

**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:

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

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

Local News

Salone Diamonds are Conflict-Free...VP Sumana / *Concord Times* Page 3

International News

(Untitled) / *BBC World Service Trust* Pages 4-5

Liberia: Cobby Supports War Crime Demonstration / *The Inquirer* Page 6

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / *UNMIL* Pages 7-9

Liberia's Musical Sensation Admits He Was A Taylor Rebel / *VOA* Pages 10-11

Dutch prosecutor: 20 yrs for Kouwenhoven / *Radio Netherlands* Page 12

Children as Terrorists: Wrong to Train, Wrong to Charge / *Jurist* Pages 13-15

Concord Times
Wednesday, 13 January 2008

Si Leone diamonds are conflict-free

... VP Sumana

By Olusegun Ogundeji

While addressing participants at the Third International Rough Diamond Conference in Israel yesterday, Vice President Samuel Sam-Sumana touted that diamonds exported out of Sierra Leone are conflict-free.

"We are taking steps to restore growth in our country. We adhere closely to the Kimberley Process. All of the diamonds we export are conflict free," he stressed.

He said he had already informed the Managing Director of Israel Diamond Institute Group (IDI) Eli Avidar in a recent meeting that Sierra Leone aspires to strengthen its

diamond industry. "The current atmosphere in Sierra Leone encourages foreign investment. In the past seven years, we have enjoyed quietness in Sierra Leone. This was expressed in the peaceful transition of government last September," the Vice President noted.

Speaking further on foreign investment, Sam-Sumana noted that diamonds constitute 90% of Sierra Leone's revenue from export and many people can be saved from poverty through the diamond industry.

"Much depends on us and our ability to attract foreign investment and diamond traders. Sierra Leone recognizes the

importance of private investors - they are in fact a significant part of our business plan. The aim is the creation of a supportive, stable and attractive business environment."

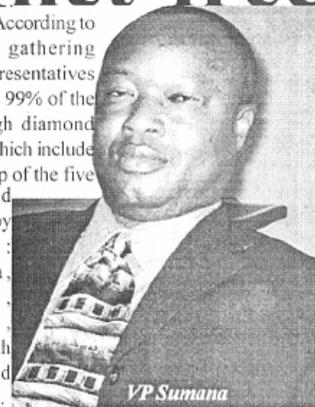
The Vice President referred to his government's reexamination of all of the country's mining agreements saying: "Our aim is not to arouse difficulties but to ensure that the agreements are

fair and ensure that the people of Sierra Leone receive their rightful share.

"We encourage international companies to develop industries and mining in the country. The kind of enterprises that will create added value and job opportunities for our people."

The Third International Rough Diamond Conference started on February 11th and ended

on the 12th. According to IDI, the gathering featured representatives of more than 99% of the world's rough diamond production which include the leadership of the five largest world producers (by value): Botswana, Russia, Canada, Angola, South Africa and Sierra Leone.



VP Sumana

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 12 February 2008

By Joseph Cheeseman at The Hague

CHEESEMAN: The Gambian testifying against Charles Taylor says the most dangerous group used by the accused former Liberian President in the Liberian Civil war was the Strike Force Marine.

Suwandi Camara is a linkage and an insider witness testifying to Taylor's alleged contribution to what the Prosecution called "joint criminal enterprise" with the RUF.

Suwandi, who said he was a Colonel in the Special Security Service, the SSS, in Liberia during Taylor's presidency, testified that the former NPFL leader used the Strike Force Marine whenever he wanted to undertake a quick and desperate operation.

He said the Strike Force Marine had no sympathy for human beings. Suwandi, who also testified that he was a former instructor at the Gbartala Cobra Base in Bong County, said the Strike Force Marine killed indiscriminately using the motto "Maximum Death and Destruction at a Minimum Time".

The Defence team of Charles Taylor continues its cross-examination of the linkage or insider witness, Suwandi Camara, pointing out contradictions between the witness's previous interviews with investigators of the Prosecution and his testimony in open court.

