

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



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, 18 June 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Standard Times
Wednesday, 18 June 2008

Workshop for Local Court Personnel ends

BY PAT KAWA IN BO

Local court officials including clerks, supervisors etc drawn from different parts of the southern province have benefited from a three day training workshop sponsored by the Peace Building Fund at the Bo city hall in Bo and organized by the Law Officers Department in the Ministry of Justice and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The aim of the workshop was to strengthen the knowledge of local court personnel on the administration of Justice and Gender Issues. UNDP's representative in the media office, Alie B. Sesay said the workshop also builds the capacity of the Justice Sector in order to enhance the quality of Justice delivered to the public thereby increasing access to Justice and the protection of human rights particularly for women and children's rights in the prov-

inces.

Alie B. Sesay said UNDP has been supportive towards the construction of magistrates courts and local courts in the four regions of the country. As a partnership to the government, he maintained that their focus is to provide access for the improvement of legal trials in the Justice Sector in order to ensure free and fair trials and justice to prevail.

Senior state counsel and customary law officer Monfred Momoh Sesay said the training also focus on capacitating the knowledge base of the local court officials, clerks and supervisors. He said the trainees gained enormously from the workshop by learning to promote the rule of law particularly of the population who are resident in the rural areas at chiefdom level.

Monfred Momoh Sesay further said trainees learnt to know or strengthen their

knowledge of powers of limitation in the jurisdiction of the local court and also know the fundamental principles of human and children's rights. They also learned how to promote quick dispensation or administration of Justice and fair play by local court and to get easy the work on customary law officers in the provinces.

The senior state counsel and customary law officer thanked UNDP for the support and also the court personnel for their cooperation in making the workshop a successful. Earlier, the provincial secretary in the south, Lansana Koroma who chaired the opening ceremony admonished the trainees to be very attentive and urged them to take the workshop seriously Mr. Koroma praised UNDP and the organizers of the workshop for their laudable support in diverse ways.

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 17 June 2008

New Prosecution Witness: Alice Pyne

A new witness, 34 year old RUF Radio Operator, took the center stage at the trial Tuesday to say what she knows about alleged Taylor links to the RUF rebels who operated in Sierra Leone.

Alice Pyne took the stand late Tuesday after Prosecution witness 590 left the stand earlier.

Adolphus Williams reports

WILLIAMS: Alice said she joined the rebels together with 300 other civilians including small boys and girls after Liberian NPFL fighters took them captive in Kailahun town, Sierra Leone in 1991.

WITNESS PYNE: The village where I was was Manosewallu, seven miles from Kailahun. That was where I was captured, together with some other people who were in the village. We were up to one hundred or more. And after three days they took me to the base in Dia... it was the Liberians who captured me.

WILLIAMS: Alice, also known as “Apple of Action”, told the Court, following two months of training she specialized as a radio operator, training in frequency, voice and message coding

PYNE: They used to train us in many things, like how to attack, how to mount an ambush... how you should crawl, how you should manoeuvre...

WILLIAMS: Earlier Tuesday, TF1-590, who spoke of Taylor and RUF Arab ties Monday, left the stand after Charles Taylor’s lawyer revisited and argued that such Taylor and RUF Arab connections were a couple of contradictions

TF1-590 is also scheduled to testify against Taylor’s son, Chuckie Taylor, in a separate torture trial in a Florida court.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 17 June 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

Ellen Seeks Aid from Watch Teams to Fight Crimes

(Daily Observer)

- [sic:] President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has challenged neighbourhood watch teams to help her Government in the fight against increasing criminal activities in the city and its environs.

50 Ex-Combatants Graduate from Cuttington University

(Daily Observer)

- At least fifty former combatants from the various former warring factions in the Liberian conflict will go through a successful final stage of the process of rehabilitation and reintegration this Sunday when they shall have earned for themselves bachelor's degrees in various professional disciplines from the Cuttington University in Suacoco, Bong County.

