

**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:**

Tuesday, 8 July 2008

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

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## The Guardian (UK)

Thursday, 10 July 2008

Opinion

### **The case against anonymous prosecution witnesses**

Geoffrey Robertson is right to attack the government's proposals to permit anonymous prosecution witnesses in criminal trials as "the most serious single assault on liberty in memory" (There can be no fair trials with this perjurer's charter, July 8). However, as a former president of the special court for Sierra Leone, he should know that the abusive use of anonymous witnesses has become the norm in those international criminal tribunals he otherwise supports.

At the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, for instance, some 40% of the prosecution's witnesses are anonymous, ie they appear in court with their identity hidden from the public and the defence. This is in addition to the fact that much of their testimony is also given in secret - the transcripts are simply censored so that the public can never know what has been said in court. Numerous are the defendants who have been sent to prison on the basis of such evidence, or who have been subject to a pre-conviction sentence by being forced to stand trial for many years while such testimony is presented.

Robertson rightly condemns these proposals for Britain because they violate the right of every defendant to challenge his accusers. But international criminal justice is based on the same tacit presumption of the defendant's guilt which has inspired them. As a result, the procedures in international tribunals have been a gross travesty of due process for years.

**John Laughland,**

Bath

Having spent three decades defending rape survivors, we are aghast at the witness anonymity bill now before parliament. Rape survivors are anonymous in the media, not in the witness box.

This bill proposes that the accused should not know who is accusing them, and therefore should not be able to challenge or appeal the evidence against them. The excuse is that some witnesses are afraid to come forward. But for every such case there are many where witnesses do come forward but they are not interviewed and/or their evidence is lost or dismissed or they are not called to give evidence in court. We have seen case after case destroyed by police and CPS bias and inefficiency. This is not only true of reported rape, with its shocking 6% conviction rate. Racist assaults, for example, have a 7% conviction rate.

We are now helping a rape survivor facing a workplace disciplinary procedure based on anonymous accusations. She believes the man who raped her is behind them, but cannot defend herself since her accuser cannot be challenged. To extend such grotesque injustice to the criminal courts would destroy any hope of justice.

Some of the rape victims we fight for are asylum seekers who have fled dictatorships where the word of the police is enough to get people locked up for any crime, guilty or innocent. The same will be true in Britain if anonymity prevails.

**Cristel Amiss,** Black Women's Rape Action Project

**Ruth Hall,** Women Against Rape

## New Vision (Uganda)

Wednesday, 9 July 2008

### **Corridors Of Power (Excerpt)**

-SNIP-

#### **Judges for export**

As Uganda grapples with various commodities to export, Justice James Ogoola has found out the country could start exporting judges and international criminal lawyers. During a seminar organised by the Advocates for International Law at Grand Imperial Hotel, Ogoola informed the audience that Justice Julia Ssebutinde had worked at the International Criminal Court, then Justice Akiiki Kiiza had spent two to three years in Sierra Leone working on war crimes and Justice Ibanda Nahamya is in Sierra Leone attached to International Criminal Court. "In this matter of international criminal justice, Uganda has become an exporter of judges," he remarked.

-SNIP-

**United Nations**  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries  
9 July 2008**

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

**Newspaper Summary**

**Solicitor General Cautions Against "Midnight" Travels**

(The News, The Inquirer, National Chronicle, Heritage)

- Solicitor General, Cllr. Tiawon Gongloe has warned the public against travelling at night on grounds that most of the killings in Monrovia and its environs occur at night.
- Cllr. Gongloe made the assertion yesterday after he was rejected by the House of Representative as a proxy for Justice Minister Philip Banks.
- The Inquirer and News newspapers report that the House had cited Minister Banks to address the wave of insecurity in Monrovia and its environs.

**Serve as Models of Professional Policing, Deputy UN Envoy Liberian Urges Police**

(Public Agenda, Heritage, The Informer, New Democrat)

- The media reports that members of the Liberia National Police (LNP) have been urged to aim at making their organisation a great example of professional policing that could help regain the full trust and confidence of the Liberian public.
- Speaking at the close of a five-day Strategic Development Workshop for key LNP Officers, held in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Rule of Law, Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, called on the LNP to redesign its structures, processes and operations to make them more responsive to the needs and expectations of citizens.
- Also addressing the closing session, the Deputy Minister for Administration and Public Safety, Ms. Ceaineh Johnson, highlighted the systemic challenges faced by the LNP including limited logistical and financial resources.

**GAC, Finance in Yet Another Wrangle**

(Heritage, Daily Observer, Public Agenda, The Informer)

- The General Auditing Commission (GAC) has seriously objected to statements made by Acting Finance Minister Tarnue Marwolo that the Commission has capacity problem.
- Addressing a news conference yesterday, the GAC's Communications Officer, James Jensen described Marwolo's statement as "falsehood" and one that has the inclination of bringing the Commission to public disrepute.
- Appearing before a Budget hearing in Monrovia, Minister Marwolo said the Ministry's decision to allot over US\$200,000 for professional and nonprofessional service as stipulated in the 2008/2009 Draft Fiscal Budget is intended to hire professional auditors as the GAC has a problem with the requisite capacity to handle professional audits.

**Students Sign Anti-Violence Resolution**

(The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The Analyst)

- Students of 25 public and private schools in the Monrovia area have signed a resolution against violence.

- The schools including the W.V.S. Tubman, J.J. Roberts, Calvary Baptist, Len Miller and St. Peters Lutheran High schools in a three-count resolution pledged not to support or participate in any form of violence as a means of addressing problems.
- Speaking at the programme, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf commended the students and called on them to make the resolution against violence a part of their daily undertakings.
- The President then urged the students to join government in its effort to reduce poverty and make the PRS a “live document”.

