

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



The edge of the Aberdeen Road Market, the former site of the Amputee Camp.

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, 30 January 2008

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

Local News

Ban Ki-Moon to Appoint Victor Angelo...Chad, CAR / <i>UNIOSIL</i>	Page 3
Remarks of Stephen J. Rapp...UN Convention Against Corruption / <i>OTP</i>	Pages 4-5

International News

Secret Witness Testifies / <i>New Democrat</i>	Pages 6-7
(Untitled) / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Page 8
(Untitled) / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Page 9
Second Protected Witness Takes the Stand Against Taylor / <i>Star Radio</i>	Page 10
Special Court Continues in Closed Session / <i>The Trial of Charles Taylor</i>	Page 11
Special Court, NRA and Energy Sector Benefit From British / <i>Cocorioko</i>	Page 12
Taylor Turns Witness for Gus / <i>New Democrat</i>	Page 13
Charles Taylor Testify at Big Gus' Appeal Hearing / <i>The New People</i>	Page 14
"Inside Witnesses" Baffle Taylor's Prosecutors / <i>The Liberian Diaspora</i>	Page 15
Is This Really Liberia? / <i>The Liberian Diaspora</i>	Page 16
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 17-18
Dr. Boley Prepares to Appear Before Truth Commission / <i>Star Radio</i>	Page 19



UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED OFFICE IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNIOSIL)

Re-issued as received

Ref.No.UNIOSIL/PIO/002/2008

PRESS RELEASE

**BAN KI-MOON TO APPOINT VICTOR ANGELO AS NEW UN ENVOY FOR CHAD,
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

New York, 28 January 2008 --- United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has informed the Security Council of his intention to appoint Victor Da Silva Angelo of Portugal as his Special Representative for the new United Nations peacekeeping mission to Chad and Central African Republic (CAR).

The mission, known as MINURCAT, was established by the Council last September to help protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian aid to thousands of people uprooted due to insecurity in the two countries and neighbouring Sudan.

It is a multidimensional operation including European Union military forces and comprising 300 police and 50 military liaison officers, as well as civilian staff, focusing on the areas of civil affairs, human rights and the rule of law.

Mr. Angelo has served since 2005 as the Secretary-General's Executive Representative for Sierra Leone, as well as Resident Coordinator of the UN system there. Prior to that, he was UN Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator in Zimbabwe.

His career with the world body also included positions with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in East Timor, New York, Tanzania, the Gambia and the CAR. He also served as UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Representative in Mozambique and UN Adviser in Sao Tome and Principe.

Prior to joining the UN, Mr. Angelo worked as University Lecturer and Senior Statistician in the Portuguese National Institute of Statistics, and was a member of the Electoral Commission of Portugal.

Office of the Prosecutor

Wednesday, 30 January 2008

Remarks of Stephen J. Rapp
Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone
2nd Session of the Conference of States Parties to the
UN Convention Against Corruption
Nusa Dua, Indonesia

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Delegates:

I serve as Chief Prosecutor of Special Court for Sierra Leone, a tribunal established by a partnership of the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone, in order to prosecute those bearing greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law, committed in Sierra Leone after November 1996.

Since 2004, these prosecutions have proceeded in trials in our courtrooms in Freetown, and in the case of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, in the courtroom of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, a trial now in its 4th week of the presentation of evidence.

Before coming to Sierra Leone a little more than a year ago, I spent six years at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania, prosecuting those alleged to be leaders of the genocide committed in Rwanda in 1994.

I am here today at this conference because of the relationship that exists between crimes of corruption and violations of international humanitarian law. I am here in pursuit of the kind of international cooperation in enforcement efforts that can help deter these grave crimes.

We have seen the relationship between these crimes in cases prosecuted by international prosecutors, where evidence revealed that violations of international humanitarian law were motivated by a desire to maintain or gain control of national resources.

