

**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, 1 February 2008

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

Special Court Forum Hears News / <i>The Peep!</i>	Page 3
Charles Taylor trial continues in Hague / <i>Cotton Tree News</i>	Page 4

### International News

Interview with President Ernest Bai Koroma / <i>BBC Hard Talk</i>	Pages 5-6
(Untitled Profile of Charles Taylor) / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Page 7
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 8-9
Ex-ICTR Prosecutor Blasts Genocidal Regime Leaders / <i>New Times</i>	Page 10
At TRC Hearing - Lutheran Church Massacre Survivor Testifies / <i>The Inquirer</i>	Pages 11-12
"International Conspiracy Caused Doe's Death", Says Prince Johnson / <i>Star Radio</i>	Page 13
Annual Report to the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict / <i>UN</i>	Pages 14-15

## The Peep!

Friday, 1 February 2008

### **Special Court Forum hears news**

Two civil society activists who were present at the trial of Charles Taylor in the Hague have said proceedings so far have been cordial.

“Prosecution and defence are working in an amicable atmosphere”. Sulaiman Jabati and Marian Samu told civil society groups earlier this week.

They noted that the former Liberian president’s demeanour has been cool and calm during proceedings.

## Cotton Tree News

Thursday, 31 January 2008

### **Charles Taylor trial continues in Hague**

Written by Francis Sowa

The Prosecution has announced another protected witness to testify against Charles Taylor in closed session. The protected witnesses say they are afraid for their personal security and family members. The second protected witness is TF1-360. Judge Teresa Doherty is the Presiding Judge. She said the rule governing the protection of witnesses was adopted from Chamber One in Sierra Leone. Solomon Moriba is the Public Information Officer of the Special Court in the Hague. He said the closed session did not violate the rights of any of the parties, including Charles Taylor. The Prosecution's protected witness will testify on the command structure of the RUF and their training in Liberia. He will also talk on Charles Taylor's relationship with RUF leaders, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, A release from the Office of the Prosecution says the witness will also testify to the purchase of arms by RUF from ULIMO in late 1996 and abduction of UNAMSIL personnel. It could be recalled that last week, a family member of prosecution witness Vamuyan Sheriff said they were harassed by unknown men in Monrovia.

## BBC Hard Talk

Thursday, 31 January 2008

Excerpt

### Interview with President Ernest Bai Koroma

PRESIDENT KOROMA: ...the consolidation of the peace is going on.

ZEINAB BADAWI: Is the healing process really going on, because you have your justice system, as well you've got your war crimes tribunal which is trying to make sure that those that are responsible for the atrocities are being dealt with, and you also have your Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But shouldn't you put [trials] people on trial to one side while you reconcile?

KOROMA: Well we cannot go on that. I mean we are already, it is a fait accompli at the moment. We are going on with the Special Court and the TRC. But the important thing is for us to focus on the healing process.

BADAWI: It gets in the way. The pursuit of justice gets in the way, doesn't it Mr. President, it reopens old wounds instead of trying [indistinct]

KOROMA: (Interrupting) We have managed that. We have managed that. That is why we've had successful elections. All of what you're saying was moving on before the elections.

BADAWI: (Interrupting) So when you see Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia, on trial at the war crimes tribunal which is taking place in The Hague – UN backed, but it's a Sierra Leonean operation really – and you look at Liberia where Charles Taylor was actually president, they sit there "Let us just pursue truth and reconciliation, and let's put this idea of a war crimes trial on the back burner – we don't want to set one up." Very different from what you've done in Sierra Leone, and I ask you whether you think that's a good thing or not.

KOROMA: No, I cannot comment on that now because we have passed that stage. We already have the Special Court legislation on before I took over office, and the TRC. What we are doing as a government is to ensure that we implement the recommendations of the TRC as quickly as possible and at the same time continue with the healing process. My responsibility is to keep the country united.

BADAWI: But you must have a view on this war crimes tribunal it's very expensive...

KOROMA: (Interrupting) I...

BADAWI: (Interrupting) \$90 million dollars...

