

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



Staff members in Pujehun during last week's outreach

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, 7 October 2008

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

Report from The Hague / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Pages 3-4
Man 'killed for Resembling Samuel K. Doe' / <i>Cocorioko</i>	Page 5
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 6-8
Civil Society Groups Express Concern over Alleged Human Rights.../ <i>Patriotic Vanguard</i>	Page 9

BBC World Service Trust

Monday, 6 October 2008

Report from The Hague

A Former Child Soldier has testified to the torture, enslavement and murder of civilians by Sierra Leonean rebels allegedly supported by Indicted Former Liberian President Charles Taylor. Captured by rebels at age 12, the witness identified those who captured him as Liberian English-Speaking men commanded by one Major Wallace formerly of Alhaji Kromah's ULIMO. As Joseph Cheeseman reports, the prosecution 51st witness described to the court the first cruel treatment of a civilian he saw. The witness is testifying in the Kono Language so he's being interpreted.

CHEESEMAN: The Former Child Soldier, Komba Sumana now in his early 20s told the judges he was hiding in a forest when he saw the rebels pour boiling water on the head of a man who had just got a new hair cut.

Suman said the man was burned with hot water because he failed to produce rice the rebels demanded from him.

Mr. Sumana testified to the invasion of their hiding place by six AK-47 toting rebels whom he said spoke Mende and Liberian English. He recalled that his father, mother, and other captives under gun point carried looted goods for the rebels.

He described to the court his recruitment into the rebel forces along with 200 captives and taken on a three-week walking journey to Kailahun for training. Sumana, a Former Child Soldier, said a Liberian Woman only identified as Monica trained them in various manners of warfare.

SUMANA: They trained us how to attack a town, how to burn a house, how to take over a town- that was what we were taught.

PROSECUTOR: What were you taught about how to burn a house?

SUMANA: We were all sitting down in a circle. Then this woman started showing us how to burn down houses. She said if you did not have petrol, if there is (indistinct) that is what you will put on the house, and torch that to fire. She said the house would burn down.

PROSECUTOR: How were you treated, you and the others, during the training?

SUMANA: We were not treated well. They used to beat us up, sometimes even to have food was a problem. Sometimes just a spoonful.

CHEESEMAN: After graduation, Sumana said Sam Bockarie alias Mosquito distributed among them Ak-47, RPG Bombs, Mortar, among others. The Former Child Soldier told the judges during the distribution of the arms, he saw some men dressed in military uniforms and wore red caps. He told the court one of the fighters identified the men as Liberians.

SUMANA: There was one rebel who was standing close to me at the time I was standing in the line. I asked him about the soldiers who had come, and he said they were Charles Taylor's soldiers.

PROSECUTOR: Did you hear any of these men with the red caps on speak?

SUMANA: Yes.

PROSECUTOR: What language did they speak?

SUMANA: They were speaking Liberian English.

CHEESEMAN: Crime against humanity which includes murder, cruel treatment, and rape are some of the charges against Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor. The prosecution 51st witness testified to the shooting of some civilians by RUF Commander, Issa Sesay.

SUMANA: As we were approaching the (indistinct) ground we met rebels standing there together with Issa. Then there were 5 people who were tied with a rope. They were standing at the side of the road. I was afraid when I met them. We were getting into the town when we heard gunshots. As we were returning, those people whom I had seen tied, I saw them dead.

CHEESEMAN: Sumana told the judges of the Special Court, his father was amputated and his elder brother was killed by the rebels.

The landmark trial of Charles Taylor, as the first African Head of State to be put on trial for the recruitment of child soldiers, sexual violence and cruel treatment coincides with the landmark of trial of his son, Charles Chuckie Taylor, Jr. as the first American to be put on trial for committing torture against civilians in Liberia.

Cocorioko

Tuesday, 7 October 2008

Man ‘killed for resembling Samuel K. Doe’

Written by Joseph Cheeseman and Mariama Khai Fornah

The 50th prosecution witness in the ongoing trial of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor has told the Special Court for Sierra Leone that rebels killed his brother because they said he had great resemblance to the former Liberian president Samuel Kayan Doe (K-Doe).

