

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



Fishermen braving the storm

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, 23 September 2008

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

Tuesday, 23 September 2008

Human Rights Boss Concerned Over Gender Justice

By Bampia J Bundu

Vice Chairman of the Human Right Commission in Sierra Leone, Mr. Edward Sam has expressed concerns over the gender justice situation in the country.

Mr. Sam, who was speaking at his office on Monday September 22 2008, says enacting a law is different from its implementation and enforcement.

“It is one thing to enact a law but quite a different thing to understand its contents, implementation and enforcement,” he told Awareness Times, while calling for the urgent implementation of the gender justice laws.

He said the Commission recognizes the need to incorporate gender justice and gender sensitivity in all efforts and activities related to justice and the rule of law.

“The Commission also recognizes the need to give greater attention to meeting the needs of victims and the wider society from which they come including the development of programmes to provide appropriate reparations to victims for harm suffered,” Mr. Sam said while noting that there is a concern that the fundamentals of the rule of law are clearly flouted not only by individuals but also by the state. He however expressed appreciation to the Justice Sector

Development Programme (JSDP) for the production of the child justice strategy which provides various strategies on the treatment of children in conflict with the law.

He called on the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs and its partners to fully implement the recommendations of the Child Rights Committee.

“All relevant stakeholders should work towards developing indicators for monitoring and evaluating the justice laws for effective implementation and monitoring,” he

BBC World Service Trust
Monday, 22 September 2008

Report from The Hague

A Former Correspondent of Radio France International and Reuters who covered both Liberian and Sierra Leonean Civil wars has taken the stand against Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor in The Hague. Mr. Stephen Smith said he was humiliated by Taylor's forces in 1990, and later expelled from Liberia by Taylor himself. Mr. Smith, now a professor at the Duke University in America is testifying to his knowledge of the civil wars in the two neighbouring countries. Joseph Cheeseman reports.

The first half of Mr. Smith's testimonies was objected to by Mr. Taylor's Lawyers. According to them, Mr. Smith's opening testimonies had no relevance to the prosecution's indictment. They said Mr. Smith dwelled largely on his experience in Liberia in 1990, a period outside of the prosecution's indictment against Mr. Taylor. The prosecution indictment covers from 1996 to 2002. The Judges agreed with Taylor's Lawyers and told Prosecution Lawyer Mohammed Bangura to confine himself to the framework of the indictment.

Mr. Smith told the court he covered all sides of the Liberian Civil war from Samuel Doe, Charles Taylor and then to Prince Johnson.

The American Professor said the Sierra Leone civil war was an offspring of the Liberian Civil war.

Mr. Smith: This connection was self evident. There were two sets of explanations. The first one you could see the conflict in Sierra Leone being spawned by the conflict in Liberia. On a very personal, or almost anecdotal, level you could see some of the same faces, people you had been meeting in Liberia would be over- I mentioned Sam Bockarie and Foday Sankoh- you would see the same people. Some of the Lebanese people I had seen in the entourage of Mr. Taylor I would see on the Sierra Leonean side as well.

Mr. Smith interviewed the accused Former Liberian President in Paris in November 2000. He said Mr. Taylor in that interview described the Sierra Leone Civil war as a war for diamonds. The Former Journalist told the court Mr. Taylor blamed the war on the British's desire for diamonds.

When asked on cross-examination whether the witness was knowledgeable of the residence of Sam Bockarie in Monrovia, Mr. Smith said indeed Sam Bockarie lived in Liberia. But Defence Lawyer, Terry Munyard said Bockarie went to Monrovia as part of Taylor's mediatory role in the Sierra Leone conflict. But Mr. Smith disagreed.

Mr. Munyard: And Sam Bockarie would not agree to disarm and that was why President Taylor agreed to have him and his troops come to Liberia.

Mr. Smith: A faction which still wanted to wage war came to Liberia.

Mr. Munyard: But did not continue to wage war on Sierra Leone from Liberia.

Mr. Smith: No I think that would be an impune statement by many analysts because precisely if you still refer to the timeline you would see that after coming to Monrovia and after the split in the peace process in Sierra Leone did not go smoothly, quite to the contrary, despite the deployment of 13,000 UN soldiers you would have heightened rebel activity and hostage taking of 500 blue helmets which prompted then the bridge intervention.