KOROMA: I had a view before now, and we expressed the view in Parliament. We spoke about it, but it is now law.

BADAWI: But it's gonna cost \$90 million. Taylor's legal bill is \$100,000 a month.

KOROMA: It is the law now. I cannot come here and undermine the process.

BADAWI: But [indistinct] how many schools and hospitals and clinics could \$90 million build in Sierra Leone? So many, the people are poor.

KOROMA: Our approach now is to emphasise on that – the social issues that will bring us out of poverty; the economic issues that will bring us out of poverty. That is my focus because I cannot reverse the process.

BADAWI: But it sounds like you're not that dedicated to it, really, and perhaps you think the money...

KOROMA: I am moving forward with my social programmes.

-SNIP-

## BBC World Service Trust

Thursday, 31 January 2008

By Abdul Rashid at The Hague

Charles Ghankay McArthur Taylor, the man who exerted so much power over the West African state of Liberia as president for six consecutive years, now sits in the dock at an international criminal court with uncertainty about what lies ahead of him. Since the resumption of his war crimes trial in The Hague, he's often seen struggling between courage, bravery, and despair.

Mr. Taylor, who was initially cheerful, became bewildered when two of his former bodyguards, Varmuyan Sherif and Abu Keita brutally bit the arms that once fed them. As Sherif and Keita painted gruesome pictures of Taylor's alleged link with the RUF during their testimonies, the war crimes indictee lost his cheerful countenance. At one point he drank water to get rid of the bitterness caused by amazement.

The former Liberian leader, always smartly attired, does not control his own movement. He has two international police standing over him even while he is in the dock. Taylor often brushes aside his despair and assists his Defence team with notes containing questions to the Prosecution witness on the stand. Sometimes the lawyers ask for permission from the Judges to consult their client.

Charles Taylor made history in 1997 when he was elected President of Liberia from a crowded list of Liberian warlords.

Charles Taylor was born in 1948 to a family of Americo-Liberians, the elite group that grew out of the freed slaves that founded the country in the 19th century. Like many Americo-Liberians, he studied in the United States,

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

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries  
31 January 2008**

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

**Newspaper Summary**

**Eyewitness Claims ECOMOG Masterminded Death of Slain Liberian President**

(Daily Observer, The Informer)

- Jeff Neeray, an Israeli-trained officer of the disbanded Special Anti-Terrorist Unit (SATU) of former President Samuel K. Doe, has given an eyewitness account of how the president (Doe) was captured and killed by the former Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) rebels in 1990. Testifying at the ongoing public hearings held by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Wednesday, Neeray explained that on September 9, 1990, the former President received a communication from the Commander of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), Gen. Albert Quainoo informing him that former Nigerian President, Ibrahim Babangida had invited him to Nigeria for political asylum.
- Neeray told the hearings that following the communication they accompanied the late President to the Freeport of Monrovia where they were disarmed by ECOMOG troops. He said not long after their arrival at the port, the Leader of INPFL, Prince Johnson and his men entered the port, captured the late President and opened sporadic fire at his (Doe) entourage killing most of them. Speaking further, eyewitness Neeray said the former President was later taken away by Mr. Johnson towards his INPFL base in Caldwell. The Informer reports that during his testimony, he accused the ECOMOG General of walking away after Doe's capture and blamed Gen. Quainoo for partially masterminding the death of the late President.

**World Bank President Renews Bank's Commitment to Liberia**

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

- The President of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, says in spite of the many challenges that have divided Liberia and shattered its economy, the country is still going strong in its reforms and economic recovery programs. Speaking during a Press Roundtable, Mr. Zoellick said he was deeply impressed over the level of work being done in the country, but cautioned that there still remain a lot of challenges.
- The World Bank President described the country as being at a key transit point, moving from emergency to deeper stages of reforms. He noted that President Sirleaf's priorities are in line with the Bank's development objectives and said the development of the country's fiscal management and the private sector as well as good governance and the rule of law are conditions that continue to attract support for the country's development programs.
- President Johnson Sirleaf and the World Bank President earlier participated in one of three regional consultations taking place in the country. Wednesdays' consultations in Kakata, Margibi County, are aimed at drawing up local development agenda to be incorporated in the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

**Court Launches Probe into Claims of Bribe Taking at Treason Trial**

(New Democrat, The Informer, The News, Liberian Express)

- The Presiding Judge of Criminal Court "A" at the Temple of Justice has launched a full-scale investigation into bribery allegation against jurors in the treason case involving retired Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) General Charles Julu and Col. Andrew Dorbor.

