

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



Bonthe Secondary School (composite photo) in the rain.

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:

Monday, 21 July 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

Local News

International Day of Justice / *Cotton Tree News* Page 3

International News

A Test for Africa / *Baltimore Sun* Pages 4-5

Milosevic, Taylor cases prove Bashir arrest will help Sudan / *East African* Pages 6-7

The 'problem' with Bashir is that he's a better suspect than Taylor / *East African* Pages 8-9

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / *UNMIL* Pages 10-12

ICC Probes Darfur Rebel Leaders / *BBC* Page 13

Sudan Leader Considers Arab Plan / *BBC* Page 14

Cotton Tree News
Saturday, 19 July 2008

International Day of Justice

Written by Alinah Kallon
Saturday, 19 July 2008

Addressing justice and impunity in Sierra Leone is a great stride towards victory for the protection of human rights. It also indicates the advancement of human security and progress in our national justice sector reform. Sarah-Ann Lewis, Coordinator of the Justice Sector Coordination Office in the Ministry of Justice spoke at a symposium in observance of the International Justice Day at the Miatta Conference Centre in Freetown. Abdul Serry-Kamal, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice said the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has created an opportunity to punish perpetrators of heinous crimes everywhere. He said Sierra Leone was one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Rome Statute creating the ICC though it had not domesticated the treaty. He pointed out that the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has contributed tremendously to addressing the issue of impunity in the world. The launch of the ICC Legislation Seminar Report formed part of the ceremony.

Baltimore Sun

Monday, 21 July 2008

Opinion

A test for Africa

War-crimes prosecution of Sudan's leader a victory for rule of law

By David M. Crane

July 21, 2008

On June 4, 2003, as Liberian President Charles Taylor walked up the steps for the opening ceremony of the Accra Peace Accords in Ghana, I stood in front of the world's press and announced that I had unsealed an indictment charging him with 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The international community reacted with praise - and condemnation. Politicians and diplomats voiced concern that my announcement had jeopardized the newly organized peace process and hopes for stability in West Africa. Some even said that the indictment put lives at risk.

Yet five years later, Liberia is stable, and a fairly elected government is in place with a real possibility that it is on the correct path to a sustainable peace under the leadership of the first woman ever elected a head of state in Africa. Mr. Taylor sits in The Hague on trial before a judicial chamber of the Special Court of Sierra Leone.

The recent actions by the International Criminal Court (ICC) related to the indictment of President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan for war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity have prompted similar rhetoric by politicians and diplomats, who warn of threats to peace, lives and regional stability. Yet the promising outcome in Liberia should encourage the international community to act and focus its efforts to stop the atrocities in Darfur and begin an earnest effort to develop a plan for peace in that region under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The indictments of Mr. Taylor five years ago and Mr. al-Bashir this week tell the people of Africa that their lives matter and that members of the "club" of African leaders are on notice that they will be held accountable for their actions. The indictment of Mr. al-Bashir also signals to the people of Africa that no one is above the law, that the law is fair, and that the rule of law is more powerful than the rule of the gun. This may sound trite to Western ears, but it is a critical message for Africa. In a region where most people have considered the law and governmental institutions a threat, they may begin to realize that through the rule of law, a true and sustainable peace and stable society can emerge from the ashes of Darfur.

Yet, the current leadership in Africa does not get it. Leaders' silence or mumbled condemnation of the ICC's actions reflects their attitude toward the law and their place in the family of nations. The atrocities, the pain and suffering that have been perpetrated upon the people of Africa past in recent decades can't be brushed aside by the statement, "African solutions to African problems." These are international concerns. They are humanity's problems, and they must be dealt with in an international forum, under the rule of law.

These indictments are the building blocks by which Africa can move forward into the 21st century. Accountability, good governance, and the rule of law will bring the stability needed for economic growth and long-term investment. In other words, it is good for business that we foster accountability in all aspects of African society.

The next African head of state who must be held accountable is President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. His arrogant rule has brought great shame on himself, his country, southern Africa, and those who either

coddle him or look the other way, like President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. International action must be focused, sustained, open, and fair in dealing with this petty tyrant. Yet the world must act soon. Mr. Mugabe must be dealt with by an appropriate legal mechanism - either a domestic or regional court or the ICC.

On Aug. 29, 2007, most of the world's current and former international prosecutors, from Nuremberg to the International Criminal Court, issued the First Chautauqua Declaration in Upstate New York. This historic declaration stated: "It is no longer about whether individuals agree or disagree with the pursuit of justice in political, moral, or practical terms, now it is the law ... the challenge for states and the international community is to fulfill the promise of the law they created; to enforce judicial decisions; to ensure the arrest and the surrender of sought individuals."