According to the article of the November 2000 interview Mr. Smith had with the Former Liberian Leader in the French Capital, Paris, Mr. Taylor admitted that the Sierra Leonean Rebel Group, RUF committed terrible atrocities. According to excerpts of the article read in court, Mr. Taylor then suggested that the RUF be a part of the solution to the Sierra Leone civil conflict. Mr. Smith's cross-examination continues on Tuesday.

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
22 September 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

President Sirleaf Addresses UN General Assembly Tuesday

(The Analyst, The Inquirer, The News, The Monitor)

- President Sirleaf who is in the US to attend the opening of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly will address the assembly on Tuesday. An Executive Mansion dispatch from New York says, the President's address will highlight the progress the government has made toward its development agenda. The President will also remind the Assembly of the challenges which continue to confront the government's ability to respond to the needs of the people.
- As part of scheduled events and meetings this week, the Liberian leader today addressed a high-level forum on 'Decent Work Approach to Development and the Millennium Development Goals.' The President's address will focus on building coherent employment and growth strategies. The former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson is sponsoring the forum. President Sirleaf also held separate meetings with American billionaires George Soros and Robert Johnson today to review progress on their investments in Liberia

UNHCR Presents Police Depot to Government

(The Informer)

- The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has turned over a Police Depot and a barrack to the government of Liberia. The UNHCR Liberia office put the cost of the project, constructed in Vahun, Lofa County at nearly one hundred eleven thousand United States Dollars.
- The agency said the project will enable survivors of abuse access to justice including challenges of sexual and gender-based violence and other harmful practices. The head of the UNHCR's Voinjama sub-office, Kazutoshi Nagasaka said the project is also intended to provide standard infrastructure support to the law enforcement groups. Assistant Police Commissioner for Leeward Affairs at the LNP, Col. James Konnie commended the UNHCR for project and said the buildings would address the accommodation problem which has impacted the field deployment of Police officers.

Normal Activities Resume at Liberia's Main University - As Faculty Support Staff End Strike Action

(The Informer, The News, The Inquirer, Liberian Express, Public Agenda)

- The faculty and support staff association at the University of Liberia have announced the end of several days of strike actions. The action was intended to bring about improvements in salaries and other incentives. The Inquirer

- reports that the President of the Faculty Association, Mr. Clifford Young yesterday said the association has decided to end the strike action because their demands or requests have been accepted.
- Meanwhile, the outgoing President of the University of Liberia, Dr. Al-Hassan Conteh has attested to the adoption of the report of the special Task force. He also acknowledged the task force's recommendation of adjustments of faculty and staff salaries by 30 percent.
 - Among other things, the task force headed by Prof. Wilson Tarphe has recommended the following measures, which include the budget for fiscal year, 2008/2009 in the amount of US\$8,211,156 to be approved by the joint faculty Senate-Council and forwarded to the Board of Trustees for its approbation. Meanwhile, the Analyst newspapers quotes the Task Force as assaying that the UL needs about US\$10 million to run smoothly without hindrance to the issues of salary delay among others.

"I Was Used To Loot and Execute People"...Ex-Taylor Government Child Combatant Recounts Experience

(The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- A child soldier of the former Charles Taylor government has explained stories of how he was conscripted as a combatant in 2003 and used as an executioner. Now 14 years old, the ex child combatant, name withheld explained that at age 9 he was recruited along with other children by former government militia commander Roland Duo around their 72nd, Somalia Drive residence to become bodyguards.
- According to a TRC release, he said they were used by Duo and other commanders to execute captives and to loot stores in and around Monrovia. The child soldier was testifying Friday at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Liberia Thematic Hearing for Children in the south eastern city of Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County. The hearing under theme: "Children and the Conflict in Liberia: What Does the Future Hold?" is aimed at understanding the impact of the conflict and transitional justice mechanisms on the development of Liberian children and their future.

Recycling Plant for Liberia Soon ...Says Minister Shannon

(National Chronicle, The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- The Daily Observer and National Chronicle newspapers report that Lands, Mines and Energy Minister, Dr. Eugene Shannon has disclosed that an international firm is seeking to establish a recycling plant in the country. Making the disclosure at a day-long workshop, Minister Shannon said Spanish Company had already been selected by Government to construct the recycling plant in Grand Bassa County.
- The Minister said the investors have begun holding discussions with authorities of the National Investment Commission (NIC) for the establishment of the Plant.
- He said when established the plant will transform scraps into the manufacture of agricultural tools and other equipment. Meanwhile, The Inquirer newspaper reports that Lands, Mines and Energy Minister has expressed his ministry's satisfaction over the manner in which the Liberia Scrap Association (LSA) is living up to the expectation of the Liberian government. Dr. Shannon commended the LSA for being corporative with the government of Liberia in line with the recent memorandum of understanding between the two parties and urged them to keep up to the task.