In the case of Rwanda, evidence pointed to a narrow group that controlled state power, and used it to place its leading members at the head of parastatal enterprises, where they could receive corrupt rewards. When these leaders were threatened with loss of this wealth in a civil war, and then by implementation of a peace agreement that would have removed them from power, they sought to divert attention from themselves and their responsibility for the nation's woes, by blaming an ethnic minority for all problems. They awakened these old ethnic animosities and then used the resources and the workers of the enterprises under their corrupt control to create and finance a militia to commit genocide against the ethnic minority. The result was the murder of 800,000 men, women and children in only 100 days.

In Sierra Leone and Liberia wars were fought to control and exploit natural resources, or to take possession of government treasuries to divert them for use in continued war or for private gain. According to our evidence, in Sierra Leone, there was a war with little of the religious or ethnic aspects seen elsewhere, where its outlaw nature was evident in the fact that it was difficult for the rebels to recruit adults to fight, and the warriors of choice became children—the kidnapped, doped, and trained to blindly commit acts of brutality to bludgeon communities into submission.

We see elsewhere that the perception that political power carries with it a right to plunder public resources leads to a feeling that political contests, even democratic elections, have “all or nothing” consequences.

Thus electoral fraud becomes a means to retain power, and these contests create flashpoints for violence, even the commission of atrocities, for those aggrieved by electoral loss, whether they were defeated by means fair or foul.

How can those who seek to enforce humanitarian law, who are part of a movement that began with the Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals, and continued with the Special Court for Sierra Leone and culminated in the creation of the International Criminal Court, work together with those involved in the global fight against corruption?

In humanitarian law, pillage is recognized as a crime against the law of nations, and at the Special Court we have sought convictions of this crime in all cases, particularly that of Charles Taylor. Of course, our statutes and rules of procedure focus on what is required to achieve criminal convictions and sentences of imprisonment, rather than on financial penalties or remedies. But our rules do provide for an order of restitution for the victims or the nation, if it can be shown that assets were taken in the commission of the crimes. Of course, such an order would have little benefit if assets had not been identified against which the order could be enforced.

We recognize that pillage in humanitarian law are generally concerned with the forcible taking of private resources, and the laws against corruption focus on the diversion of public ones, but these violations go hand-in-hand, with humanitarian law violations making possible the achievement of power and with it the capacity to embezzle the public treasury; and the corrupt access to the assets of the public treasury makes possible the continuation of the conflict in order to loot private resources within the country or beyond its borders.

This means we must work together. Criminal prosecutors of humanitarian law at the international level bring certain advantages to this cooperative endeavor. Such offices have been established at the international level for these crimes, but similar ones have not been created at this level to combat crimes of corruption. The prosecutors of humanitarian law have developed criminal investigation and enforcement methods, in cooperation with state authorities, that can be more effective than those available in civil actions, and the results of which be shared in appropriate circumstances.

On the other hand, national authorities who are aggrieved by the thefts committed by their public officials, can use civil remedies including those in Chapter 5 of the UN Convention Against Corruption. In some jurisdictions remedies include prejudgment attachment and forfeiture, and everywhere civil actions can be successful based upon a lesser standard of proof than the one applicable to criminal prosecutions.

The cases where the corrupt have also been the violators of human rights are also the ones of highest visibility, where populations have been murdered, maimed and victimized, and where the greatest pressures can be brought to bear to implement the provisions of international conventions, in law, and in actual practice.

In the end, this is about putting legal provisions into actual practice—about establishing the rule of law. It is about deterring crimes that threaten all of humankind. It is about protecting people from murder, rape, amputation, but also from extortion of bribes, or theft of what a nation, a community, or a family has built for its future.

A joint effort can increase the chance that we all can live free from violence and atrocity, and that we can achieve everywhere a prosperity that cannot be threatened or destroyed by corruption.

Thank you.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Monday, 28 January 2008

Secret Witness Testifies

As Safety Fears Mount

A secret witness against former President Charles Taylor, simply known as TF1-371, also with a hidden nationality, began giving testimony last week behind closed doors for fears of his or her safety. Journalists and trial monitors were barred from hearing the testimony.