The international community has moved forward slowly and erratically in holding accountable those who commit atrocities around the world. Yet it has moved forward nonetheless. The legal card has been dealt by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in response to the United Nations Security Council, regarding the grave international crimes perpetrated in Darfur. It is now time for the dangerous game being played out there to end. Only the political process can do that - by working out a way by which Mr. al-Bashir is removed from power and prosecuted.

They did it with Mr. Taylor; they can do it again with Mr. al-Bashir. In the words of the Chautauqua Declaration: It is the law.

David M. Crane is a professor at Syracuse University College of Law and former founding chief prosecutor of the international war crimes tribunal in West Africa called the Special Court for Sierra Leone, 2002-2005. His e-mail is dmcrane@law.syr.edu.

The East African (Kenya)

Monday, 21 July 2008

Milosevic, Taylor cases prove Bashir arrest will help Sudan

By ZACHARY OCHIENG

Special Correspondent

Last week's request for a warrant of arrest for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Luis Moreno-Ocampo, continues to draw mixed reactions.

However, a report by the think tank ENOUGH Project argues that the call to arrest al-Bashir is not only based on sound evidence, but that it can be a step forward in the path to secure peace in Darfur.

The report cites the cases of Slobodan Milosevic and Charles Taylor, as past indictments of war criminals that brought the desired results.

"The status quo in Sudan is one of the deadliest in the world. Until there is a consequence for the commission of genocide, it will continue. This action introduces a cost, finally, into the equation," says John Mr Prendergast, the co-chair of Enough.

In the report, *The Merits of Justice*, the authors of the report argue that, "If the hand-wringing all feels a bit familiar, it is because we have been through this more than once before. In 1999, during the Kosovo conflict, Milosevic was indicted in the middle of not only a Nato bombing campaign to reverse the ethnic cleaning in Kosovo, but of high-level peace talks between the United States, Russia, and Finland to end the war."

In the case of Taylor, in June 2003, Liberia was on the brink. Rebel forces had advanced within 10 miles of the capital in the first of a series of offensives that Liberians would dub "World Wars" for their ferocity. The ICC warrant was nevertheless executed, and sanity was restored in Liberia.

In the latest move, the ICC wants al-Bashir indicted on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Darfur. The report says however, "Sadly, but somewhat unsurprisingly, the step has set off a chorus of hand-wringing among certain diplomats, academics and pundits who are now arguing that holding perpetrators of crimes against humanity accountable for their actions is unhelpful.

A veteran academic expressed his worry that almost all African senior officials could be made vulnerable to similar charges by this precedent," the report states.

But the report argues, "Let's be clear. Holding people accountable for war crimes is not only the right thing to do from a moral perspective — it directly promotes peace and makes future such abuses less likely.

Part of the reason Darfur has remained locked in crisis for years is that the international community has been slow to acknowledge what has always been painfully obvious: The janjaweed militias that have terrorised and decimated Darfur have been directed by the Sudanese government.

The militias were financed by the government, and received direct battlefield support from the Sudanese military. The ICC is doing no more than acknowledging the plain, painful truth of Sudan's tragedy. The prosecutor should be congratulated for recognising that turning a blind eye to war crimes is not helpful."

According to the report, very few commentators took exception with the notion that Milosevic had been intimately involved in directing ethnic cleansing, genocide, and sundry other war crimes in Bosnia and Kosovo.

But Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin said the indictment “pulled out the rug from under the negotiating process,” as both Russia and China decried what they called a “political” indictment that was designed to scuttle peace talks. Others suggested the indictment would push Milosevic to stay in power permanently or lead his forces to adopt an even more brutal approach on the ground in Kosovo.

Yet, in retrospect, the work of the Yugoslav tribunal and the indictment of Milosevic led to none of the doomsday scenarios envisioned by the skeptics.

While the Russians postponed a single diplomatic trip to Belgrade for one week to express their dissatisfaction with the indictment, the peace talks resumed quickly and Milosevic accepted the demands that were placed upon him: Kosovar refugees were allowed to return home; Serb forces withdrew from the province and a Nato-led force entered to provide security.

Milosevic’s hold on power did not last long after the 1999 war and his indictment.

The reports says that the lesson learnt from Milosevic’s case is that indictments don’t necessarily derail peace talks and, indeed, they seem to be most helpful in clarifying the minds of dictators that their very existence is at stake.

In the Taylor case, he was indicted shortly after he promised to step down by the end of 2003 at a peace meeting in Accra, Ghana, when the special court for Sierra Leone unveiled an indictment against Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated during that country’s brutal war.