The Prosecution recorded that Suwandi arrived in Libya in 1988, but in his testimony the witness said he arrived in Libya in 1989. The Prosecution eleventh witness indicated that the information recorded by the Prosecution was not correct. The Prosecution record showed that Suwandi stayed in Mataba in Libya while he was in that country, but the witness said he visited his leader at Mataba, but he never stayed there. He said Mataba was a hotel reserved for mafia, terrorists, and crooks from all over the world.

COUNSEL: Was this read back to you at the end of the interview?

CAMARA: It's possible that they read it to me, but I don't remember. What I remember, I remember telling them that I had a training in Dr. Mani's room at Mataba

COUNSEL: [Indistinct], is it?

CAMARA: I didn't say that I was staying in Mataba.

COUNSEL: You've said they've got that wrong?

CAMARA: Saying that I was housed in Mataba? That was a mistake. The rest is true.

COUNSEL: They read it back to you, you would have corrected that mistake, wouldn't you?

CAMARA: Yes, I would have corrected it.

CHEESEMAN: On direct examination, the Prosecution Gambian witness said he first met Charles Taylor in Mataba, Libya. But the Defence Lawyer, Terry Munyard, trying to impeach the credibility of the witness, said Suwandi did see Charles Taylor in Libya.

CAMARA: Taylor, the person you are defending, knows what I'm saying. What I'm saying, Taylor knows very well what I'm saying. Taylor was at that time in Libya. Despite the fight in Liberia, Taylor left Liberia and went to Libya. Burkina Faso also.

COUNSEL: And he was in Libya in December 1989, leading into January 1990. Is that what you're telling this Court?

CAMARA: I didn't tell you that. I told you it was between December to January 1990. That's what I told you. I didn't tell you that Taylor was there at that time. But I saw Taylor, I told you at what time I saw Taylor in Libya.

CHEESEMAN: A strong argument ensued between Suwandi and the Defence Lawyer Terry Munyard over who established the Lofa Defence Force in Liberia. The Defence Team denied that it was Charles Taylor who organized the Lofa Defence Force. Instead, the Defence told the court the citizens of Lofa County that organized LDF.

CAMARA: Our operational defence force, the ones headed by Charles Taylor?

COUNSEL: Well the Lofa Defence Force was set up by local Lofa citizens, wasn't it? That's right, isn't it, Mr. Camara?

CAMARA: It started off according to me, who created the LDF, the Lofa Defence Force. So it was not the Lofa citizens.

COUNSEL: So you disagree that ULIMO had control of this area in 1993?

CAMARA: We had a fight with ULIMO until 1994.

COUNSEL: ULIMO were winning and controlling the area, weren't they?

CAMARA: No. If you say the whole Lofa was in the hands of ULIMO, I disagree with you.

The Defence cross-examination of the Prosecution Gambian witness continues on Wednesday.

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

The Inquirer (Liberia)

Tuesday, 12 February 2008

Liberia: Cobby Supports War Crime Demonstration

The National Chairman of the Coalition of Political Parties Youths (COPPY), Mr. Daniel T. Fassa is calling on the Government of Liberia (GOL), to allow the planned peaceful demonstration by the group of citizens who are advocating the establishment of a war crime court for Liberia.

The COPPY Chairman said a war crime court is intended to prosecute and punish war criminals in Liberia who are presently masquerading as decent citizens.

Mr. Fassa observed that Liberians have begun to reduce the hearing at the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) to ridicule by half hearted and insincere utterances that do not resemble a worthy national undertaking.

According to a release quoting the COPPY Chairman, the concerns raised by the group calling for the war crime court are germane to Liberia's national healing because, unlike the TRC hearings, the war crime court, when established will have the judicial power to indict, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of atrocities committed during the civil war which lasted for almost two decades.

'Moreover, this democratic government under the Unity Party (UP) Flag Bearer, Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf should not be seen as an obstacle to the free expression of views, such as those that are expressed by the group calling for the war crimes court', the release said. The release said the need to establish the war crimes court in Liberia is being accentuated by the pretensions of well-known war criminals in the midst who refuse or ignore to appear before the TRC hearings in order to confess.

