

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



River above the dam at Bumbuna.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Wednesday, 16 April 2008

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

RUF Accused Testifies in His Own Case / <i>Cocorioko</i>	Page 3
(Untitled) / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Pages 4-6
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 7-9
Progress Deeded in Security, Rule of Law, Governance... / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 10-11
Liberia's Army Rebuilt to Defend Country / <i>Voice of America</i>	Pages 12-13
Statement by SG on the Tenth Anniversary of Pol Pot's Death / <i>UN</i>	Page 14

Cocorioko website

Wednesday, 16 April 2008

RUF accused testifies in his own case

Written by Moses Kargbo

Wednesday, 16 April 2008

Responding to questions posed by his lead Defense Counsel, Charles A. Taku, on crimes committed during the war, the former rebel strongman said there were many people bearing the name Kallon in the RUF and that the individual the witnesses were referring to might not be him. **READ THE REST :**
RUF accused testifies in his own case

By Moses A. Kargbo

The Second Accused in the RUF trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Morris Kallon has denied allegations made against him by previous witnesses while testifying on behalf of himself.

Responding to questions posed by his lead Defense Counsel, Charles A. Taku, on crimes committed during the war, the former rebel strongman said there were many people bearing the name Kallon in the RUF and that the individual the witnesses were referring to might not be him.

Kallon told the Court that he became a member of the Revolutionary United Front after he was captured by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia or NPFL in Kakata, Liberia, in November 1989.

He said the deceased from leader of the RUF, Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh secured his release from Taylor's men and later trained him in a place he described as 'Camp Jackson' in the thick bushes of Kailahun District.

"I was taught RUF ideology at Camp Jackson and I became fascinated by the political lectures of Foday Sankoh and Mike Lamin," he told the court, revealing further that the aim of the RUF had been to put an end to the one party government of late former President Joseph Saidu Momoh and liberate Sierra Leoneans.

According to Kallon, this persuaded him to stay with the movement. His testimony continues.

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 15 April 2008

By Alphonsus Zeon, at The Hague

Defence cross-examination of prosecution witness TF1-516 Tuesday took on a rather harsh manner, departing from the usual quiet and friendly atmosphere, as Defence lawyer Morris Anyah tried to test the witness's familiarity of specific parts of Liberia where he said he worked as radio operator of the RUF in Liberia.

Prosecution lawyer, Mohamed Bangura objected to Anyah's line of questioning several times as inappropriate.

And Justice Richard Lussick even intervened to admonished the witness to show respect for Taylor's lawyer Anyah.

Charles Taylor's farm in Gbarnga was the focus of the harsh exchanges.

ANYAH: Describe the farm. What's in the farm? You took a tour of it, tell us what's in the farm.

TF1-516: Fine. On the street towards the Monrovia highway, Kakata way, there were fish ponds, a good number of holes, those ponds, moving towards deep in the farm, that other side. Okay? Then in the farm was numerous birds, birds flying above those feed ponds and 50 even shot some of those birds. They collected them and brought them to the house where we used to put up.

ANYAH: What did he shoot them with?

TF1-516: With the single barrel gun he had.

ANYAH: Were they pellet guns?

TF1-516: No, not pellet, but single barrel, the single barrel guns.

ANYAH: Cartridges, did they use cartridges?

TF1-516: Yes sir.

ANYAH: Okay, I see. How big was the farm?

TF1-516: It was big. It was big. I saw machines ploughing. They were ploughing. According to them they had just harvested beans.

ANYAH: Beans?

TF1-516: Yes.

ANYAH: Mr Witness, come on now, Mr Witness, you know what was on the farm, Mr Witness?

TF1-516: Yes.

ANYAH: Not beans, it was rice, Mr Witness. Rice paddies.

TF1-516: At that part, the portion of the farm, in fact there was new other area that was just being tilled.

BANGURA: Your Honours, the line of cross-examination, your Honours, is not proper, I submit. My learned friend is testifying in a sense. He's asked the witness about what is produced on the farm and the witness says beans. My learned friend comes and says, "No, it's not that, it is rice." Your Honours, I'm at pains to understand this line of cross-examination.

ANYAH: I can rephrase the question.

JUSTICE DOHERTY: He'll rephrase it as a question rather than an observation.

ANYAH: Exactly. Mr Witness, you've just told us beans were planted on the farm and I'm putting it to you, may I finish, that what was planted on that farm was rice. Do you agree?

TF1-516: I'm not denying the fact that rice was planted, but that other part where I went, they told me that it was just beans that they had harvested and still the machine was tilling the land. We stood there, I took some photographs. The point is after disarmament most of the materials we had went astray, otherwise I would have brought some other materials really for you to be convinced that what I'm saying is factual.

ANYAH: I see. You saw beans in the farm in Gbarnga.