The witness is testifying on condition that his or her anonymity be protected for fear of reprisals. The development comes a day after the prosecution expressed fears that naming witnesses' fam-

SEE PAGE 8



Secret Witness Testifies

ily members in open court could open them to dangers. The court also noted reports from family of witness Varmayan Sheriff of death threats from unknown persons because of his testimony against Mr Taylor, in whose government he served in various security positions.

Court transcript on the secret witness and the decision says:

The Court entered into closed session for Prosecution witness TF1-371, who will testify in English, because this witness received protected status in an order on June 14, 2006, from Trial Chamber I in a prior Special Court case against the RUF.

Lead Defense Counsel Courtnay Griffiths objected to this ruling and argued that this particular Trial Chamber must issue an order calling for protective measures. According to Griffiths, a failure to do so would deprive the accused of his ability to challenge the substance or basis of the ruling.

Presiding Judge Doherty noted that the order granting protective status to TF1-371 mandated that testimony of that witness be heard entirely in closed session. Rule 75(F) of the Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence states that once protective orders have been given, they shall continue in effect in any other proceedings before the Court. A party seeking to rescind protective measures ordered in the first proceeding must apply to the Trial Chamber seized of the second proceeding. The Court

(by majority decision) ruled that having not received a motion to rescind the order, the order shall stand before Trial Chamber II.

The Court then entered closed session, but reopened to discuss alternatives to completely closed sessions. Presiding Judge Doherty ruled that there would be a modified closed session during which the two side curtains in the public gallery would remain open and the middle curtain would be closed to block public view of the witness. The Court also rejected a Prosecution motion to admit the witness's evidence from the RUF trial.

The Court adjourned to explain these procedures to the witness. When the proceedings resumed, there was a problem with the witness and the Court again entered closed session.

The Special Court's press office sent a notice to journalists and monitors this evening, stating that the current witness will be heard in closed session for the next couple of days and it will no longer be possible to follow the trial in the public gallery or media center until this witness is finished giving testimony. Another source at the Special Court says that under the judges' order relating to this witness, the public gallery will technically still be open, but beyond blocking the public's view of the witness, no audio will be available in the public gallery. Effectively, no public information will emerge from the trial tomorrow.

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

By Abdul Rashid in The Hague

RASHID: For fear of his or her life and the lives of family members, another protected witness has been announced by the Prosecution to testify against Charles Taylor in closed session.

This protected witness with the pseudo name TF1-360, brings to two those who do not want their identities disclosed to the public and the media.

Presiding Judge Teresa Doherty says the rule governing the protection of witnesses was adopted from Chamber I which is trying fighters of the AFRC (sic.), CDF and RUF in Freetown.

JUSTICE DOHERTY: The provisions of Rule 75(F) provide once protective measures have been ordered in respect of a witness or victim in any proceedings before the Court, such measures shall continue to have effect *mutatis mutandis* in any other proceedings before the Special Court, known as the second proceedings...

The Public Information Officer of the Special Court in The Hague, Solomon Moriba, says the closed session does not violate the rights of any of the parties, including the indicted former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor.

MORIBA: They should know that all the parties are represented. The Defence is represented in their full force. Of course the Prosecution, and the accused himself, is in court and has the right to confront those who are giving evidence against him.

RASHID: The Prosecution protected Witness TF1-360 will testify to the command structure of the RUF, training of RUF members in Liberia, use of Liberian personnel to train RUF members, the Accused's relationship with RUF leaders Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, and circumstances surrounding the departure of Sam Bockarie from Sierra Leone to Liberia.

A release from the Prosecution office says the witness will also testify to the purchase of arms by RUF from ULIMO in late 1996, abduction of UNAMSIL personnel, and the involvement of the Accused in the release of the abducted UNAMSIL personnel.

Charles Taylor faces eleven count charges for allegedly contributing to atrocities committed in Sierra Leone between November 30, 1996 and 18 January 2002. The trial is expected to last until 2010.

Abdul Rashid for Search for Common Ground and BBC World Service Trust, at The Hague.