"This attitude of the war criminals is supported by the call of the TRC for voluntary confessions," the release said.

Only a judicial forum such as a war crime court, according to Mr. Fassa, can compel these individuals to face the realities and consequences of the inhumane acts they committed on their fellow Liberians in the name of liberation.

This is why the planned demonstration by the war crime court group is necessary to generate public and international support for their cause which is in the national interest.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
12 February 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

President Sirleaf Challenges New Army to Respect Authority, Rule of Law

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

- The media reports that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has challenged officers of the new Liberian army to respect "constituted authority and the rule of law. President Sirleaf told the soldiers that the Liberian people have high expectations of the new army and urged them not to let the people down.
- Speaking at celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the President who is also Commander -in- Chief of the army thanked the U.S Government for "taking the primary responsibility for the training of the new AFL" and also lauded the roles played by China, Nigeria and other partners.
- The President said strength is not measured on the force of arms alone but through creating a "strong economy and a vibrant democracy." While acknowledging the military's prime responsibility to "secure our borders and coastlines," she said they must also be "development oriented, as well as technically trained to carry out their constitutional mandate."
- President Sirleaf said that members of the armed forces must be prepared to extend medical help, to engage in agricultural projects, including growing their own food, and generally to contribute to Liberia's development. The new army is being trained by DynCorp, a private security firm hired by the U.S Government which has to date trained 1,131 soldiers, more than half of the 2,000 expected to be trained.

Margibi By-Elections Set for Today

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

- Residents of District Number Four in Margibi County will today go to the polls in a by-election to fill the vacant slot created by the death of Fletcher Chideryou.
- According to the National Elections Commission (NEC), over 26,000 ballots were already in the country for distribution to the 58 polling stations across the 31 precincts in the district and said over 24,000 eligible voters are expected to vote in today's by-election.
- The Analyst reports that the Elections Commission has warned against violence during the conduct of the elections.
- In a statement issued yesterday in Monrovia, NEC said since 2005, Liberia is emerging as a shining example of free, fair and transparent elections in the sub-region and said Liberians cannot afford to lose this credit by engaging in violence during the electoral exercise. NEC said it is of the hope that the candidates in today's election would exhibit political tolerance.

Seven- Man PPCC Panel Inducted to Review Complaints

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

- A seven-man panel constituted by the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) to review complaints arising from bidding process has been inducted into office. The Complaints, Appeals and Review Panel (CARP), with members from the legal profession, the business community and civil society groups were inducted recently for a 3-year term.

- The Panel will hear and review complaints in accordance with Part VIII of the act establishing the Public Procurement and Concession Commission. Those inducted were Cllr. Beyan Howard, Chairmen, Cllr. Pearl Brown Bull and Attorney Eric B. Morlu. Others are, David Jallah, Massaquoi M. Morlu, Martin Kollie and Commissioner Esther W, Paegar who represents the commission on the panel.

Radio Summary

Local Media – Star Radio *(News culled today from website 9:00am)*

Police Arrest Guardian of Suicide victim - Second autopsy report says deceased was strangled to death

- Police in Monrovia have arrested the guardian of a teenager, Angel Tobga, who reportedly hanged herself in the bathroom of her guardian.
- Mr. Hans Williams, his wife and all occupants of his house were arrested today. But Mr. Williams said more than 60 police officers stormed his residence without any arrest warrant. They were arrested few hours before the Ministry of Justice released the second autopsy report which indicates that the teenager was strangled to death and did not hang herself as has been speculated.
- Hans Williams had pre-empted a recent autopsy performed by a Cuban Pathologist which he said would have indicted him. Radio Veritas says the management of a local funeral service is likely to be called in for questioning for supposedly tempering with the body. There has been continuous public outcry over the delay in making the autopsy report public.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Radio Veritas)

American Philanthropist Expresses Concern over Slow Projects Implementation in Liberia

- An American philanthropist and founder of the Soros Foundation says he's concerned about the slow pace of implementing projects in Liberia.
- Mr. George Soros told reporters it is difficult to make speedy progress even with all the goodwill.
- Mr. Soros who has been checking on his projects in the Country said the paper works and planning stages take far too long to complete.
- He is currently supporting capacity building programs in Liberia, the TRC, and the Liberia Education Trust. He has committed five million dollars to education on the condition that other countries will contribute fifteen million.
- Even though the money was committed nearly a year ago, it has not been disbursed as the paper works are still being done. He wants the planning process to be speeded up to get a teachers' training college functioning as an initial project.

