

**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, 2 March 2008

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

(Untitled) / *BBC World Service Trust*

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BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 1 April 2008

The cross-examination of Prosecution witness Isaac Mongor continued Tuesday in the war crimes trial of the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, in The Hague. As Adolphus Williams reports, Taylor's lawyer repeatedly accused Mongor of contradicting earlier testimony in which he had linked Taylor to the RUF.

WILLIAMS: On several occasions, Taylor's lawyer, Terry Munyard, accused Mongor of lying. He said he did not believe Mongor's claim to have done his training with NPFL forces in 1989 and 1990. He also doubted that Mongor had been a member of Taylor's executive mansion bodyguard in 1990 and 1991. Mongor was asked to describe the bodyguard commander, Cassius Jacobs, he replied that he was dark-skinned and about the same height as himself. Mr Munyard said this was not true and Jacob had a fair skin and had pimples all over his face

Mongor said he was captured by NPFL fighters in a town near Lokatuo early before Christmas of 1989, and eventually joined the rebels. Mongor, who said he was a businessman in Nimba prior to being captured, said he could not remember the name of the town in which he was captured.

He said he had training in Gborplay for two months but could not remember his training commander. When Taylor's lawyer asked again whether Mongor knew John Teah as one of his training commanders, Mongor replied that he only remembered "Gborplay Devil" as one of his trainers. Charles Taylor smiled at this point, bowing and placing his forehead in his palm. Taylor supplied his lawyers with notes on yellow pieces of paper, apparently furnishing his lawyers with dates on the NPFL troop movement.

The Witness alleged that Taylor selected him to help Foday Sankoh train the RUF.

He said at first Taylor was always disguising himself so that people would not know he was preparing fighters to attack Sierra Leone.

MONGOR: At first Mr Taylor used to disguise... he would not want people to know that he was preparing people to go and fight in Sierra Leone because he had said over the BBC that Sierra Leone will feel the bitterness of war. He had gone over the air and said that.

Mongor told the Court Tuesday that Taylor had sent him to train RUF rebels. But Mr Munyard reminded him that earlier he had claimed to have been recruited by Foday Sankoh. When this was pointed out to him, Mongor said he forgot to say that during the Prosecution initial interview. At another point he said Prosecution interviewers got his testimonies wrong.

MONGOR: It was Mr Taylor who sent me to go and train these people." I was handed over to Mr Foday Sankoh to help him train the men and Foday Sankoh himself told me that I should join him after training the men so that we would come and fight in Sierra Leone.

COUNSEL: Mr Mongor, that's a complete lie, isn't it? You did not say to them, "It was Mr Taylor who sent me to go and train these people." That does not appear anywhere on that page, does it? Take as much time as you want to read the page?

MONGOR: Well, I have told you that that was what happened.

COUNSEL: tell us where it shows you saying to them, "It was Mr Taylor who sent me to go and train these people. I was handed over to Mr Foday Sankoh to help him train the men." Where does it say that on this page? Look at the page and take some time to read it. Don't reply yet. Look at the page and read it to yourself.

MONGOR: What part are you referring to? I said I have not seen it.

For the BBC World Service Trust, Search for Common Ground, Talking Drum Studio, Adolphus Williams in The Hague.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 1 April 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

President Sirleaf Signs New Firestone Agreement into Law

(The Analyst, The Informer, The News, New Democrat, and Heritage)

- An act ratifying the amended and restated Concession Agreement between Liberia and the Firestone Inc. has been signed by President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
- According to an Executive Mansion release, the President approved the Act Monday at her Foreign Ministry office when she was presented the document by the House and Senate Committees' leaderships on Executive.
- The President also signed the Act to amend the revenue code, restricting to 20-percent, budgetary transfer by the Executive. Under the Act, any budgetary transfer exceeding more than 20-percent must be approved by the national legislature.
- Until now, there were no restrictions on budgetary transfers by the Executive. The President told reporters that the decision to submit a legislation calling for restrictions on budgetary transfers by the Executive is in furtherance of government's fiscal and financial discipline, transparency and accountability.