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

By Joseph Cheeseman in The Hague

CHEESEMAN: For fear of his or her life and the lives of family members, another protected witness has been announced by the Prosecution to testify against Charles Taylor in closed session.

This protected witness with the pseudo name TF1-360, brings to two those who do not want their identities disclosed to the public and the media.

Presiding Judge Teresa Doherty says the rule governing protected witnesses was adopted from Chamber I which is trying fighters of the AFRC (sic.), the CDF – that's the Civil Defence Force (sic.) – and the RUF in Freetown.

JUSTICE DOHERTY: The majority decision of the Chamber is that an order was made in Trial Chamber I on the 14th of June 2006 which ordered, *inter alia*, one, that the testimony of protected...shall be heard entirely in closed session...We have not had any application to rescind, vary, augment put before us and therefore the provisions of the order of the 14th of June 2006 stand.

CHEESEMAN: The Public Information Officer of the Special Court in The Hague, Solomon Moriba, says the closed session does not violate the rights of any of the parties, including the indicted former Liberian president, Charles Taylor.

MORIBA: They should know that all the parties are represented. The Defence is represented in their full force. Of course the Prosecution, and the accused himself, is in court and has the right to confront those who are giving evidence against him.

CHEESEMAN: The Prosecution protected Witness TF1-360 will testify to the command structure of the RUF, training of RUF members in Liberia, use of Liberian personnel to train RUF members, the Accused's relationship with RUF leaders Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, and circumstances surrounding the departure of Sam Bockarie from Sierra Leone to Liberia.

A release from the Prosecution office says the witness will also testify to the purchase of arms by RUF from ULIMO in late 1996, the abduction of UNAMSIL personnel, and the involvement of the Accused in the release of the abducted UNAMSIL personnel.

Witness TF1-360 brings to ten the number of Prosecution witnesses that has appeared before the Special Court since the resumption of the trial of Charles Taylor on January 7.

Charles Taylor faces eleven count charges for allegedly contributing to atrocities committed in Sierra Leone between November 30, 1996 and 18 January 2002. The trial is expected to last until 2010.

This is Joseph Cheeseman reporting for the BBC World Service Trust and Search for Common Ground, from The Hague.

Star Radio (Liberia)

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

Second protected witness takes the stand against Taylor

Written by Wellington Geevon Smith

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

Another protected witness has been announced by the prosecution to testify against Charles Taylor in closed session.

This protected witness with the pseudo name TF1-360, brings to two those who do not want their identities disclosed to the public and the media.

Presiding Judge Teresa Doherty says the rule governing the protection of witnesses was adopted from Chamber One.

The spokesman of the Special Court in The Hague, Solomon Moriba says the closed session does not violate the rights of any of the parties.

The Prosecution Protected Witness TF1-360 will testify to the command structure of the RUF and training of RUF members in Liberia.

The witness will also testify on the use of Liberian personnel to train RUF members, Mr. Taylor's relationship with RUF leaders, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie.

The Trial of Charles Taylor website

Monday, 28 January 2008

<http://charlestaylortrial.org/>

Special Court continues in closed session

Posted by Webmaster on January 28, 2008

The trial of Charles Taylor before the Special Court for Sierra Leone continued in closed session this morning. The courtroom was locked with curtains drawn to hear the testimony of Prosecution witness, TF1-371.

We were informed by court personnel that the Prosecution was still conducting its direct examination of TF1-371, which began last Thursday afternoon. The Defense's cross-examination was expected to begin at some point this afternoon, also in closed session, and continue until at least tomorrow. We will resume our live-blog when the court returns to open session.

Cocorioko website

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

Special Court, NRA and Energy sector benefit from British

Written by Cocorioko Newspaper Limited

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

As President Ernest Koroma continues his state visit to the United Kingdom, the socio-economic and political benefits of the trip have started manifesting themselves, with the British government making some economic assistance to the country.

The financially-strapped Special Court of Sierra Leone, which has been trying those deemed as carrying the highest responsibilities for the atrocities committed during the Sierra Leone war, will receive U.S \$6 million (3 million British pounds). The money will help to boost the operations of the court which is presently trying the former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor in the Hague.

