

**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, 2 July 2008

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

Wednesday, 2 June 2008

*As Kabala prison goes without a vehicle...*

# Prisoners plead for mercy

By John Baimba Sesay

Prison conditions all over the country have not been encouraging especially the way prisoners are treated by prison officers, which for most of the time is badly.

Chief Officer class two, Randolph George of the Kabala Prisons, explained that the Kabala prisons has 10 cells for male prisoners and 2 for female and that each cell room is expected to contain at most six prisoners. "Currently, there are 44 prisoners in the prisons, including one female" and that the prison is expected to house a capacity of 75 inmates.

He disclosed that the cases that mostly take people to prison are those of cattle stealing and sexual offences. The prison officer who happens to be the second in command of the Kabala prison also disclosed that, the longest serving prisoner is a female who is serving a three years prison sentence for wounding.

"As a prison, we ensure we respect the basic rights of all

prisoners; they have access to people who come to visit them, they have food every day, and everything that basically makes somebody lives a good life. Only that we restrict them from enjoying their freedom of movement, but all what the prison is supposed to provide them with, we ensure they get all".

Mr. George denied that they have ever allowed prisoners to be used as laborers by people in the community, "only that if somebody is a carpenter and there is a way of getting them [prisoners] to go and do some exercise, we will allow that, but not on commercial purposes. At times we take them to our gardens just to exercise". He said, they have no basic tools to train prisoners except agricultural tools

Speaking on the constraints they are faced with in running the prison, Randolph George said, they lack transportation facilities

to take prisoners to the High Court in Makeni whenever a matter is transferred to the High Court by the Magistrate. "We are staying very close to the border with Guinea and if there is any problem, we have no transport system to take our prisoners to Freetown. At times when we want to go for prisoners supply, we are compelled to use commercial vehicles", George said and "we don't even have a bicycle".

George also disclosed that prisoners lack toiletries and medicine. "It has taken a long time since the prison in Kabala was supplied with drugs and toiletries. We have a nurse and not a doctor and for most time when prisoners fall sick, we take them to the government hospital for treatment and the hospital has been very cooperative with us in that direction".

With regards the only female prisoner in the prison, Randolph George said, he has

always ensured that, she is not abused since there is a female prisons officer who mans the gate leading into her [female prisoner] cell room.

However, he said, since he was transferred to Kabala, there has never been an escape of prisoners. "There used to be such reports but since I was transferred here, that has never occurred". He appealed to the government to look at the prison conditions in Kabala.

Meanwhile, speaking to Awoko, Dalba Samura, the only female prisoner said she is not encountering any problems with the female prison officer. "I eat twice a day. There is enough water

only that we have no soap to wash".

She disclosed that she was jailed for wounding but that the person that she wounded normally visits her in prison. She disclosed that she has five children, the younger being three years old, and that the eldest, a girl, got pregnant when she was sentenced to jail. "I never had the intention of wounding, only that I was very angry at the time. I am pleading of mercy, let the president look into my plight, I am a mother of five," she said, weeping. She also called on Human Rights organizations to look into her plight and see what

could be down to save her from continuous suffering in prison.

Another prisoner, Abu Bakarr Sillah, who is being held on remand said, he was sent to prison after he had an encounter with his father in Kabala over Mango. Contrary to what the prison boss said that, prisoners get food thrice a day, Abu Bakarr Sillah said, the food that is provided them is not enough and called on the authorities to look at the plight of prisoners in Kabala.

"We have no problem with the prison officers here, only that we are getting small food but we know that is not the fault of the officers since they are providing us what is given them", he said.