Liberia Receives 'Most Powerful' Sewage Truck

(Daily Observer, New Democrat)

- The Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) has received a US\$300,000 “most powerful” sewage truck from the Turkish Government. The truck was dubbed the “most powerful sewage truck in the world” by one of the Turkish engineers who accompanied the truck in order to train selected members of the Corporation on how to use the “multi-purpose” vacuum truck.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 9:00 am)*

Government Warns Deactivated AFL Personnel Against Demonstration

- In a statement issued in Monrovia yesterday, the Justice Ministry strongly warned de-activated Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) personnel against holding a planned demonstration today.
- According to the Ministry and the joint Security Commission, no permission was sought for the demonstration which is illegal and vowed that it will not be tolerated.
- The Ministry said the Liberia National Police (LNP) and other security forces have been placed on high alert to robustly deal with any situation to maintain law and order.

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

UNHCR Hands over Police Depot

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

President Sirleaf to Address Decent Work Forum Today

- An Executive Mansion dispatch from New York says President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will address a high-level forum on Decent Work Approach to Development and the MDGs in the United States today.
- The President's address will focus on building coherent employment and growth strategies.
- The former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson is sponsoring the forum.
- Later today, President Sirleaf will hold separate meetings with American billionaires George Soros and Robert Johnson to review progress on their investments in Liberia.
- President Sirleaf who is in the US to attend the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly will address the assembly on Tuesday.
- The address will highlight the progress government has made toward its development agenda and would also remind the world assembly of the challenges which continue to confront the government's ability to respond to the needs of the people.

Trouble Still Looms at Sinoe Rubber Company

- Report from Sinoe County says business people are being prevented from entering the Sinoe Rubber Plantation
- Correspondents say a group headed by one Prince Willie is denying the business people entry into the plantation some of whom are accused of being members of the Citizens Welfare Committee.
- The confusion at the Sinoe Rubber Plantation was a result of attempts to dissolve the Citizens Welfare Committee.
- Last month, a decision by Superintendent Sylvester Grigsby to dissolve the committee resulted into several persons being wounded and houses burned.
- Sinoe Police Chief, Superintendent Patrick Smith confirmed the situation and

said he has spoken to the heads of two groups said to be protecting the plantation.

- Superintendent Smith said Prince Wellie and the head of the other group only identified as White Flower, have agreed to find a resolution to the tension at the SRC.

Huge Consignment of Gold Arrested at Border Point

- State security at the Ganta Port of Entry in Nimba County has intercepted a Guinean national, Keita Bunzu with a huge consignment of gold.
- Reports say Bunzu entered Liberia with nearly 19,000 grams of processed gold concealed in a food basket.
- A Star Radio report says though customs officials at the Ganta border declined to comment but it was gathered that the gold is valued at more than US\$400,000.00 and a customs duty of US\$45,000 would have been paid if declared at the collectorate.
- Meanwhile, Keita and the consignment of gold have been transferred to Monrovia.

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UN News Centre

Monday, 22 September 2008

ICC Prosecutor urges world leaders to help stop Darfur war crimes



Luis Moreno-Ocampo International Criminal Court Prosecutor

The International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor is in New York today to urge international leaders to better protect civilians in Darfur and allow the court to successfully prosecute crimes committed in the war-torn Sudanese region.

The visit by Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the ICC Prosecutor, comes two months after he requested an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for allegedly committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide over the last five years in Darfur.

“We presented a solid case. The evidence shows that crimes against Darfurians continue today,” Mr. Moreno-Ocampo said.

“[Mr.] al-Bashir has complete control of his forces, and they are raping women today, they are promoting conditions in the camps to destroy complete communities and they are still bombing schools,” he added.

The ICC pre-trial chamber is reviewing the evidence submitted by prosecutors to determine if there are reasonable grounds to believe the Sudanese President committed the alleged crimes and issue the arrest warrant.

“The judges will decide. Those sought by the court have to face justice,” Mr. Moreno-Ocampo said referring to his request for the arrest warrant. “Between criminals and 2.5 million victims, they should make the right decision.”