Stakeholders Hold Consultations for Media Sector Reform in Liberia

(The Informer and Heritage)

- The Liberia Media Law and Policy Reform working group will today host the first in a series of civil society consultations as part of the advocacy campaign for media reform process in Liberia. The reform effort targets three draft Acts - an Act to establish an Independent Broadcasting Regulatory body for Liberia, Freedom of Information Act and an Act to transform the Liberia Broadcasting System into a Public Service Broadcaster.
- The draft 'Act Establishing an Independent Broadcasting Regulator' seeks to redress the present state of media laws in Liberia and create an independent mechanism for media regulation while the 'Freedom of Information Act' seeks to give Liberian citizens access to public information in accordance with the well-established principle that public bodies hold information not for themselves, but as custodians of the public good and that citizens can only participate in governance if they have access to such information. The draft 'National Public Broadcasting Service Act' seeks to transform the Liberian Broadcasting System (LBS) into a public service broadcaster serving the diverse needs of various interest groups in the Liberian society, in order to ensure that all voices are heard.
- It is believed that the proposed laws will bring Liberian media legislation into substantial conformity with regional and international standards for the protection of media freedom and freedom of expression, thereby ensuring that the media is able to play an optimal role in the reconstruction of Liberia.

Taylor's War Crimes Trial Resumes

(New Democrat, The Analyst)

- Reports say the trial of detained former Liberian President Charles Taylor resumed on Monday, with prosecution witnesses still trying to link the accused with the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone.

'UNMIL Policeman Kills Two Armed Robbers in Self-defence'

(New Democrat)

- [sic] A Czech policeman with UNMIL has killed two suspected armed robbers who attacked and left him with minor injuries, according to a Czech newspaper. Contacted to verify the report Monday, UNMIL confirmed the policeman was attacked when he was stopped to help a man along the Robertsfield highway. It said a group of men then attacked the policeman, but that he defended himself, and that no one was killed. But the story from the Prague, the Czech Republic, as reported by the newspaper Mlada fronta Dnes(MfD) quoting the Police Presidium on 29 March said the two persons were killed.

Civil Society Groups Threaten To Withdraw from Lawmakers' Bribery Case

(Heritage, The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- As the House standing Committee on Judicial failed for the third time to resume what should have been the fifth sitting of the bribery case that is still looming over that august body, Human Rights organizations and civil society groups in the country have threatened to withdraw from the much-talked about bribery case.
- The civil society organizations that were accredited to observe the case said their threat is based on the continuous delay on the part of members of the House Judicial Committee to resume the case. The groups noted that members of the House who are also part of the Judicial Committee are dragging their feet on the matter so that at the end it would be swept under the carpet.

Radio Summary

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

President Johnson Sirleaf Signs Amended Firestone Agreement

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

Bribery Probe Fails to Resume at House of Representatives

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

Police Dismisses 70 Officers for Unexcused Absence

- Police authorities in Monrovia have dismissed 70 officers for staying away from work without being excused and suspended indefinitely three criminal investigators for alleged torture.
- Speaking at a news conference, Police Inspector General, Beatrice Munah Sieh said the police would not tolerate officers abandoning their assignments without valid excuse.
- Inspector Sieh said the investigators will soon be sent to court following a probe which established that the three inmates were supposedly tortured in the custody of the police.

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

Star Radio (News culled today from website at 8:35 am)

Forum to Discuss Liberia's Media Reform Programme Today

Outgoing UNMIL Commander Cautions Liberians Against violence

- The outgoing commander of UNMIL Sector One, Major General O.L Abidoye says Liberians must refrain from actions that have the tendency to disrupt the current peace.
- General O.L Abidoye said mob violence and other forms of civil disobedience must not be encouraged, adding that the rule of law must be obeyed at all times.
- Maj. Gen. Abidoye spoke Monday when he handed over the command post of UNMIL Sector One to his successor Brig. Gen. O.E Olufin-Muagun.