### **I Am Not a War Actor, President Sirleaf Reacts to Observer Story**

(Daily Observer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has reacted sharply to the Daily Observer's lead story of yesterday captioned “TRC Cites Lead War Actors”.
- The paper said in a telephone call yesterday with the Publisher, the President took serious exception to the inclusion of her photograph among people who the newspapers described as “Lead War Actors” another name for warlords.
- But the paper said the story was only intended to show that the President was among those being cited by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## **Radio Summary**

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

### **President Sirleaf Hosts the Press Today**

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will today hold a major press conference at the Foreign Ministry, which is being used as the temporary seat of the Presidency.
- President Sirleaf is expected to address a number of national issues as well as the Poverty Reduction forum held in Berlin.
- The conference which comes in the wake of revelations of Fiscal inadequacies during the Budget debate at the Legislature, Monday's strike action by commercial drivers and the hard-cost of living in the country will also provide the opportunity for interaction between the President and senior media practitioners.

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

### **Solicitor General Gongloe Warns the Public Against “Midnight” Travel**

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

### **Students Sign Anti-Violence Resolution**

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

### **Pre-trial in Margibi Massacre Case Continues Today**

- The pre-trial hearing of the murder case involving Senator Roland Kaine and others resumes today in Kakata, Margibi County.
- At today's hearing, Defense lawyers are expected to continue the cross-examination of the first state witness, Gibson Kpangbah.
- The second state witness, Emmanuel Cooper could begin testifying if both prosecution and defense lawyers complete the cross examination of Gibson.
- The pre-trial hearings are meant to establish whether the state has reason to hold the accused liable for the murder of 14 men killed in a land dispute.

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

### **Lawmakers to Study Capital Offense Legislation, Says Vice President Boakai**

- Speaking at a news briefing yesterday, Vice President Joseph Boakai says the Legislature is closely studying whether or not to respect the global convention against capital offense.
- Vice President Boakai said the lawmakers are looking for the best way to handle the convention in the face of the prevailing crimes rate in Liberia and called on the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to help the Liberia National Police (LNP) tackle the situation.

## Human Rights Watch

Friday, 10 July 2008

Press Release

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina: Local Courts Face Obstacles in War Crimes Trials Slow Progress May Create Impunity Gap for Many Perpetrators of Grave Crimes**

(Sarajevo, July 10, 2008) – Bosnia and Herzegovina’s cantonal and district courts face serious challenges in their efforts to fairly and efficiently try cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, Human Rights Watch said in a new report released today. A sustained commitment by local authorities, as well as substantial international support, is needed to address the large backlog of cases, Human Rights Watch said.

" Local and national authorities in Bosnia should demonstrate the political will to ensure fair and effective trials can be held. "

Joshua Franco, researcher in the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch

Still Waiting: Bringing Justice for War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity, and Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Cantonal and District Courts  
Report, July 10, 2008

It is estimated that several thousand unresolved case files involving very serious crimes committed during the 1992-95 war remain that may be tried before the cantonal courts in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and district courts in Republika Srpska (the two entities that make up Bosnia and Herzegovina). Yet, these trials have a fraction of the attention or support that similar trials received at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) or the War Crimes Chamber of the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

“Victims have been waiting for more than a decade to see justice done,” said Joshua Franco, researcher in the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch. “Local and national authorities in Bosnia should demonstrate the political will to ensure fair and effective trials can be held.”

The 71-page report, “Still Waiting: Bringing Justice for War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity, and Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Cantonal and District Courts,” details the numerous practical and political problems impeding these trials.

The obstacles include that prosecutors’ offices lack sufficient staff and generally do not specialize in one type of crime. Cooperation between prosecutors and police and between police across entity lines continues to be problematic. Witness protection measures are rarely, if ever, employed, and witness support services are generally not available. Prosecutors often fail to make use of available sources of evidence and do not take steps necessary to secure suspect attendance at trial. Defense attorneys generally lack access to training in relevant areas of law and are often inadequately, or not at all, compensated for their work. Some cantonal and district courts have yet to try a single case.

“Clearly, there are resource constraints in the entity justice systems, and the Bosnian authorities need to ensure that those doing effective work on these cases have the tools that they need,” said Franco. “But resources cannot explain all of the shortcomings in these trials. Prosecutors, police, judges, and others who are not fulfilling their duty to investigate and try these cases need to be pressed to do more with what they have.”

The legal system also suffers from several serious deficiencies. A lack of law harmonization in Bosnia's four justice systems leads to inconsistent interpretations of key points of law and to widely differing punishments for similar crimes. Courts often do not respect the precedent of other courts, including the ICTY. The absence of formalized cooperation or a framework for extradition with neighboring countries makes it impossible to try many cases.

In addition, trials for crimes committed during the war that are being prosecuted in cantonal and district courts are often invisible to the public due to insufficient outreach and a lack of accurate, publicly available information on these trials.

“Without public understanding of the process, it is hard for victims, witnesses, and society at large to trust the fairness of the trials,” said Franco. “In the absence of accurate information, there is a tendency to interpret these proceedings in a way that conforms to preexisting political beliefs.”

The recent signing of a stabilization and association agreement between the European Union (EU) and Bosnia and Herzegovina underscores the importance of the EU's commitment to building the rule of law and of supporting political stability in the country. The EU should prioritize the needs of cantonal and district courts dealing with these war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

The report includes detailed recommendations of steps that local and national authorities, as well as the European Union and other governments, can take in order to address the pressing problems standing in the way of justice for victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.