- Judge Charles Williams launched the probe yesterday, a day following the handing down of a guilty verdict against the two former senior military officers. The Defense Counsels however excepted to the verdict alleging juror tampering to hand down a guilty verdict.
- They accused the juror of bribe taking and asked that the verdict be dismissed. The Liberian Express reports that both the jurors and the Judge traded accusations of bribe taking after the verdict was announced on Tuesday leading to the eruption of chaos in the courtroom. Jurors claimed that Judge Williams attempted bribing them, a claim that he has rejected. Earlier Judge Williams said the jurors could not be trusted saying they might have been bribed.

### **LPRC to Construct US\$500m Refinery - Grand Bassa Identified as Site for Project**

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

- The Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) has identified Grand Bassa County for the construction of a US\$500 million refinery to replace the existing one in Gardnersville which lies in ruins. According to the Managing Director of the LPRC, Mr. Harry Greaves, the old refinery site in Gardnersville outside Monrovia is no more useful saying what remains can not be used for modern purpose and that they have been authorized to scrap the facility.
- On the rehabilitation of the current storage facilities at the LPRC Bushrod Island site, Mr. Greaves said Liberia needs modern storage or risk losing in revenue.
- Mr. Greaves said bidding would start in March and a rehabilitation contract would be awarded in May this year. Speaking at a media forum, the LPRC Managing Director said the storage rehabilitation project, when awarded, would last for three to four years. Mr. Greaves disclosed that the LPRC would finance the project due to Liberia's inability to obtain a credit loan. The media forum focused on where the current administration met the LPRC, where it is today and where it intends to go and how to get there.

### **Radio Summary**

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

#### **LPRC to Construct US\$500 Million Refinery**

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

#### **World Bank President Impressed over Country's Progress**

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

#### **Defense Lawyer Testifies in Juror Bribe Taking Probe**

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

#### **UNMIL SRSG Says Inclusion Vital to Success of Development**

- Speaking at a two-day consultative workshop of the county development agenda on Wednesday in Kakata, Margibi county, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Løj, identified inclusion and participation as critical elements for the way forward if the country is to break from its violent past.
- Ms. Løj said the involvement of the people in the "bottom-up" process of consultation in the formation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) is laudable in responding to their needs and said there can be no better approach for ensuring the success of sustainability that would let the people express and decide what their most urgent needs are.
- The County Development agenda is geared towards carving out the most urgent needs of the people as it relates to government PRS paper.

## The New Times (Rwanda)

Thursday, 31 January 2008

### **Ex-ICTR Prosecutor Blasts Genocidal Regime Leaders**

By James Munyaneza  
Bali

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone Stephen J. Rapp has blasted the pre-1994 Rwandan government leaders for their corrupt tendencies, which he said contributed to the Rwanda Genocide.

Rapp, who previously served as a prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), is among the officials and delegates from over one hundred countries attending the ongoing the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) conference in Bali, Indonesia.

"In the case of Rwanda, evidence pointed to a narrow group that controlled state power, and used to place its leading members at the head of parastatal enterprises, where they could receive corrupt rewards," Rapp told delegates.

He added: "When these leaders were threatened with the loss of this wealth in a civil war, and then by the 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 the problems."

About one thousand delegates from more than hundred countries have turned up for the week- long conference, which got underway on Monday.

Meanwhile, Rwanda, a signatory to the UNCAC, is among the African countries not represented at the high-level conference. Earlier, conference organisers said they were expecting a Rwandan delegation but until yesterday it hadn't showed up in Bali.

When contacted yesterday, the Ombudsman Tito Rutaremara said he didn't have details about the country's representation at the conference.

