribunal.

The agreement with Portugal notes that it will only enforce ICTY sentences when the length of the jail term does not exceed the highest maximum sentence for any crime under Portuguese law.

The Tribunal said in a press statement that the agreement will enter into force after it is ratified by the Portuguese Parliament.

BBC

Thursday, 20 December 2007

Uganda LRA rebels given ultimatum

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has given the northern Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels an ultimatum of 31 January 2008 to conclude a peace deal.

It is the same date that has been set for LRA leader Joseph Kony and his fighters to leave their jungle hideout in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

DR Congo's army has warned it will launch an offensive if they do not go.



Mr Kony remains in DR Congo because of the ICC warrant

An LRA delegation has just returned to South Sudan, the venue of peace talks, after a six-week tour of the north.

The rebel representatives were discussing issues such as reconciliation in the region which has endured the brunt of a 21-year rebellion.

An estimated 1.5m people remain in displacement camps and thousands were killed during the fighting.

Mr Kony and three other top LRA commanders are wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes.

Correspondents say this issue has been a stumbling block to finding a lasting peace deal at talks in Juba, the capital of South Sudan.



South Sudan has been hosting negotiations between the government and LRA since mid 2006.

According to Uganda's Monitor newspaper, Mr Museveni said at a meeting with the rebel LRA delegation earlier this week that if no progress was made by the end of January, a new military offensive would be launched.