JUSTICE DOHERTY: Actually, in fairness I think he said he was told.

ANYAH: He was told: I asked you, Mr Witness, to describe the farm. May I ask you this –

BANGURA: Your Honours, my learned friend is taking a very argumentative line with the witness because he puts to the witness - mischaracterises what the witness says and then engages the witness in some argument. The witness in more than two of his answers said that he was told and that's very clear.

JUSTICE LUSSICK: Yes, Mr Witness, I'd be grateful if you would get control of yourself.

TF1-516: Okay.

JUSTICE LUSSICK: I don't like you answering the questions in the manner you are answering them. You've been spoken to on a number of occasions by the Presiding Judge and so far you've treated Mr Anyah with disdain and impatience. Now I would ask you to mend your manners, please.

TF1-516: Okay. Thank you very much.

ANYAH: Madam President, I would be happy to clarify. I believe I am responding to the manner of the witness with which I am confronted. I have been civil with him. We have had exchanges, but nothing uncivil as far as I know and the main issue between us has been interrupting each other and I think we're getting that sorted out... Mr Witness, you started out saying you were told in relation to Kakata highway and so on. I asked you a specific question for you to describe the farm. All that you have told us now about the beans, about Yeaten shooting birds, are those things that you saw, or are those things someone told you? Please clarify.

TF1-516: The shooting of birds took place in my presence. I was there. I saw with my naked eyes fish ponds, many ponds, you know, on that highway and let's say this is the location, the farm is located like this, then at the side of this farm there is a field. It was newly constructed even. The field ran from up, down. We had - there were some ATU personnel keeping guard on this farm and - I mean on this field. There was a container there that used to pump the fuel into the helicopter.

ANYAH: Mr Witness, in respect of the beans you talked about did you see beans, or did someone tell you about beans?

TF1-516: I said I met the machine in operation, tilling the soil, and they told me that it was just beans that they had harvested from that land and the land should not be left like that. So the machine was still working.

ANYAH: I see, and I'm telling you that that is a lie because beans were not planted on that farm. It was rice. Do you agree?

TF1-516: I disagree with that.

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
15 April 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

UN Secretary-General visits Liberia Monday

(The Informer, Heritage)

- The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is due to pay an official two-day visit to Liberia, beginning Monday evening. While in the country, Mr. Ban will meet with Liberian Government officials, the National Legislature and members of UNMIL as well as the UN Country Team.
- The visit forms part of a four-nation West African tour that will take him to Ghana, Liberia, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. The trip will focus mainly on UN peacebuilding efforts in West Africa and progress being made on the Millennium Development Goals.

President Sirleaf Promises Harsh Actions against Armed Criminals

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

- Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in nation-wide address Monday spoke to a number of national issues including her promise to take more drastic measures to ensure better protection for the citizens and residents from armed criminals. The President did not specify what measures she would take against armed robbers but said "If there is no improvement in the situation within a month or two, I will take more drastic measures, even if unpopular, to ensure better protection of our innocent population."
- "I have asked UNMIL to be more vigilant and proactive in patrols and I have asked the Minister of Justice to do more in terms of logistical support for the Police and a more effective system of justice," she said.
- The President's comments followed reports of an increase in armed robbery, particularly in the Paynesville suburb.

Opposition Politician admits Government's Progress but Criticizes President over dismissal of Magistrate

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

- In a live radio broadcast Monday, a key opposition politician Counselor Charles Brumskine of the Liberty Party said lauded the government for making progress on several fronts but among other things criticized President Sirleaf for dismissing a court magistrate, and the 'failure' of her government to cancel diamond and gold mines deals reached during the regime of former President Charles Taylor.

Human Rights Mediator says 'Embezzlement' Nightmare Haunting Liberia

(The News)

- [sic:] A Liberian human rights mediator, 'Black Eagles' based in Switzerland says the nightmare of embezzlement and corruption continues to haunt Liberia. The 'Black Eagles' challenged President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to remain steadfast in fighting these societal ills. A release quoted the Country Representative Isaac S. Fatamorle as saying that these vices have the tendency to create setbacks to the development agenda of Liberia. Mr. Fatamorle recalled that years of horror and disgrace of Liberians have gone, yet the nightmare of

corruption and embezzlement is still haunting the peace loving Liberians. He urged the Liberian Government to do more to discourage dishonesty in the society, and noted that the election of President Johnson-Sirleaf has nurtured into daughters and sons of Liberia the hope for better future. "Despite your determination to fight corruption, there are some ghosts of the past that are still undermining the endeavors of our people towards sustainable global development," Fatamorle added.