President Sirleaf Wants Culprits of Guthrie's Sex Scandal Punished

(The News, The Informer)

- President is apparently infuriated over disturbing reports of a recent development involving 24 female students who were reported to have dropped out of school owing to pregnancies resulting probably from illicit relationships between the students and faculty members at a plantation school in western Liberia. The President views the act as 'unacceptable' and wants those responsible for impregnating the students to be prosecuted. Authorities of the Ministry of Education said it has identified some of the culprits while the President mandated the Ministry of Justice determine the proper punishment for the perpetrators.
- The incident attracted widespread condemnation from both the public and the media. Opinion pieces published in the Daily Observer, New Democrat and National Chronicle newspapers had earlier encouraged the government not to rely on punitive actions alone but employ, enforce and encourage preventive methods to ensure that moral decency returns to Liberian school system.

Senator Kaine and 13 others Charged with Conspiracy to Murder

(Heritage)

- Police in Monrovia have charged Margibi County Senator Roland Kaine and 13 others with conspiracy to murder in connection with the killing of at least 19 persons in a recent land dispute along the border with Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties. Senator Kaine and Charles Bennie are presently undergoing thorough investigation about the deaths. Bennie has not been formally charged.
- Bennie accused Kaine's security men of leading the attackers, but the senator denied the allegations. Bennie said he and Kaine had been in dispute over the land for some time now and that a court has already ruled the farmland belongs to him but the senator continues to claim it as his ancestral land.
- The dispute between Bennie, a former spokesman for the LURD rebels, and the senator over farmland is the most deadly land dispute of recent years. Last month, another land dispute in the south-east of the country saw two people killed after the inhabitants of two towns attacked each other with machetes. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has expressed concern about the rising number of land disputes in Liberia. "This could lead to unrest all over in the country if it is not carefully dealt with," she said on Monday.

President Sirleaf Launches Judicial Institute today

(The Inquirer)

- President Sirleaf is due to launch the James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute at the Temple of Justice Tuesday. The Judicial Institute will focus on the training of professional personnel within the Judiciary and that such training would include procedures, policies, ethical obligations, substantive law and practical aspects of administering justice.

Radio Summary

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

Prince Johnson Responds to Claims by former US State Department Official

- Former rebel leader and now Nimba County Senator, Prince Johnson says he is shocked by the statement made by former US Under Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen. Testifying before the Liberian truth commission in the United States, Mr. Cohen described Senator Johnson as a very wild and incoherent person.
- Senator Johnson told Star Radio during the Liberian civil conflict, he was invited by the former US Ambassador to Liberia to hear a message from then US President George Bush, Sr.
- He said at the meeting, he was told by Mr. Cohen and the Ambassador to open a corridor at the Freeport of Monrovia to evacuate President Samuel Doe and allow Charles Taylor take state power.
- The former INPFL leader said he refused because there was no provision for him and his men. Senator Johnson said his refusal to open the corridor is what Mr. Cohen is referring to him as him being wild and incoherent. He said he can not be referred to as being drunk when in fact he was offered a tobacco allegedly by Mr. Cohen and he refused it.
- According to the former rebel leader, the tobacco was specially made for American soldiers to be brave in warfare. Senator Johnson accused the American government of playing a double standard game in the Liberian civil conflict.
- He warned that "if the Americans torch me, I will torch them and explain everything I know about them during the civil war." The former INPFL leader alleged the American government gave him and Mr. Taylor as well as President Doe a Motorola Mobile Radio each, to be in constant communication with them.
- Senator Johnson spoke to Star Radio in reaction to former United States Under Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen. Mr. Cohen said apparently General Johnson was under the influence of drugs.

President Sirleaf Urges Liberians to partake in Agricultural Sensitization Programme

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is encouraging Liberians from all walks of life to participate in a one-day agricultural sensitization programme to be held this Thursday. This programme is to enable all Liberians to go back to the soil. The President sees this measure as extremely significant, given the global food crisis. The one-day sensitization programme is being organized to inform the Liberian people about continuing increases in domestic food prices.
- It will also acquaint Liberians, as well as those residing in Liberia, with steps the Government of Liberia has taken, as well as future plans to mitigate domestic price increases. These plans are directly linked to the government's vision of increasing domestic food growth.

President Calls for Patience as Government addresses Problems of Public Transport

- The President is fully aware of the transportation difficulties in the country and is pleased to reveal to all Liberians that the Monrovia Transit Authority (MTA) is in the process of concluding arrangements for additional buses to aid the public transport system. The buses will arrive in Liberia in a few months.