OSI Upbeat about Liberia's TRC

- The President of the Open Society Initiative (OSI) has expressed optimism that Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) will make significant headways in the country.
- Mr. Aryeh Neier said the fact that perpetrators give statements without requesting amnesty was a major gain.
- He described the decision by perpetrators to testify without amnesty as an advance over the South African TRC process. Mr. Neier believes the TRC would foster reconciliation because the perpetrators' action demonstrates a sense of remorse.
- The TRC has ended its public hearings in Monrovia and is expected to conduct public hearings across the Country till the end of July.

School Principal Held in Connection with Man's death in Central Liberia

- Police in the central Liberian town of Gbarnga have held the Principal of the St. Peter's Episcopal School, Mr. Edward Fayah, in police custody in connection with the death of a man.
- Police on Monday discovered the body of a 20-year old man, Augustine Golotor, in a stationary shop on the GST road in Gbarnga.

- The actual cause of his death has not been established. The deceased has been living with Mr. Fayiah over three years.
- This is not the first time that Mr. Fayiah has been arrested in connection with ritualistic activities.

Chiefs call for attention over discovery of skeleton

- Local chiefs in Foya District, Lofa County want the Government to take prompt action in the case involving the discovery of a human skeleton in the county.
- The skeleton was found recently between the Liberian-Guinean border. The skeleton had a rope tied on its neck and believed to be that of a male.
- According to our correspondent, inhabitants of the Mahn Custom and Balado towns have abandoned all farming activities to attend police preliminary investigation in Foya.

Voice of America

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

Liberia's Musical Sensation Admits He Was A Taylor Rebel

By James Butty
Washington, D.C.

Liberia's musical sensation Sundaygar Dearboy has admitted that he was a member of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia rebel movement during the country's 14-year civil war. This comes after three witnesses testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that Sundaygar Dearboy AKA Michael Davis raped a young woman and murdered several men, women and children in Grand Bassa County during the civil war.

The TRC says Dearboy should come clean and give full disclosure about his actual role during the war. Dearboy told VOA that he was forced to join Charles Taylor's rebel movement.

"My mother and I left from Monrovia as a result of the rebel insurgency when Prince Johnson took over Monrovia. We walked and went to Grand Bassa County. That was as a result of being conscripted into the rebel group. In fact, I was a direct victim of the situation because I was tortured and beaten on several occasions. And the only option I had at that time was to be part as a child soldier," he said.

Sundaygar Dearboy denied accusations made to the TRC that he raped a young woman and murdered several men, women and children in Grand Bassa County during the civil war. He blamed some members of the TRC of being biased against him.

"I never, never, and I repeat never did I rape or did I order the raping of anyone or the killing of anyone as was alleged by those people from Grand Bassa County. I see the situation in Liberia that whenever you are accused you are being presumed guilty by even the staff of the TRC because their questions are in line with prejudice. They don't create an equilibrium; they don't balance their investigation; they consider you to be guilty before going to even in the eyes of the public. And this is very ridiculous. I don't think this is why the institution was established," Dearboy said.

He said the TRC has been manipulated and undermined by certain individuals for their own selfish aims. Dearboy specifically singled out TRC commissioner Massa Washington who he said manipulated he Sundaygar's photograph in front of his accusers.