Awoko

Wednesday, 2 June 2008

## **UNIOSIL to change**

*By Ophaniel Gooding*

**S**ierra Leone's eleven year madness made the United Nations intervene with a peace keeping mission. Now that the civil war has ended the mission will massively scale down and transform in to an "integrated peace building" entity. The acting Executive Representative of the UN Secretary General (ERSG) Mr Michael Schulenburg during a breakfast session with media practitioners at the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), Mammy Yoko headquarters disclosed that by the end of September this year the mission will transform to a "United Nations Integrated Peace Building Office." He stated, "the role of the UN is changing," noting that the UN was going to capacitate local institutions to remain technically engage "[Sierra Leone] is not a UN country," lamented the ERSG, pointing out that Sierra Leoneans should take their own destiny in their hand by ensuring that the hard won peace is maintained. Mr Schulenburg commended Sierra Leone for maintaining a high standard of democratic practice and encouraged Sierra Leoneans to keep such a good practice. Among several issues discussed, Mr Schulenburg spoke about the criteria used by the UN to assess the credibility of the electoral process which was one of the points highlighted in the voting pattern "if there is a major change [in voting pattern it must be] explainable." The Head of Department Mass Communication, Fourah Bay College (FBC) who doubles as Independent Media Commissioner's Chairperson, Mrs Bernadette Cole explained that the IMC has appointed media monitors all over the country, adding that "they are individuals of high integrity". She commended the UN for the role played in Sierra Leone in attaining and consolidating peace. The President of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalist (SLAJ), Philip Neville noted that the UN has helped journalists attain the recognition that they deserve and "we are trying to maintain it" he said.

## UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 1 July 2008

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

### **Newspaper Summary**

#### **Liberian President Wants UN Extend Timetable for Troops Withdrawal**

(Daily Observer, The Analyst, The News)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has asked the United Nations to re-consider its timetable for the withdrawal of peacekeeping troops in Liberia.
- President Sirleaf stressed that crime still exists in some sections of the Liberian society and appealed for assistance for the security sector.
- Speaking on Monday during talks with the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Aisha Rose Mugiro, the President said she believes the UN can do more to strengthen the Liberia National Police and asked for cooperation from the organization in this initiative.
- She said the country is building “a strong army” and expressed the optimism that this will be strengthened in a few years.
- Ms. Mugiro pledged the UN’s commitment to revamping many of Liberia’s troubled sectors, including security.
- In keeping with UN Security Council Resolution 1777, the mission is authorized to reduce its military forces by 2,450 personnel. This clearly means UNMIL will still be maintaining more than 11,000 troops in Liberia after September this year. President Sirleaf’s request indicates a fairly high level of public interest and the importance of UNMIL’s work and presence in Liberia.
- Despite the overwhelming public approbation regarding the relevance of mission, some critics continued to perceive the phased drawdown plan [that is steadily being implemented, and which will leave more than half of the current number of peacekeepers in Liberia by 2010], to mean that the mission was hastily winding down its operations while the country was yet to complete a vigorous security sector reform process initiated by the international community.

#### **Poverty Reduction Forum Ends With More Support for Reconstruction**

(The News)

- The 2008 Liberia Poverty Reduction Forum (LPRF) has ended in Berlin, Germany with Liberia’s partners announcing additional financial commitments to fund the country’s development programs. In a communique, the partners confirmed that their support to Liberia will be approximately US\$250-300 hundred million for the first year of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS 2008/2009). The partners agreed with the Liberian Government on the need to fully align these funds to the country’s highest development priorities.
- According to an Executive Mansion dispatch from Berlin, the partners committed approximately US\$115 million through the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund. In addition to this amount, there is a further US\$140 million commitment from the World Bank and the African Development Bank to support infrastructure financing over the three years. Partners also announced increased budgetary support and contributed to financing for a cash buy-back of the country’s commercial debt. The African Development Bank and the World Bank made commitments of US\$26 million in budget support over the next three years.

(The News)

- [sic] An official of the UN Public Information Section says rape remains the most frequently committed serious crime in Liberia, where most cases are not reported by the victims. Mr. George Somerwill, Chief of Public Information of the UN Mission in Liberia said from January to February alone, out of 200 rape cases, 17 involved infants aged five and below. In a communication addressed to media institutions, Mr. Somerwill said terrible effects of rape do not stay with the victim alone, but also family members suffer and their lives are destroyed.