“It is an immense challenge for the political leaders of the world. They have to protect the victims and ensure the respect for the court’s decisions,” the **ICC** Prosecutor added ahead of the General Assembly annual high-level debate, which starts tomorrow.

The prosecutor has also requested information from the Sudanese Government about the August attack on the Kalma camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs), where evidence suggests Sudanese Government forces killed at least 31 civilians while executing a search warrant for illegal weapons and drugs.

A third ICC Prosecutor’s investigation coming to completion is focusing on crimes committed by rebels, in particular the attack on African Union (AU) peacekeepers in September last year in Haskanita.

Mr. Moreno-Ocampo “will be meeting senior United Nations officials and expressing his appreciation of the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s staunch support for the independence of the international judiciary,” a spokesperson for the prosecutor told the UN News Centre.

The high-level officials meeting with the prosecutor on this visit include Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, who chairs the Ministerial Committee aimed at furthering peace efforts in Darfur.

Others meeting with Mr. Moreno-Ocampo include AU Chairperson Jean Ping, British Minister of State responsible for Africa, Asia and the UN Mark Malloch Brown, French Minister of State for Human Rights Ramatoulaye Yade-Zimet and Netherlands Foreign Minister Maxime Jacques Marcel Verhagen.

Some 300,000 people are estimated to have been killed across Darfur, an impoverished and arid region of western Sudan, as a result of direct combat, disease or malnutrition since 2003. Another 2.7 million people have been displaced because of fighting between rebels, Government forces and allied militiamen known as the Janjaweed.

Voice of America

Monday, 22 September 2008

International Court Presses Case Against Sudan Leader



AP Photo

The International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor plans to meet with United Nations and African Union officials this week to discuss a possible war crimes case against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.

An ICC statement Monday said prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo will be in New York to meet with leaders on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting.

The prosecutor has accused Sudan's president of masterminding a campaign of rape, murder and deportation in the volatile Darfur region, and has asked the court to issue a warrant for Mr. Bashir's arrest.

International Criminal Court prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo speaks during a news conference at UN Headquarters in New York (File)

Mr. Bashir has denied the charges, and Sudan has refused to cooperate with the court.

Sudanese officials also will be in New York this week, lobbying world leaders to block any move to prosecute Mr. Bashir.

In a joint statement with South African President Thabo Mbeki last week, Mr. Bashir said war crimes proceedings against him would hurt peace efforts in Darfur.

The Darfur conflict began in 2003, when ethnic African minority rebels took up arms against Sudan's Arab-led government and state-backed Arab militias.

The United Nations says the five-year conflict has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced some 2.5 million others.

Moreno-Ocampo said today that Mr. Bashir has "complete control" of his forces in Darfur, and says those forces are raping women, bombing schools and trying to destroy entire communities.

Sudan has accused Western governments and media of exaggerating the conflict, and says only about 10,000 people have died.

BBC online

Tuesday, 23 September 2008

Sudan lobbies against Bashir case

Sudan has started lobbying the UN to block an investigation into alleged war crimes in Darfur by Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.

Other African countries are expected to call for the case to be suspended.

International Criminal Court chief prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo says that troops under the president's command continue to rape women in Darfur.

Opponents of the investigation argue that it is hindering efforts to establish peace in Darfur.

'African laboratory'

The lobbying is underway at the UN general assembly in New York.

The African Union and the Arab League have already said the investigation should be dropped.

African Union Chairman Jean Ping told the BBC it was unfair that all those indicted by the ICC so far were African.

"We are not against international justice," he said.

"It seems that African has become a laboratory to test the new international law."

But Western countries such as the US and the UK say

Mr Bashir's government has backed militias, which they accuse of committing widespread atrocities in Darfur.

Mr Ocampo has asked for an arrest warrant to be issued for the Sudanese president.

He says Mr Bashir should be charged with carrying out genocide in Darfur, and that forces under his authority continue to bomb schools in the region.

Up to 300,000 people have been killed and more than two million have been forced from their homes in Darfur since 2003.

The International Criminal Court is expected to rule on how to proceed before the end of this year.

It can refuse to prosecute the case if it believes that doing so would be a threat to peace and security.

The African Union has already asked the UN Security Council to put a block on the case.



The Sudanese president is accused of war crimes in Darfur