Some diplomats engaged in the negotiations denounced the indictment as an impediment to peace, and the presidents of South Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana complained that they had been “sandbagged” by the timing of the indictments as they tried to persuade Taylor to resign.

Pessimists were quick to critique the court’s prosecutor for interjecting the concept of justice into the rarefied realpolitik of peace negotiations.

Yet, Taylor’s indictment, combined with unprecedented levels of international pressure (including a US warship on the horizon) helped to build the leverage necessary to convince him to move into a negotiated exile in Nigeria. The terms of this deal were clear: As long as he stayed out of Liberian politics, Nigeria would keep him out of the hands of the court, despite an Interpol warrant for his arrest.

Nevertheless, he was arrested following a dramatic and nearly successful escape attempt to cross from Nigeria into Cameroon. He was turned over to the special court and is currently facing trial on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

“Today, self-professed realists argue that Taylor’s handover to justice sent the wrong message to dictators such as al-Bashir and Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe, maintaining that it undermines the credibility of amnesty offers to dictators who are all the more likely to hold on to power at any cost. This facile misreading of history misses the real lessons from the Taylor case,” the report says.

The East African (Kenya)

Monday, 21 July 2008

The ‘problem’ with Bashir is that he’s a better suspect than Taylor

By CHARLES ONYANGO - OBBO

cobbo@nation.co.ke

There were two very different and significant developments in Eastern Africa in the last few days.

The International Criminal Court of Justice’s prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo announced that he was moving to seek a warrant of arrest against Sudan’s President Omar al-Bashir for genocide and war crimes.

At about the same time in Rwanda, the country which faced one of the worst genocides of the 20th century in 1994 (nearly one million were killed), a law was passed to amend the constitution to provide that a former president cannot be prosecuted on charges for which he was not put on trial while in office.

The amendment means that serving heads of state can be prosecuted. That is quite unusual not just in Africa, but also in the world.

The ICC prosecutor’s move has been met with mostly opposition in Africa, with critics arguing it threatens the fragile peace in southern Sudan, and prospects for a negotiated settlement in Darfur, where nearly 200,000 people have been killed and other 2.5 million displaced by government troops and the Khartoum-backed militia, the Janjaweed.

But perhaps the Rwanda example demonstrates that things that are considered “impossible”, or deemed to be “unAfrican” can actually be achieved more easily than most people realise.

THE “PROBLEM” WITH THE THREATENED indictment of Bashir is not that it will scuttle peace in southern Sudan and progress in Darfur, but rather that he is considered a “better” war crimes suspect than former Liberian president Charles Taylor. Taylor became the first incumbent African president to be charged by the ICC with war crimes.

In 2003, he was forced to step down from power and eventually carted off to the Hague where his trial is currently taking place.

The same leaders who all descended upon Monrovia to ensure that Taylor left, are now mealy-mouthed about Bashir. Yet, while Taylor’s atrocities were informed by an element of common criminality and petty greed, Bashir’s in Darfur are partly a cold cynical calculation to ethnically cleanse parts of western Sudan to make possible oil exploration unfettered by local political and cultural claims over the fields.

True, in the Sudan context, Bashir is a moderate of sorts, and if he is weakened by the threat of ICC indictment, it might make it easier for hardliners to outmanoeuvre him.

Even if that happens, it might not all be a disaster. It’s probably better to have a regular leadership change that allows hardliners too to come to power, than have incompetent moderates rule until they are senile.

Secondly, Bashir has probably reached the limits of his ability to deliver on commitments made to the south, or to make progress on Darfur. A hardliner might be able to move matters forward because he would have more credibility with the forces now opposed to compromise.

YET AGAIN, THE AFRICAN UNION ALSO has positioned itself foolishly. An organisation that has been pressing the international community to invest more in the Darfur peacekeeping effort, and to send a UN mission to Somalia does not help its cause when it rallies to shield Bashir from Morenzo-Ocampo's onslaught.

China, perhaps the leading global defender of Bashir — and rogue Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe's — government's against international censure, is also putting its future relations in Africa at risk because of a narrow focus on the oil concessions it has won in Sudan.

China is worried about losing access to oil and other resources in Africa to feed its booming economy, it's unwilling to risk that by seeming critical of brutal regimes in countries from which it buys raw materials. So it has rushed to try and seek a UN vote halting charges on Bashir.

China doesn't need lessons in the folly of such an approach. It should just take a look at the damage a similar approach has brought upon the USA, and how much of its prestige — and influence — it has squandered in the process.