Radio Summary

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

President Sirleaf Vows to Take Drastic Action against Armed Robbers

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Government Announces Measures to Ensure Stable Supply of Rice on Market

- Making the disclosure in a nation-wide address, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said government has approved and forwarded for Legislative ratification, a US\$30 million Concession Agreement for investment in large scale mechanized rice production.
- President Sirleaf said the government was also considering asking the Chinese agricultural team to start the training and a programme for production of large scale mechanized rice, near the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) in Bong County.
- Amidst the growing alarm over the price of food, the President said the solution lies in the ability of Liberians to return to the soil and grow more food.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

State Lawyers Fail to Produce "Witness Testimony" Taken in Ivory Coast

- State lawyers in the ongoing treason trial Monday failed to produce in court testimonies of witnesses taken in the Cote d' Ivoire.
- In an earlier request on Monday, state lawyers claimed their findings were being translated at the Foreign Ministry but defense lawyers maintained no depositions were taken in the Ivory Coast.
- Both State and Defense lawyers travelled to Cote d' Ivoire last week to obtain written testimonies from two senior security officials in connection with the treason trial to corroborate the only insider witness, Junior Gaye.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Akon Performs Live in Liberia Today

- Senegalese-American megastar, Akon is in the Liberian capital, Monrovia and is due to perform live in concert today at the SKD Sports Stadium outside Monrovia. Meanwhile an alleged criminal snatched away Akon's mobile phone but the phone snatcher was arrested and is in police custody.

Star Radio (News culled from website today at 09:00 am)

Former NPP Chairman Accuses UNMIL of Practicing acts of "Imperialism"

- The Chairman Emeritus of the National Patriotic Party (NPP), Chief Cyril Allen has alleged that the UN Mission in Liberia is practicing acts of "imperialism" and is engaged in suppression and oppression in Liberia.
- In an interview, Mr. Allen said the UN is abusing the Liberian Constitution by seeking financial information from various banks on those affected by its travel ban saying a search warrant sought for by the UN from a Liberian Court is a form of intimidation.
- The former NPP Chairman said those affected by the sanction would seek legal redress to ensure that the UN does not continue its illegal action.
- Last week, the media reported that UN soldiers stormed the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment in search of information on the private accounts of former associates of detained ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor who are affected by the UN travel ban.

20 Soldiers of the New Army Desert Military Barrack

- Speaking during a Senate hearing Monday, Defense Minister Brownie Samukai said at least twenty soldiers of the new Liberian army have left the Camp Edward Benyah Keselley Military barracks without authorization.

- Minister Samukai said the soldiers might have left the barracks for family or personal reasons, saying the 20 on Absence Without Leave (AWOL) represent at least one percent of the more than 1000 trained soldiers.
- Meanwhile, the Defense Ministry has tried to defuse a row over damaging comments by some AFL soldiers who complained of hunger and neglect saying they would be fully investigated.



Press Release, 15 April 2008

UNMIL/PIO/PR/27

**Progress needed in security, rule of law, governance and development to consolidate peace in Liberia,
UN Envoy tells Security Council**

New York - The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj, has told the Security Council that despite significant progress made in maintaining peace in Liberia, further progress is needed in some critical areas in order to truly consolidate the peace. Ms. Løj was briefing the Council on the 16th Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).



SRSG Løj addressing the Security Council in New York

“Liberia today is a place of hope, characterized by many positive developments,” she stated, but warned that the security of the country still relied heavily on the presence of UNMIL military and police forces. “This is clear evidence that peace has not taken roots and it is not yet time to declare victory and leave the country.”

SRSG Løj identified the critical areas as, the reform of the Security Sector, including the Liberia National Police, LNP, reform of the Rule of Law institutions and the effective implementation of the new Poverty Reduction Strategy.

On the current drawdown plan being implemented by UNMIL, Ms Løj stated that this is being carried out in a well planned manner so as to minimize any threats to the security of the Liberian state. The process, she added, will also ensure that UNMIL is able to assist the Government in dealing with any serious disruption or civil disturbances, while providing the time and space needed for Liberia to build up its own police and military forces and progressively assume full responsibility for national security.

On the current security situation, SRSG Løj cited occasional violent incidents on rubber plantations and in diamond mining areas as sources of concern. She highlighted cases of armed robbery and rape, which remain high. UNMIL and the Government of Liberia have launched anti-crime and anti-rape campaigns across the country to deal with these challenges. Additionally, Ms. Løj stated that there have been a number of incidents of mob violence, including attacks on police personnel and police stations by angry crowds who sometimes want to assault and even kill crime suspects being detained by the police. She pointed out that such resort to violence could be a sign of the public’s lack of trust in the security and justice system. However, SRSG Løj underscored the need to address this comprehensively as the government finalises the ongoing national security strategy and the reforms of the security institutions. “Any further delays will make it impossible for the new army to be fully operational before late 2009, and would impact directly on the timeline for UNMIL’s drawdown plan,” she said.