## The Inquirer (Liberia)

Thursday, 31 January 2008

### At TRC Hearing - Lutheran Church Massacre Survivor Testifies

By C. Winnie Saywah

Amidst doubts that there were no survivors from the Lutheran Church Massacre, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission public hearing has brought to the fore a survivor who has testified about her experience.

Annie Tennih, 40, testified how she pretended to be dead after soldiers loyal to former President Samuel K. Doe entered the compound at about 10 p.m. and opened sporadic firing which led to the death of the scores of people who had gone to seek refuge there.

Annie, who was the second witness, took the stand three hours late, an unusual situation for which the TRC is responsible. She narrated that as the result of the firing, she sustained bullets in her foot, right hand and neck.

She said the soldiers left with the notion that all those seeking refuge in the church were dead including the pastor but she was alive by the mercy of God even though she was bleeding profusely.

The witness said her husband, Samuel Larimi, was one of those killed due to the massacre. She explained that it all started when they went to seek refuge at the United Nations Compound in Sinkor but were later advised to transfer to the Lutheran Compound where everyone in the Sinkor community thought was the safest place then.

She explained that after the onslaught, the next day workers of the Red Cross went and decided to clean and carry away the corpses from the church but to their surprise, few persons were still alive. Annie said the workers then took them to the Catholic Hospital for treatment but said while they were at the hospital; the soldiers went there and started to shoot at patients apparently, to make sure that no one survived.

Annie explained that by then she was breathing slowly as though she was dead or about to die due to the heavy loss of blood so the soldiers took her to be dead already and did not shoot her.

She said the next day, the doctors who ran for their dear lives returned and took those who were still alive to Phebe Hospital in Bong County where she stayed and survived.

Paul Sherman, the last witness for the open session of the hearing, explained how he was tortured and as the result of thirst, he drank the urine of his friend but he was not satisfied therefore he was constrained to drink his own urine while in detention by the fighters.

Paul, 36, said that it was in August, 1990 when the former President, Charles Taylor instructed his men to arrest foreign nationals and they were taken from Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount County to Bomi County where they were kept hostage.

The witness who said that he is a half Ghanaian explained of how Taylor even ordered the killing of citizens from ECOWAS. He said 75 persons were killed and over 1,000 ECOWAS citizens were victimized in the process.

Other witnesses who testified before the commissioners at the 13th day public hearings were Rev. Tijili Tyee and James Thomas while one person was allowed to give his testimony in camera, thereby bringing the number of witnesses to five.

Meanwhile, the Montserrado County public hearing is expected to adjourn for recess next tomorrow with over half of the 88 statements for the county already heard. The process is to be taken to all of the 14 counties in the next four months after which time it would resume in Montserrado County for conclusion.

## Star Radio (Liberia)

Thursday, 31 January 2008

### **"International conspiracy caused Doe's death", says Prince Johnson**

Written by Wellington Geevon Smith

Nimba County Senator Prince Johnson says the death of President Samuel Doe was an act of international conspiracy. Senator Johnson said the conspiracy involved all politicians in the Country. The Nimba County lawmaker said the politicians met in The Gambia where they formed an interim government headed by Dr. Amos Sawyer.

Senator Johnson named other top African leaders who attended the meeting in The Gambia as ex-AU Chairman, Yoweri Museveni, former ECOWAS chairman, Sir Dwada Jawara and ailing Catholic Archbishop Michael Francis.

He said these politicians used him as an instrument to remove President Doe in order for Amos Sawyer to take over.

Senator Johnson spoke at a news conference where he warned the Truth and Reconciliation to stop all forms of witch-hunt against him.

Senator Johnson said statement by the TRC that it would use its subpoena powers on him is a form of witch-hunt.

He said the TRC was hunting him on the death of Samuel Doe while leaving others who killed President William Tolbert and thirteen officials of his government.

The Nimba lawmaker vowed to resist in the strongest terms all forms of witch hunt by the TRC against him.

Meanwhile, a official of the Press Union of Liberia said the public relations section of the truth commission is slipping into politics.