### **Opposition Politician Urges Partisans to prevent next election under current electoral body**

(Heritage)

- [sic] Mr. J. Milton Teahjay, an executive of the opposition Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), has declared that the CDC would prevent through legal and political means the conduct of the 2011 general and presidential elections if the current administration of the National Election Commission (NEC) is not replaced. Teahjay claims the entire NEC board of commissioners headed by Mr. James Fromayan is incredible and would produce incredible and unfair results of the 2011 elections if they are allowed to conduct the polls.

## **Radio Summary**

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

#### **President Sirleaf Appeals for Extension of UNMIL's Mandate**

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

#### **Speaker Tyler Urges UN and America Not To By-Pass Rule of Law**

- House Speaker Alex Tyler has called on the United Nations and the US Government to follow the law in the move to freeze and seize the assets of Charles Taylor and his associates.
- Speaker Tyler said the UN and the US Government must ensure due process in achieving their campaign against the former President and his associates.
- The Speaker made the statement at the start of a training programme for legislators and their staff.
- The House earlier this year rejected the passage of the assets freeze and seizure bill submitted by the Executive describing it as draconian and a violation of the Liberian Constitution.
- The training programme at the National Legislature was facilitated by a delegation of the House Democracy Assistance Commission of the US Congress.

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

#### **Cohen Reveals Why America Failed to Rescue Liberia in 1990**

- A dispatch from the United States says former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen has given reasons why the United States did not intervene at the start of the civil war in Liberia.
- Testifying before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Diaspora public hearings, Mr. Cohen said America could not intervene because it did not want to be responsible for Liberia forever.
- He quoted the former U.S. National Security Advisor, William Scowcroft as saying that the U.S. intervention would have meant that Liberia would perpetually be a "ward" to America.
- Mr. Cohen said the perception of the administration was that if it had intervened to end the conflict, America would be fully responsible for the recovery of Liberia forever.

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BBC

Friday, 27 June 2008

## ICC charges DR Congo 'warlords'

**Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court in the Hague have charged two Congolese militia leaders with war crimes.**

Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui are accused of planning and ordering an attack, in which more than 200 villagers were allegedly killed.

Reports say some of the victims were burned to death, and many women were forced to become sex slaves.

This is only the second case to be launched by the court, set up in 2002.

The first trial, of another Congolese militia leader, Thomas Lubanga, has been suspended over concerns that evidence was withheld from the defence.

### Decision

Mr Lubanga, who was on the other side of the Ituri conflict, may be released over concerns that the defence was denied access to some evidence.

Defence lawyers for Mr Katanga and Mr Ngudjolo have asked judges to suspend the case against them as the prosecution is using the same evidence.

However, the court has decided to go ahead with the hearing, as the proceedings are not as advanced.

A "confirmation of charges" is now set to take place at which evidence will be presented to support the charges, which include war crimes and crimes against humanity. These include murder, sexual slavery, rape, inhumane acts and recruiting child soldiers.

At the end of this process the court will have 60 days in which to decide whether or not to go to trial.

"Over 200 children, women, elderly and civilian men were killed," in the north-eastern village of Bogoro, said Deputy Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

The Ituri conflict, which raged well after a wider peace accord officially ended Congo's 1998-2003 war, pitted foreign-backed militias from the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups against one another.



Mr Katanga was known as "Simba", meaning lion



Mr Katanga headed the Patriotic Forces of Resistance of Ituri (FRPI), while Mr Ngudjolo led the allied Front of Nationalists and Integrationists (FPI) militia.

The ICC, based in The Hague, was set up in 2002 as the world's first permanent war crimes court.

It was designed to end the need for various ad hoc war crimes courts - including the chambers created to deal with war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the genocide in Rwanda.