The British government has also planned to boost revenue collection in Sierra Leone by boosting the operations of the National Revenue Authority (NRA). Said the British Secretary of State for International Assistance, Mr. Douglas Alexander: "Sierra Leone has made huge progress since the civil war ended a decade ago, but the Government is struggling to raise enough revenue to fund basic services, like healthcare and education and is still heavily dependent on aid. The UK's support to the National Revenue Authority will increase domestic revenues by the equivalent of £10m a year from 2011, and will also decrease the cost of doing business in Sierra Leone. By modernising the way it does business, and increasing revenues, the government will have more money available to spend on providing healthcare, education and basic services to its citizens."

About the Sierra Leone energy sector, Mr. Alexander stated:

"I am pleased to announce that the UK is providing £20 million to support the building up of the energy sector in Sierra Leone. Our money, along with that of other donors will mean that electricity availability will increase at least ten-fold. It should provide a sustainable electricity supply to the one million residents of Freetown and provide lighting and power for health centres, water pumping stations, colleges and police stations. I'm delighted that the UK can help Sierra Leone as it travels along the road to prosperity."

Sierra Leoneans who talked to COCORIOKO today expressed delight at the commitment being demonstrated by the British government to help the new Sierra Leone government achieve its socio-economic and political reforms necessary to improve the lives of the people.

New Democrat (Liberia)
 Wednesday, 30 January 2008

Taylor Turns Witness For Gus

Ex-President Charles Taylor, in trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity, will testify in the appeal trial of his former business friend, the Dutchman, Gus Kouwenhoven.

Gus, known here as the Godfather, was convicted in 2006 of arms smuggling to Liberia. Taylor's testimony was announced by a spokesperson for the Dutch public prosecutor Monday.

Taylor, will give evidence on February 8 to a judge investigating the case of Gus Kouwenhoven in a closed session, the spokesperson added.

A Dutch court sentenced Kouwenhoven, a business associate of Taylor, to eight years in prison for arms smuggling but acquitted him of war crimes due to lack of evidence.

Both the prosecution and defence are appealing the ruling, with defence lawyers calling Taylor as a witness.

Also known as "Big Gus" in Liberia, the former executive of the Oriental Timber Corp and the Royal Timber Co was accused of selling arms in exchange for timber concessions in Liberia, in direct violation of a UN weapons embargo.

The embargo came into force during Liberia's civil war that spilled across borders, killed a quarter of a million people and spawned a generation of child soldiers.

Taylor's trial by a UN court on charges of orchestrating atrocities in Sierra Leone began in January.

His trial is being held in The Hague after fears it could stoke unrest in Sierra Leone.



GUS KOUWENHOVEN

The New People website

Monday, 28 January 2008

Charles Taylor to Testify at Big Gus' Appeal Hearing.

1.28.2008



FREETOWN - NEW PEOPLE CORRESPONDENT - Defence lawyers for 64 year old businessman Guus Kouwenhoven will call for former Liberian President, Charles Taylor to testify in closed session in the case of the appeal against the 8 year jail sentence for breaking a UN Arms embargo and smuggling but acquitted the Dutch businessman on charges of responsibility for crimes against humanity.

Taylor may testify on February 8 to a judge in closed session on the charges against his former ally, Guus, fondly known as "Big Gus" if Special court for Sierra Leone officials indicate whether Charles Taylor will be granted leave to testify in another court

Ms. Leppens, the court spokeswoman noted that if the go-ahead is received from the Special Court, Taylor will indeed give testimony in the trial of his former ally and business partner.

"Big Gus" Oriental Timber Corp. and the Royal Timber Co. were accused of funnelling arms to Charles Taylor's forces as he battled a number of insurgencies with a UN arms embargo. The weapons are thought to have been offloaded at the port of Buchanan in South eastern Liberia. His timber company is also thought to have used mercenaries who trained and fought alongside Taylor's forces as advisers. In spias accused of selling arms in exchange for timber concessions in Liberia, in direct violation of a U.N. weapons embargo.