"I have come to tell you that I did not confess anything. I did not say that I committed any atrocities. And if they believe that I confessed, that's Malu Washington who is commissioner of the TRC during the public hearing who took my photo and showed it to the guy who accused me and said is this Sundaygar? I would have preferred for Malu Washington to have produced more than two photographs so that the person who accused me would be able to choose among them. But instead she used one photograph. I think that was intended to direct the alleged victim to be able to say yes this is Sundaygar. And that was very unethical. And she is one of the brains behind making sure that I be convicted as a rapist, as a murderer which of course I did not do any of these things," he said.

Commissioner Washington said the mandate of the TRC is to find the root causes of the Liberian civil war with the aim of reconciling the country. She said the TRC does not wish to engage victims or perpetrators or even witnesses word for word.

However she said Dearboy must come clean about the actual role he is alleged to have played during the Liberian civil war.

“We would like for Mr. Dearboy to continue to cooperate with the Commission. We can schedule a date where he can come to the TRC publicly and explain to the Liberian people all of these allegations that he says are false. No one is after Mr. Dearboy. I love his music; I play his music a lot. But this process here is not a popularity contest. We don’t care if Mr. Dearboy is the best musician on the face of the earth. We don’t care if Mr. Dearboy is a billionaire whatsoever. We don’t care. We as a TRC will make sure that we are true to our mandate that says no one is above the TRC process. And no one will be above this TRC process. We intend to do our job well and none of us will be threatened or cowed into silence or chicken away. The Liberian entrusted us to do this job and we intend to this job to the best of our ability,” he said.

Washington said if Dearboy feels he was conscripted into the war as a child soldier, the commission would compute his age to and during the time of the war, and if it is proven that Dearboy was truly a child soldier he would qualify for the TRC policy which grants immunity to children combatants. But first Washington said Dearboy must come out and give full disclosure of his role during the war.

Dearboy said he regretted being a member of Charles Taylor’s rebel movement but said he did not kill or rape anyone. He said he has been trying to make the best out of his past.

“One thing we are not in control of that God decided to leave alone is our past. Our past remains our past. We are in control of the presence to make a better future. And so that’s one thing I’m not going to deny that I was conscripted as a child soldier. And this is why I’m using this opportunity to have a foundation to be able to promote or assist every child soldier who a direct victim of the situation,” Dearboy said.

Radio Netherlands

Monday, 11 February 2008

Dutch prosecutor: 20 yrs for Kouwenhoven

The Hague - The Dutch Public Prosecutor's Office has asked that Guus Kouwenhoven be sentenced to 20 years in prison for arms smuggling and war crimes during the Liberian civil war. The public prosecutor is also demanding that he pay a fine of 450,000 euros.

Mr Kouwenhoven is said to have committed the war crimes between 2000 and 2003. The arms were allegedly smuggled to the regime of former Liberian president Charles Taylor.

In 2006 Mr Kouwenhoven received an eight-year jail sentence for arms smuggling to Liberia, but was acquitted of war crimes charges for lack of evidence. The Public Prosecutor's Office is appealing the ruling.

Jurist Legal News and Research

February 2008

Children as Terrorists: Wrong to Train, Wrong to Charge

JURIST Contributing Editor David Crane of Syracuse University College of Law, former Chief Prosecutor for the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone and a signatory of the recent Paris Declaration on child soldiers, says that not only is it morally and legally wrong to train children to become terrorists, but that those who have been trained or otherwise coerced - including Omar Khadr, the Canadian captured in Afghanistan while a juvenile and now facing a US military commission at Guantanamo - lack the moral culpability and deliberative intent to be tried as war criminals....



A recently captured video in Iraq depicts children, mainly boys, being trained in various military and terror techniques. This is disturbing. Coupled with the recent use in Iraq of young women apparently suffering from a mental disability as unwitting suicide bombers, these actions auger poorly for the future as to the shape and scope of tactics being used by various Islamic groups fighting their pseudo-jihad against the West.

Women and children have always suffered the brunt of war. Both in international and internal armed conflicts, the fighting factions use and abuse the weakest found on the battlefield. This trend over the past one hundred years has not changed - in fact, to my mind it is getting worse.