The witness, Patrick Sheriff told the Judges that the rebels killed his brother and chopped off his fingers. He said the worst atrocities he saw in the Sierra Leone civil war were committed by a rebel commander named Peleto who earned another nickname Friday because he went on a killing spree on every Friday. He said that Peleto went to place called Manor Corner on one Friday and moved from house to house killing civilians indiscriminately.

Sheriff gave an account of how Peleto met a man known only as Mr. Kai reading a bible. He allegedly ordered him to drop it and stand up. “As the man stood up, he shot him with a pistol...A minute after killing him, he moved again and met a Limba man eating rice, and he shot him...” During cross-examination, defence lawyer, Terry Munyard pressed him on his earlier statement that the rebels he saw were Liberian English-Speaking men dressed in a uniform with the inscription “RUF”.

Sheriff insisted that the rebels who attacked Waterloo and Lumpa outside Freetown were “purely Liberian rebels.” He said he was given 150 lashes and that after ECOMOG had driven the rebels from Lumpa he and other civilians constituted a committee that buried 60 civilians allegedly killed by the rebels.

At this point, Justice Julia Sebutinde asked the witness about the composition of the sixty people killed and he replied that they were all men and boys. “There...were no women because mostly they used women for their own selfish needs.” Sheriff said.

Defence lawyer Munyard asked the witness whether the events of the war had affected his memory and that he could not remember most of the events. But Sheriff told the court that he could vividly remember every thing that happened to him during the war.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
6 October 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

ERU Completes Training - Urged to be Law Abiding

(The Monitor, The News, New Vision, Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The Informer)

- After eight months of intensive training in anti-terrorism and other crimes, 139 officers of the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) graduated last Friday. The media reports that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf urged the newly trained officers to be law abiding in the discharge of their duties. President Sirleaf said the country can now boast of a force that would respond robustly to any form of crime and rioting whenever and wherever they occur. She congratulated the 139 ERU officers for their discipline, dedication and commitment to stay the course as they completed their rigorous training.
- Also speaking, the Charge d' Affaires of the United States Embassy in Liberia, Ms. Brooks Robinson, said the United States has committed more than US\$7 million to the ERU project, mainly to train and equip the unit and to build its new headquarters.
- The ERU will deal with crime situations which may require the use of firearms in the arrest of armed criminals, hostage situations, and violent crimes in progress, as well as armed terrorist activities. The unit will additionally handle riot control, anti-crime patrol in high crime areas, and will provide assistance in major disaster situations.

Armed Gang Attacks Senior Immigration Officer

(Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The Monitor)

- Armed men have attacked and wounded Deputy Immigration Commissioner, Archie Williams at his residence. The unknown men reportedly attacked and chopped him while attempting to enter his house on 3rd Street on Saturday night. Reports say following the incident the robbers made away with several valuables. Neighbours said they heard the robbers vowing to get at Government officials who they claimed are benefitting from State resources. The Deputy Immigration was taken to the state-owned John F. Kennedy Hospital where he's reportedly admitted at the Intensive Care Unit and journalists are being barred from seeing him.

Press Union Welcomes US\$100,000 Gesture from Government

(The News, National Chronicle, The Inquirer, The Monitor, Public Agenda, National Chronicle)

- The Press Union of Liberia (PUL) says it welcomes the recent announcement by Deputy Information Minister, Cletus Sieh of government's contribution of US\$100,000 toward the construction of its headquarters in Sinkor. A press statement issued Sunday described the gesture by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and government as "magnanimous" noting that such amount would go a long way in the progress of the institution.
- The union's leadership viewed the gesture as a demonstration of the President's commitment to towards the development of the media. In another development, the PUL has reprimanded four journalists for ethical misconduct. This followed their admission of guilt in a recent investigative mission to Margibi County. The union said it is convinced that journalists,

Bockarie Musa, Norris Karluson, Garmonyou Wilson and Sawar Fallah were in serious breach of the Union Code of Ethics and Conduct and imposed a fine of L\$2,000.

President Sirleaf Launches Final Phase of DDRR Programme

(Daily Observer, Liberian Express)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf today launched the final phase of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) programme at the Monrovia Vocational Training Centre in Paynesville. A release issued in Monrovia said the launch is aimed at addressing post disarmament and demobilization commitment particularly for those who have not benefitted from the reintegration packages. The packages include psycho-social counselling, human rights education, career counselling and HIV/AIDS. The last phase will mainly target women who were associated with the fighting forces.