PUL Assistant Secretary General Henry Flomo said TRC spokesman Richmond Anderson is going too harsh on Senator Prince Johnson.

Mr. Flomo said continuous public comment by Mr. Anderson that Senator Johnson would be subpoenaed is unhealthy for the TRC process.

He said the TRC spokesman is unduly making Senator Johnson famous knowing that the TRC has the powers to subpoena anyone if required.

Mr. Flomo cautioned Mr. Anderson against personalizing the TRC process by reacting to any comment by Senator Johnson.

TRC spokesman Richmond Anderson recently told Star radio Senator Johnson would be subpoenaed if he does not voluntarily appear for public hearings.

Mr. Anderson said the TRC and Liberians in general want to know how President Samuel Doe was killed.

## United Nations

Thursday, 31 January 2008

Press Release

### **Annual Report to the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict**

Ms. Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict presented the Annual Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict (A/32/609-S/2007/757) during a press conference today. It will be examined by the Security Council during its Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict that should take place on 12 February 2008.

The report highlights progress in the implementation of SC Resolution 1612 and its monitoring and reporting mechanism. It includes information on compliance in ending recruitment and use of children by armed groups and other grave violations. Its annexes contain a naming and shaming list of parties (states and non state actors) committing these grave abuses. The report also raises concern about a number of other situations of concern and cross-cutting issues that seem to have worsened around the world due to the changing nature of conflict.

“Thanks to the commitment of the Security Council and the sustained political will on this issue, the monitoring mechanism on violations against children in armed conflict in place is leading to positive results”, announced Ms. Coomaraswamy. She referred to the de-listing of parties in Cote d’Ivoire from the annexes of the report and to progress on development of action plans to demobilize children from armed groups in Uganda, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Myanmar.

However, recruitment and use of children is taking place in 13 situations of concern including Burundi, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda and, more lately, in Afghanistan and Central African Republic.

The Special Representative confirmed initial evidence that due to the changing nature of warfare, children are increasingly suffering from the consequences of armed conflict. The Secretary General’s report raises serious concerns about a series of cross-cutting issues such as the increasing cases of recruitment or re-recruitment of children across borders and in refugee or internally displaced camps due to lack of security around the camps in DRC, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Chad. She also said that more support should be given to the reintegration and the rehabilitation of children who have been associated with armed groups to avoid these re-recruitments and to ensure proper reintegration in their communities.

The use of various forms of sexual violence and gender-based violence as a weapon of war against children has become alarming. For example, in the DRC, 60% of the recorded cases involved victims between the age of 11 and 17.

Increasingly, children are being detained for alleged association with armed groups in violation of international standards.

Systematic and deliberate attacks on schoolchildren, teachers and school buildings have escalated in certain countries.

The Secretary-General also deplores the use of indiscriminate weapons such as cluster munitions during attacks in areas of civilian concentration, which has a severe impact on civilians, particularly children,

even long after the conflict ended. Children are caught in the crossfire in too many situations as victims of indiscriminate mortar shelling of residential areas, of bomb attacks or suicide cars bombs.

“The fight against impunity through accountability for perpetrators of grave violations against children is crucial to halt these unacceptable acts. Major milestones are being set by the Special Court of Sierra Leone and the International Criminal Court in this regard but much more still needs to be done”, said Ms. Coomaraswamy.

The report calls for effective targeted measures against parties to armed conflict who continue to systematically commit grave violations against children in defiance of recommendations by the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and of Security Council resolutions. Member States concerned also should take effective action to bring to justice individuals responsible through national justice systems. The Security Council is encouraged to refer to the International Criminal Court, for investigation and prosecution, for violations against children in armed conflict that fall within its jurisdiction.

Ms. Coomaraswamy stated that the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism set in place by SC Resolution 1612 is unique and is beginning to show positive results. “Equal attention should, however, be given to all situations of concern and the 6 grave violations, especially sexual violence. We must also ensure that all parties listed in the naming and shaming list begin, as a matter of urgency, preparing action plans in collaboration the UN Country Teams in order to halt violations of children in armed conflict”, she concluded.