From the horrors perpetrated by King Leopold II in Belgium in the Congo at the turn of the last century, through the campaign of the three Pashas in Turkey against the Christian Armenians during World War I, the depopulations by Joseph Stalin between the wars; the Holocaust of World War II, the mass deaths perpetrated by Mao on the Chinese people, the killing fields of Cambodia, to the more recent depredations of Charles Taylor in West Africa, women and children have been particularly singled out by their own governments as targets. The victims number in the tens of millions.

In the past twenty years, over two million children have died in conflict. Most, if not all, were forcibly recruited under great duress, causing whole generations of children to be destroyed in various parts of the world. In the past ten years the world has begun to address this scourge. Led by the United Nations, various treaties, protocols, resolutions, and declarations have clearly stated that children are not to be used in conflicts. From the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (and its Protocol 1), to the recent Paris Declaration (of which I was a signatory), as well as the law found in the Geneva Conventions, children are to be nurtured and "especially protected". The law is clear, yet the violations and abuse continue.

Those who violate these international standards and norms are now being held accountable. The ground-breaking work of the international war crimes tribunal in West Africa, called the Special Court for Sierra Leone, saw most of the key leaders in that ten-year horror charged and convicted of the

unlawful recruitment of children under the age of fifteen into an armed force. The International Criminal Court is also moving forward on this new international crime as well particularly by the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda. This is a major step forward in attempts to stop using children in combat or in terrorist operations.

No child has the *mens rea* (the evil-thinking mind) to commit war crimes. In fact those who use children in combat use coercive techniques that clearly shock the conscience. In Sierra Leone, children were forced to kill their parents and then were led off into the bush to fight for years, doped up, murdering, maiming, mutilating, and raping. Many forgot their real names and where they came from. They became true killing machines. They knew neither right from wrong, nor the concept of mercy. The lost generation of Sierra Leone now struggles in life, a life of literally no hope whatsoever.

In the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are seeing the coercive induction of children into various terrorist groups, many brainwashed by religious fervor, given little to no options but to perpetrate murder against their own kind, as well as against soldiers from the international community, mainly the west. The setting is different than West Africa, but the results are the same - children killing against their will and with little choice. This is morally and legally wrong, regardless of the justification and rationale by the groups into which they are inducted.

It is unfortunate that the capture of this Iraqi video is not the only time that the use of children in the Middle East as soldiers has surfaced. In another circumstance from Afghanistan, a young Canadian is currently being tried in Guantanamo for a war crime. Omar Khadr is charged, among other crimes, as having allegedly killed a US soldier in Afghanistan on 27 July 2002 as an "unlawful enemy combatant". He was just fifteen years old as the time of this crime. Brought to Afghanistan from Canada by his father several years earlier, young Omar had no choice as to the circumstances he found himself working with individuals who were part of the al-Qaeda network.

When war broke out he was forced to fight and to kill. Gravely wounded, he was shipped to the US detention camp in Cuba where he has been kept for over five years. Omar Khadr is the poster child of what can happen when children are forced into these situations. For his crimes he is the first child ever to be charged as a war criminal. This too is morally and legally wrong.

It remains to be seen how the hearing officer at Guantanamo will rule on a motion before a US military commission to drop the charges due to Khadr's age. I am not optimistic as to the outcome. Hence, he will be tried for crimes arguably he did not have the mental state to commit. This remains to be seen. It should be those who caused Khadr to be in the circumstance of war to be dealt with, rather than Khadr himself. That was my policy in West Africa: to charge the leadership of the units and factions, not the children they "recruited". I felt as the Chief Prosecutor at the time that they were legally not culpable.

The international standard for children is for protection, nurturing, educating, and giving them the ability to realize their full potential. Unlawful recruitment into an armed force is not a part of this

paradigm. The training of children as seen in the video is to be condemned and the release of Omar Khadr, a child soldier, from the US detention camp should be clearly mandated by the international community. France already has called for his release, as should his own country, Canada.

David M. Crane is a professor at Syracuse University College of Law, and former founding Chief Prosecutor for the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone (2002-2005).