BWI Alumni Association Expresses Disappointment over Elevation Status

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- The Booker Washington Institute (BWI) Alumni Association says it is disappointed that the move started early this year to elevate the status of the Institute to a technical college has failed to make progress. The Association is therefore seeking the intervention of the Institute's board of governors headed by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to break the impasse. In a release, the group expressed outrage that since it was reconstituted months ago, the board itself has shown no indication of its readiness to get down to business.

World Bank Boost GAC Operations

(The News, The Informer, Liberian Express, New Democrat)

- The Informer newspaper reports that the World Bank has made a substantial donation to the General Auditing Commission (GAC) to boost its work. The donation includes five double-cabins Mitsubishi Pick-ups, one of which has been presented and 40 sets of computer.
- Making the presentation on behalf of the World Bank at the GAC offices on Ashmun Street, Mr. Wisfdom Dafeamekpor, Manager of the Project and Financial Unit said the donation was in continuation of the bank's assistance to the Commission. He expressed the hope that the vehicles and other items would help to strengthen the Commission implement its task. For his part, the Auditor General of Liberia thanked the World Bank for the gesture and assured the items would be used wisely.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 9:00 am)*

Armed Robbers Attack Deputy Immigration Commissioner

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

Final Phase of DDRR Programme Launched

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

Public School Teachers Advocate for More Pay

- In observance of this year's World Teachers Day, the Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers Association (MCSSTA) has called for more pay for Liberian teachers.
- Speaking to reporters at the weekend, the President of the association, Nathan Suah said teachers in the country were still being under paid though qualified like other civil servants.

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

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Port Truckers Calls for Dialogue Over New Measures

- The Port Truckers Association has called for dialogue with government over new measures to restrict the movement of container trucks in the country.

- The President of the association, Sam Tetteh said the recent decision taken by police to prevent the movement of trucks during the day was a unilateral decision that does not meet the consent of the association.
- The LNP recently announced that container trucks should move only during the night to avoid the upsurge in accident during the day.

Patriotic Vanguard

Tuesday, 7 October 2008

Civil society groups express concern over alleged human rights violations in rural Sierra Leone

ACCESSING JUSTICE IN RURAL SIERRA LEONE PROGRAMME AMNESTY SPECIAL PROGRAMME ON AFRICA COALITION.

(Campaign for Good Governance, Amnesty International Sierra Leone, Access to Justice Law Centre Makeni, Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Makeni, Bo Peace and Reconciliation Movement and Rehabilitation and Development Agency SL)

PRESS STATEMENT

Our attention has been drawn to the frequent abuses and violations of human rights in rural Sierra Leone perpetrated by some traditional leaders against women and children and the impunity that these perpetrators have enjoyed.

We particularly wish to condemn the blatant abuse committed against Fannie S. Turay, a JSS I pupil of Sierra Leone Muslim Brotherhood Secondary School in Matotoka, by a powerful 'kangaroo' (illegal) court presided over by one Pa Roke Koroma on Saturday 20th September 2008. Fannie was arbitrarily detained using a 25 kg chain-link for over six hours for failing to pay an illegal fine of twelve thousand Leones. The matter is still being investigated by the Sierra Leone Police at Magburaka.

However, Fannie has expressed fear of reprisals to the Coalition about her safety and security following her report on the incident.

The Coalition condemns such cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of children by adults which is a contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the Sierra Leone Child Rights Act (2007).

We, therefore, call on the government of Sierra Leone, particularly The Attorney General and Minister of Justice, the Solicitor General, the Director of Public Prosecution, the Senior State Counsel and Customary Law Officer Northern Region, the Inspector General of Police and other stakeholders to ensure that justice is done and the perpetrator brought to book.

The Coalition, through its focal partner Access to Justice Law Centre(AJLC) 1 Flower Corner Makeni, will continue to monitor this matter.

We wish to commend the media and other civil society organizations for their support in bringing Fannie's plight to the attention of the world. We call on everyone to uphold the rights of children and women and to ensure that perpetrators are reported and prosecuted.