Noting that the reform of the Liberia National Police (LNP) constitutes a significant challenge, the UN Envoy updated members of the Council about ongoing efforts to improve the quality and professionalism of the individual police officers, enhance the LNP’s management structure and provide the force with the necessary equipment and resources to perform effectively.

On the rule of law, the Ms. Løj said that despite efforts by the Government of Liberia, deficiencies in the justice system continue to pose serious challenges to the administration of justice country-wide. She mentioned the lack of adequate funding, shortage of qualified judicial officials, the lack of infrastructure, including courts and prisons, poor case management, low salaries and corruption as some key challenges that are being addressed. She warned that these deficiencies, if unaddressed, could cause some Liberians to lose confidence in the justice system.

The UN Envoy informed the Security Council that though the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had launched public hearings, to date none of the major actors have testified. She reiterated the Secretary-General's call for all Liberians to cooperate with the Commission. She also urged the international community to continue to provide necessary support to the Commission so that it may fulfill its mandate.

SRSJ Løj spoke of the recently completed national poverty reduction strategy, PRS, in positive terms. But for the PRS to succeed, she observed, renewed efforts were required to bolster the limited national implementation capacity currently available. She added that economic growth was urgently needed in order to reduce the high unemployment rate, which also constitutes a security concern.

To address a funding gap in achieving the ambitious economic growth targets, the SRSJ said the Government will still require support from international partners. She noted the opportunity for further discussions on this matter that is offered by the upcoming Partners Forum, expected to be held in late June in Berlin. Ms. Løj then called on all of Liberia's development partners to use the PRS as the framework for their activities.

Voice of America
Monday, 14 April 2008

Liberia's Army Rebuilt to Defend Country

By Kari Barber
Monrovia

During Liberia's civil war, the national army and rebel factions were guilty of gross human-rights abuses. Civilians were killed, villages looted and torched. Many civilians said they had nowhere to turn for safety. Now, those helping to restore security in Liberia and rebuild its armed forces say they are building an army that will protect people. Kari Barber reports from Monrovia there is a sense of nervousness as United Nations peacekeepers begin to withdraw.



Liberia security troops

These soldiers are part of Liberia's new army, which numbers only a couple of thousand. After the war which ended in 2003, the U.N. helped demobilize former fighters while the new government, with United States help, began recruiting. New trainees must meet much higher eligibility requirements.

Private American companies are training the Liberian soldiers. The military contractors were hired and paid for by the U.S. government.

These soldiers are being drilled on battlefield tactics.



Lt. Colonel Chris Wyatt

Lieutenant Colonel Chris Wyatt of the U.S. Army is in charge of the training. He says there have been concerns about the use of private contractors. "The question is not whether they are private or they are public, the question is whether they are competent and doing their proper job. This is not the government's army, this is not the American army, this is the people of Liberia's army," Wyatt said.

The U.N. mission also established training for the national police force, which is expected to take on many of the peacekeepers' roles. Unlike U.N. troops, police are not allowed to carry guns.

Skirmishes and crime are frequent in Liberia, and it has been difficult for police to gain respect.

However, United Nations spokesman Ban Malor says the U.N. drawdown needs to happen. "There comes a time that people need to face the reality that you cannot have international presence, military-wise a U.N. mission presence, forever. Nervousness is understandable."

This Ministry of Defense office was a command center during the war, where one official says Liberia attempted to destabilize the region. Liberia's post-war Defense Minister Brownie Samukai says this will never happen again. "Not one inch of Liberian territory will be used to destabilize our neighbors, that is a cardinal principle of securing our borders so that none of our neighbors will have any concern that any inch of our territory will be used to destabilize their country," Samukai said.



Brownie Samukai

Newly trained soldiers say this military will not be abusive like security forces under warlord and President Charles Taylor. An officer under Taylor, Oyango Kole, says he agrees with a requirement that new soldiers have clean human rights records.

"Because we do not want anybody out there that people are going to be spotting and saying 'This guy did that during the war, and he did this and that' - that is old wine in a new bottle," Kole said. "We do not want that again."

Army restructuring began a little over two years ago.

Trainers say they do not know when the new army will be activated. Rebuilding a military, they say, must be a careful process in a country scarred by past abuses.

United Nations

Tuesday, 15 April 2008

Statement by the Secretary-General on the Tenth Anniversary of Pol Pot's Death

Today marks the tenth anniversary of the death of Pol Pot. I would like to remind the international community of the urgent importance of bringing to closure one of history's darkest chapters. The United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia remain actively engaged in efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge senior leaders and those most responsible accountable for their horrific crimes. With the support of the international community, it is my hope that the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia will soon deliver long-overdue justice for the people of Cambodia.

New York

15 April 2008