

**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:**

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

Monday, 10 March 2008

# Leatherboot, 19 Others Return From Morocco

Twenty ex-combatants who were absorbed into the Operation Support Di-

vision (OSD) of the Sierra Leone Police Force past January by President Ernest

Bai Koroma have returned home after completing a month and half

training on close protection bodyguard in  
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## Leatherboot, 19 Others Return From Morocco

*From front page*

the Moroccan capital Rabat. The twenty officers including former members of the Sierra Leone Army led by Idrissa Kanu (alias Leatherboot) last Friday paid a courtesy call on President Koroma at State House. They will now serve as close protection bodyguards to President Koroma.

Leatherboot and others were members of the APC

Task Force that was providing security to both Ernest Koroma and Mr. Samuel Sam Sumana during last year's parliamentary and presidential elections. These men worked in the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces in the early nineties and later joined forces with the then Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) which in-

vaded the capital in January 6, 1999 and caused a lot of mayhem in the city and other areas in the provinces especially the North and Kono in Eastern Sierra Leone.

Leatherboot and team are expected to work directly under the directives of the Director OSD, Assistant Inspector General David S. Sesay and are also expected to undertake another training to make them to be more equipped in their roles and functions.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues last Friday at State House, Leatherboot noted that they had a vigorous training and, eventually excelled through out their stay in Morocco.

President Koroma, however, congratulated them on going through the exercise successfully them for the training, and urged them to perform their roles as expected of the people.

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Concord Times  
Monday, 10 March 2008

## TRC recommendations yet to be implemented *-Human Rights Commission*

*By Ibrahim  
Tarawallie*

Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Friday said the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which deals with women's issues are yet to be implemented by the government.

Speaking at a day symposium organised by Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL) in commemoration of the International Women's Day, Jamestina King said women suffered immensely during the civil war in the country. "International Women's Day is worthy of commemoration in a continent where women

are regarded as the weaker sex," she said. She said WIMSAL should serve as a pressure group that will keep the government informed about the numerous issues affecting the development of women. President of Legal Access through Women Yearning for Equal Rights and Social Justice (LAWYERS), Melinda Davies said only 20 percent of the 52 percent women population are educated. Deputy Director of the

Sierra Leone Police Family Support Unit (FSU), Mira Koroma said it is time for women to be empowered and get their rightful place in the society.

She said women's rights need to be protected by authorities concerned and she also advised that for "Women to be taken seriously, they must take themselves seriously."

WIMSAL's President, Mariama Sesay said women should continue to advocate for their rights in society.

New York Times  
Sunday, 9 March 2008

## Gains Cited in Hunt for Liberia Ex-Warlord's Fortune



Pool photo by Michael Kooren  
Charles Taylor, left, the former president of Liberia, at his trial in the Special Court for Sierra Leone at The Hague in January.

By MARLISE SIMONS

THE HAGUE — For two years, Charles Taylor, the West African warlord and former president of Liberia, has been locked in a Dutch high-security jail, leaving the compound only in an armored car that speeds across The Hague as it delivers him to his war crimes trial.

But while he is in the dock, the hunt is still on for his legendary missing fortune. Prosecutors say the most exhaustive effort to date is under way to pinpoint the money the former dictator is believed to have amassed by pilfering the coffers of his country and running smuggling operations, particularly of diamonds, deep inside neighboring states.

No money has been seized, but investigators say they have made some breakthroughs recently.

“We have new information that more than \$1 billion passed through Taylor’s personal bank accounts between 1997 and 2003 when he was president,” said Stephen Rapp, the chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying Mr. Taylor at an outpost in The Hague. Last year, experts advising the United Nations Security Council estimated Mr. Taylor’s fortune at half that amount.

Newly traced bank records and other documents show Liberian money flowing into Mr. Taylor’s accounts, as well as large cash withdrawals and transfers to foreign banks, Mr. Rapp said. “The records showed he controlled enormous funds which he hid,” the prosecutor said. “The big question is how much of that wealth is still left.”

The court now has the aid of a London law firm with experience in recovering wealth stolen by dictators and other leaders. Court officials said the firm was being paid by Western governments but they would not release other details, saying that could jeopardize the investigation.

Mr. Taylor, 60, has been charged with pillaging, but his hidden accounts and assets are also central to his prosecution on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The prosecutors want to demonstrate how he financed operations that dragged neighboring Sierra Leone into a civil war that lasted more than a decade.

Prosecutors argue that in his drive to expand his power in the region, Mr. Taylor used stolen millions, including profits from smuggled diamonds, to buy the loyalty, weapons and supplies for rebels in Sierra Leone and other neighboring countries. His indictment holds him accountable for the rebels' barbaric methods, as they pillaged, killed, raped, used children as soldiers and hacked off hands or feet of innocent civilians.

No one knows how much money was stolen in the region or raised from the diamond fields of Sierra Leone and parts of Guinea. Evidence presented at the trial showed that enslaved laborers were often forced to dig for diamonds at gunpoint and could be executed for keeping a stone. Court investigators have said diamonds were often sold cheaply and used to pay for clandestine weapons shipments.

Millions of dollars of income from government timber concessions and Liberia's shipping flags of convenience often went directly to Mr. Taylor, Western diplomats have said.

If the international judges' panel finds him guilty of pillaging, the court can seize assets proved to belong to him or his associates and use the money for restitution.

The list of claimants is likely to be long. Trust funds have been set up in Liberia and Sierra Leone for war victims, among them the thousands who were mutilated by machetes. Each country may have claims for war damages and for pilfering state coffers and resources like diamonds and timber, prosecutors have said.

Not least, the court could claim funds for its expenses on Mr. Taylor's defense.

The former Liberian dictator, who arrives for court in tinted glasses and impeccable suits, has insisted he has almost no money and cannot even pay for his defense. The governments of Nigeria and Liberia, where Mr. Taylor is believed to have considerable investments and real estate, have not cooperated with the court's requests for information and freezing his assets, prosecutors said.

As a result, the court is paying \$70,000 per month to his defense team, which includes a dozen people. It pays an additional \$30,000 per month in other expenses, like the team's office rent and salaries for the four investigators assigned to him.

Mr. Taylor, who had fretted about what he called the "low level" of his court-appointed defense team, obtained a court order last summer providing him with a large team of more senior lawyers.

If Mr. Taylor's assets are found, the court could bill him for his defense, expected to cost \$3 million to \$4 million. Such costs are now paid by the governments who help finance the United Nations-backed court. The United States, which had high hopes for