UN News Centre
Monday, 16 June 2008

International Criminal Court suspends case against Congolese rebel militia chief



Thomas Lubanga Dyilo

16 June 2008 – The International Criminal Court (ICC) has suspended proceedings against the Congolese rebel militia leader Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, accused of recruiting child soldiers, after finding that prosecutors had failed to disclose more than 200 documents to the defence that have the potential to prove Mr. Lubanga’s innocence.

The ICC trial chamber, which sits in The Hague, imposed the stay on the case on Friday and announced that the trial process will remain halted unless the stay is lifted. A hearing will now be held on 24 June to consider whether Mr. Lubanga should be released from custody.

Mr. Lubanga, the founder and leader of the Union of Congolese Patriots in the Ituri region of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has been charged with a series of war crimes, including conscripting and enlisting child soldiers into the military wing of his group and then using them to participate in hostilities between September 2002 and August 2003.

The judges said they had decided to stay the proceedings because the failure of prosecutors to disclose the documents they had in their possession – which contained “a significant body of exculpatory evidence” – to defence lawyers had the effect of “improperly inhibiting the opportunities for the accused to prepare his defence.”

The judges added that the disclosure of exculpatory evidence held by prosecutors is a fundamental aspect of the accused’s right to a fair trial.

The trial of Mr. Lubanga was due to have been the first to be held by the ICC, and it had been scheduled to begin next Monday.

Daily Star (Lebanon)

Wednesday, 18 June 2008

Hariri tribunal concludes negotiations on premises

Members of core staff begin trickling to the Hague

By Michael Bluhm

Daily Star staff

Wednesday, June 18, 2008



BEIRUT: The UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon has now taken control of the former Dutch intelligence building in The Hague which will serve as the tribunal's headquarters, tribunal registrar Robin Vincent told *The Daily Star* on Tuesday. "We have now concluded the negotiations on the lease," Vincent said, adding that the lease should be signed at the beginning of next week. "The building is in the possession of the advance team. It has been secured on our behalf."

The building will become home for the UN tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of former Premier Rafik Hariri. The tribunal, created last May 30 by UN Security Council Resolution 1757, has a mandate encompassing assassinations and attempted assassinations from the failed bid to kill Telecommunications Minister Marwan Hamadeh in October 2004 through the killing of Internal Security Forces Major Wissam Eid on January 25 of this year.

The prospective court has frequently cropped up as a key issue dividing the March 14 and March 8 political camps. March 14 figures have long blamed Syria for Hariri's killing and for the string of assassinations and attempts which have bedeviled the country since, while the Syrian regime of President Bashar Assad has denied any role in the violence and has said it will not allow its citizens to appear before the tribunal.

Many on both sides have talked about the tribunal's potential use as a negotiating tool between Syria and the West, with many March 14 figures citing the length of time to establish the tribunal as a sign of its unsure status.

One member of Vincent's core staff started work in The Hague on Monday, and others will take up their posts there before the end of the month, Vincent added.

"What I've decided is that getting people to The Hague sooner rather than later is important," said Vincent, who previously served as registrar in the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Canadian Judge Daniel Bellemare, who heads the UN team investigating the political violence and who will become the tribunal's first prosecutor, said in his April 8 report to the UN that "no one can predict or dictate how long" it will take him to submit indictments.

"Any illusion of immediacy must be dispelled," said Bellemare in his report to UN chief Ban Ki-moon, his first report since taking office in January. "Our progress is neither slow nor immediate: It is deliberate."

Vincent said he plans to arrive around the beginning of July, after the tribunal's management committee approves the operating budget for the tribunal's first year.

Vincent added that he expects the court's management committee to approve the budget within the next 10 days, and the ratification will serve as the "final trigger" for him to move to The Netherlands. The committee could still change the amount of the budget, so Vincent would not release the figure he submitted, but he previously told The Daily Star it would be around \$45 million.

Bellemare has had "significant input" into shaping the prosecution's budget, Vincent said, but added that he could not set a date for when Bellemare would leave Beirut for The Hague and formally assume the office of prosecutor.

The Security Council recently extended the mandate of the investigation commission until the end of this year, so Vincent and his team will endeavor to prepare the tribunal's headquarters so that the court could begin functioning from next January, he said.