Big Gus is accused of having a series of meetings with Charles Taylor at his White Flowers residence and of importing weapons from Eastern Europe. He is seen as a member of Taylor's network of shady businessmen who supplied him with weapons that wreaked misery in the Mano River Union area through 12 long years of war and destruction.

The Liberian Diaspora

Wednesday, 30 January 2008

As I See It 

With Reginald B. Goodridge, Sr.

“INSIDE WITNESSES” BAFFLE TAYLOR’S PROSECUTORS

It appears that the central link of the prosecution’s case against former Liberian President Charles Taylor in his crimes against humanity trial at the Hague is fraying at the edges as the so-called ‘inside witnesses’ are said to be creating a dilemma for the prosecution.

In its zeal to convict Taylor at all costs, the prosecution led by Steven Rapp has amassed dozens of witnesses either by coercion, coaxing or promises of some sort of reward if they tell all they ‘know’ about Taylor’s alleged collusion with the RUF in Sierra Leone and their gruesome atrocities.

Unfortunately for the prosecution, the testimony of the first set of ‘inside witnesses’, meaning those who allege to have been in the loop with Taylor (when he was leader of the NPFL and later President of Liberia) have fallen apart under intense cross-examination by defense lawyers.

The prosecution apparently made a deal with its ‘inside witnesses’ so that their testimony would be done in secrecy - without the challenge of facing former President Taylor.

The defense has argued against the secrecy testimony. And the defense case has been strengthened by the “inside witnesses” unwillingness to testify in secrecy.

More than that, the ‘inside witnesses’ prefer to testify in public so that they may be visibly at home in Liberia to either claim hero status or claim that because of their testimony they and their family face the wrath and repercussion of Taylor loyalists - hence, they believe that they can qualify for asylum in Europe or the United States.

In essence, the ‘inside witnesses’ are using the Taylor trial as their passport to emigrate to the United States or Europe after trying so hard and having failed to obtain visas for said emigration.

The prosecution is finding to their dismay and embarrassment that their so-called ‘inside witnesses’ told them one thing during the pre-trial interviews, and are now saying another thing under cross examination or alleging that the prosecution lied on them.

Everyone is waiting to find out what next the prosecution has up its sleeves.

[Note: The Liberian Diaspora is operated by Reginald Goodridge, former Information Minister in the Taylor government.]

The Liberian Diaspora

Wednesday, 30 January 2008

Is This Really Liberia?



Former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor finally goes to trial, not so much for what he might have done in the fourteen years when he led the NPFL and served as President of Liberia in the bloody civil crisis. He is being charged for something that others did in another civil war in Sierra Leone. However, his government and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia which he led as a rebel leader are both on trial at the on-going Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, while his compatriots of that era watch as casual spectators

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 29 January 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

Coup Suspect Gets Presidential Pardon

(National Chronicle, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer, The News, The Analyst, Heritage, New Democrat, The Parrot)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says the government will no longer pursue the treason trial of former transitional Speaker George Koukou and said she would file the necessary legal instrument to secure his release. Delivering her Annual Message Monday before a Joint Session of the National Legislature, the President said the clemency stems from numerous appeals to her office saying the decision to pardon the former Speaker is in line with the spirit of reconciliation.
- She cautioned Mr. Koukou to accept the pardon with the spirit in which it is given, to pursue his future endeavours in a peaceful manner, refraining from unlawful and illegal acts. As the other cases are more complex in evidence and at a more advanced state in the courts," the President said, adding that the judicial process will be allowed to run its course.
- Koukou along with several other Liberians were arrested last year and charged with plotting subversive activities against the Government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

President Suspends Tariff on Rice

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer, The News, The Analyst, Heritage, New Democrat)

- The media reports that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has proposed to suspend the US\$2 tax on a bag of rice for the remaining period of the fiscal year. Delivering her Annual Message to the joint session of the National Legislature Monday, President Sirleaf said her action was prompted by the increment in the price of rice and other basic commodities on the Liberian market.
- According to the President, the suspension will remain in force until the committee set up to determine the cause of the continuous increment in the price of basic commodities on the local market releases its report. Rice importers have called for an increase in the price of rice on the local market. The President said the reduction is being done on an interim basis by an Executive Order until the National Legislature have time to consider the over all tax reform proposal which is being finalized for submission to them.