Charles Onyango-Obbo is Nation Media Group's managing editor for convergence and new products.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 18 July 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

Six Police Officers Disrobed for Complicity in Armed Robbery

(The Inquirer, New Democrat, The New Liberia, The Analyst, The Informer, Heritage, The News)

- Six Police officers caught in armed robbery have been disrobed and sent to court for prosecution. The men are accused of armed robbing some residents of Paynesville and Sinkor, fleeing with money, phones and other valuables.
- The New Democrat newspaper said the six officers were part of 'Operation Thunderstorm' previously launched by Police to combat crime. The accused officers were the ones President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf apparently referred to as "bad apples" in the Police. At a recent press conference, the President spoke of the Police as being infested with some 'bad apples' which might have resulted from a vetting process that was not, in her view, rigorous as was done in the case of the new Liberian army. She suggested that the setting up of a re-vetting process may be necessary to retain good officers and weed out the bad ones. Some critics including opposition politicians - John Whitfield and the Liberty Party - misconstrued President Sirleaf's statement as demeaning the Force.
- Residents of the King Gray community in the Paynesville suburb this week accused police officers of complicity in armed robbery that left several people affected, but Police officials denied their men were involved. One can expect public feedback in the media in the coming days, particularly since it has become public knowledge that Police officers are involved in armed crime. Public fears are likely to be allayed in view of the fact Police authorities are apprehending and punishing misconduct involving law enforcement officers.

President Sirleaf Assesses Security Situation – Tours Several Communities at Night

(The Analyst)

- President Johnson Sirleaf late Thursday evening joined state security officers on a patrol of several communities, mainly in the Paynesville suburb to get a first hand assessment of the security situation in Monrovia at night. Some communities in Paynesville suffered an unprecedented wave of attacks and looting by armed roaming criminals in the last couple of days, prompting the recent launch of a security measure by the Liberia National Police to deal with the menace.
- The President was escorted on the assessment tour by a contingent of the Liberia National Police, backed by United Nations peacekeepers.

Third Autopsy Report Vindicates Suspected murderers of Teenager - But Government Expects

(Public Agenda, Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The News, National Chronicle, Heritage)

- Lawyers representing Hans Williams and his fiancée Mardea Paykue in the little Angel Meideh Togba murder case have released the result of the third autopsy conducted on the exhumed body. Speaking at a news conference Thursday, the Dean and Associates headed by Cllr. Musa Dean quoted the autopsy report as saying the deceased died from hanging and urged the Justice Ministry to release his clients from further detention. But Justice Minister Philip Banks described the third autopsy report presented by the lawyer as "ridiculous and faulty."
- Quoting the report, he said the second autopsy by the Cuban pathologist was incomplete and substandard.

- Prior to the third autopsy, two separate autopsies were performed with the second report contradicting an earlier one that ruled out foul play. The second report indicated that Angel was sexually abused before being strangled to death.
- Little Angel Meideh Togba was found hanging on November 30, 2007 at the home of her guardians.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:30 am)*

Immigration Commissioner Identifies Trafficking Points

- Speaking at a one day seminar on challenges of border security and management, Immigration Commissioner Chris Massaquoi said the Roberts International Airport and other border points in the country are major transit points for human trafficking.
- Col. Massaquoi said human trafficking and the illegal entry of undocumented migrants are situations of concern and challenges along the borders.
- He said because the borders are porous, deadly crimes are being perpetrated leaving the economy strangulated and deprived of much needed revenues.
- Also speaking at the seminar, Justice Minister Philip Banks acknowledged that child trafficking was prevalent in the country.
- The one day seminar was organized by the Governance Commission and the BIN.

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

Defense Lawyers Release Third Autopsy Report for Late Angel Togba

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

Suspected Armed Robber Found Dead in Paynesville

- A man believed to be in his twenties has been found dead in the Rock Hill Community in Paynesville.
- Residents claimed the man was part of a group that had gone to arm rob residents of the area Wednesday night and that the suspected armed robber might have been lynched to death by some community people.
- In an interview, the residents said they would do all they can to protect the area which has been a constant target for armed robbers.
- On Saturday armed robbers attacked several homes in the King Gray community in the same area, stealing money, phones and raping women.

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

Government Resolves to Protect Citizens amidst Upsurge in Armed Robbery

- Information Minister Laurence Bropleh says the upsurge in armed robbery is a superficial attempt to disrupt the smooth operation of government and confuse peaceful citizens.
- Speaking to reporters, Dr. Bropleh said government is resolved to protect its citizens and would do all it can to ensure they are safe.
- He said "Operation Disrupt and Dismantle" is showing a good sign and assured the necessary support would be given to ensure success.
- "Operation Disrupt and Dismantle" was launched by the Liberia National Police following increasing report of armed robbery involving men wearing Police uniforms.

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

LPRC Shortlists Five Companies to Bid for Terminal Rehabilitation

- The Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) has short listed five out of ten companies to participate in a bidding process.
- The process would lead to the rehabilitation and modernization of the Petroleum Storage Terminal at the LPRC.
- LPRC's Managing Director, Harry Greaves said the bid would close on August 21 and one of the companies is expected to be awarded the rehabilitation contract on September 10.

- Mr. Greaves said the present Product Storage Terminal has limited capacity, leakage, corroded pipes and old technology resulting to high losses.

Government Debunks Claims of Abandoning Collapsed Vai Town Bridge

- Government says it is currently in the process of evaluating bids for the reconstruction of the collapsed Vai Town Bridge.
- Clarifying reports that government had abandoned the bridge, Public Works Minister, Luseni Donzo said instead two Chinese companies, Chico and Ceeco are in the bid for the World Bank sponsored contract.
- His statement follows assertion by a former Finance Minister that government was boasting of surplus while the collapsed Vai Town Bridge lies abandoned.

* * * *

BBC

Friday, 18 July 2008

ICC probes Darfur rebel leaders

Rebel leaders from Sudan's Darfur region are being investigated for war crimes, says International Criminal Court's prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo.

Mr Ocampo last week asked for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to be indicted on war crimes charges, sparking angry protests in the capital, Khartoum.

Now he wants rebels to help investigate two of their own commanders accused of attacking African Union peacekeepers.

"Any attack against peacekeepers... is a war crime," he told the BBC.

Evidence

Rebels are accused of killing 10 AU peacekeepers last year in an assault on their base in the town of Haskanita, in southern Darfur.

Mr Ocampo told the BBC he was asking other militant groups to help him gather evidence against two rebel commanders suspected of leading the attack.

"The rebel groups have an opportunity to... provide evidence, to arrest the commanders and to stop crimes," he said, adding that the rebels had to show respect for the law.

The ICC prosecutor rejected suggestions that he had jeopardised peace efforts in Darfur by asking for an arrest warrant for Mr Bashir. He says the UN Security Council decided justice had to be done in Darfur to make peace.

"A few weeks ago, in June 2008, the Security Council confirmed the need to do justice", he said, "so I am doing what the Security Council requested me to do."

Some UN officials fear reprisals against UN peacekeepers and aid workers in Darfur, if an arrest warrant is issued against Mr Bashir - some non-essential staff have been pulled out of the region. There are some 9,000 members of a joint UN-African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur, of a planned 26,000 contingent.

The five-year-old conflict has left some 300,000 people dead, while more than two million have fled their homes, the UN says.

Sudan's government says the scale of the violence and suffering has been exaggerated by the west for political reasons.

It denies charges that it organised the Arab Janjaweed militias, accused of widespread atrocities against Darfur's black African population.



Darfur rebels are being asked to help the ICC investigations



BBC

Sunday, 20 July 2008

Sudan leader considers Arab plan

The head of the Arab League has met Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir to discuss accusations against him by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Amr Moussa said a plan drawn up by the Arab League to solve the crisis had been well received in Khartoum. During a Cairo meeting on Saturday the Arab League condemned the ICC's call to arrest Mr Bashir on war crimes charges.

ICC lawyers say Mr Bashir must answer charges of genocide over the violence in Sudan's troubled Darfur region.

The Arab League said the ICC's move was "unbalanced".

Trial call

Mr Moussa flew to the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, on Sunday to meet Mr Bashir.

"In so far as work is concerned, we had very, very serious discussions for the duration [of] a little less than two hours," Mr Moussa said.

He said he would meet Arab League ministers again on Monday and was confident that progress would be made.

Mr Moussa did not reveal any details of the Arab League's plan, but the organisation called for Sudan to hold credible trials for those accused of war crimes in Darfur.

ICC chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has asked the court for a warrant for Mr Bashir on suspicion of masterminding crimes against humanity in the region.

Mr Moreno-Ocampo accused Mr Bashir of running a campaign of genocide that killed 35,000 people outright, at least another 100,000 through a "slow death" and forced 2.5 million to flee their homes in Darfur.

Meanwhile, the African Union is preparing to meet in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa to discuss the implications of Mr Bashir's possible indictment.

The meeting was requested by the Sudanese government.



Mr Bashir is accused of masterminding the deaths of thousands in Darfur