Treason Trial Verdict Expected today....Hundreds to Storm Temple of Justice

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The News, The Analyst, Heritage)

- The verdict in the treason trial involving former Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) General Charles Julu and Colonel Andrew Dorbor is expected to be handed down today. The verdict of the jury follows final legal arguments held yesterday at the Criminal Court "A" at the Temple of Justice. In their final arguments, State Lawyers urged the jury to take into consideration the historical past of Charles Julu in passing their verdict.
- They told the jury that it must acknowledge that Defendant Dorbor did not deny going to Ivory Coast which is a sign of admission of guilt. For their part, the defense lawyers, headed by Cllr. Dempster Brown informed the jury that to prove a treason case, there must be an insider witness to "prove or disprove" the case. They said the state failed to produce a fruit of the crime obtained from the Ivorian security and therefore the accused should be set free.

World Bank President Visits Liberia Today

(New Democrat, The Analyst)

- The President of the World Bank (WB) Group, Mr. Robert Zoëlick, arrives in the country today for a two-day visit. Mr. Zoëlick's visit here will focus on the development challenges facing the country and its efforts to promote growth over poverty and improve the Liberia people's living standard. During his visit to Liberia, Mr. Zoëlick will talk to beneficiaries of community projects, meet Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and participate in a roundtable with Finance Ministers from Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Togo to discuss the Bank's support to post conflict countries and lessons learned from its work in Liberia.
- He will meet with donor representatives and discuss the Bank Group's contribution to Liberia. Mr. Zoëlick is also expected to meet with the leadership of the National Legislature including the President Pro Tempore of the Liberian Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and members of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank. The group will be a mix of government and opposition party representatives.

South African Company Wins Major Bid in Liberia

(National Chronicle, The News)

- A South African company, Delta Mining Consolidated Limited has won the bid for the Western Cluster which covers a chain of mountains in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties. President Johnson Sirleaf said the company won the bid with an indicated potential investment of US\$1.6 billion saying the bidding process followed a vigorous and professional exercise involving four government entities.
- This pronouncement has made Delta Mining Consolidated Limited the single largest investment in Liberia followed by Mittal Steel. According to Madam Sirleaf, the inter-ministerial group has also started the process of bid evaluation for Bong Mines in Bong County.

Radio Summary

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

Plans Underway to Rename Presidential Guard Service

- Making the disclosure during her "State of the Union" Address on Monday, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said plans are underway to change the named of the Special Security Service (SSS) to the Executive Protection Service to revolutionize the image of the Presidential Guard and limit its scope of operations.

President Sirleaf Grants Former Transitional Speaker Clemency

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

South African Company Wins Major Bid

(Star Radio)

President Sirleaf Proposes Suspension of Tariff on Rice

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth FM and ELBC)

Jury Poised to Release Verdict on Treason Trial Today

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth FM and ELBC)

Star Radio (Liberia)

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

Dr. Boley prepares to appear before truth commission

Written by Wellington Geevon Smith

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

The leader of the defunct Liberia Peace Council has expressed his preparedness to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at anytime.

Dr. George Borley said the TRC on-going hearings are recipes for healing the wounds of the nation and reconciling its citizens.

Dr. Borley said the process was necessary and it is not prudent for Liberians to render it useless.

The former LPC leader stressed that Liberians must stay the course to foster peace, reconciliation, security and economic recovery.

He however, indicated that the TRC process would serve the country well only by maintaining what he called home-grown posture void of undue external influence and manipulation.

Dr. Borley also urged the TRC to be mindful of people he referred to as collaborators whose conduct could bring its integrity into disrepute.