

**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:

Friday, 28 November 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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Star Radio (Liberia)

Friday, 28 November 2008

Special Court Registrar speaks on prison sentence, Taylor's conviction

Written by Wellington Geevon Smith

The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone says there is no definite number of years on the books for the prison term of convicts who committed war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Registrar of the Special Court, Herman Von Hebel said the crimes are very serious.

He however, said the severity of the crimes did not automatically mean they would be accompanied by severe punishment.

The Registrar of the Special Court said the sentence depends on the quality of the evidence presented by the prosecution.

Mr. Von Hebel clarified that the mere presentation of evidence that women were raped, villages were burnt and people were amputated didn't mean that Charles Taylor was involved.

The Special Court Registrar said what the prosecution needs to prove is the alleged link between those who committed the crimes in Sierra Leone and Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Von Hebel also said the Special Court has enough money to end the trial of the detained former Liberian President.

He said the court received thirty-six million United States Dollars from donor assistance in 2008.

The Registrar said the court would need a smaller amount for next year because most of the works in Freetown have been completed.

Mr. Von Hebel revealed that the prosecution got three to four million dollars this year.

According to him, Taylor's Defence team got 100-thousands U.S. dollar per month for salary, Taylor's wellbeing and office maintenance in Freetown, Monrovia and The Hague.

The Registrar clarified that the prosecution gets more money because it has the burden of proof.

The Independent

Thursday, 27 November 2008

<http://www.northumberlandnews.com/news/porthope/article/>

Former child soldier thanks Port Hope students

By Moya Dillon

PORT HOPE - Students had a chance to see the effects of their fundraising when a former child soldier spoke to them about life in his native Sierra Leone.

"I will take the message home that Canadian children, Port Hope children, are willing to extend their humanity to the children of Africa," Kabba Williams told students at Dr. M.S. Hawkins Senior Public and Port Hope High School on Tuesday, Nov. 25.

He was referring to the fundraising efforts of the students, which raised over \$16,000 last year to build a school in Sierra Leone.

"It gives a lot of hope and really inspires children in Africa," Mr. Williams said.

"It's strengthening to know there are people out there who are concerned with the plight of children in Africa. People like these students are laying a solid foundation for the children to have a brighter future."

Mr. Williams was captured by rebel forces at the age of six during the civil conflict that raged throughout Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. A rebel commander told the captured children that his forces were the good guys, fighting against evil authorities, and that if the country were in the rebels' control everyone would have a good job. The children were then injected with liquid cocaine to encourage them to violence.

"There was no alternative. We were made to be mad," Mr. Williams said, addressing a hushed gymnasium full of students.

"Even if you ran into your mother or brother, you wouldn't know, you would just kill. They made young people take up arms, but the arms weren't directed at the authorities, they were pointed at innocent women and children, including myself."

Eventually Mr. Williams managed to escape from his captors, who were forcing the child soldiers to kill, rape and cut off the hands of innocent people. He then went through the post-war Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program and was placed in a school program where he managed to work his way to the top of his class despite taunts from the other, much-younger, students. Now 24, he attends university and speaks to children across Africa about his experience.

"I want the children to know that there are people who are suffering in the world and people going through these horrific tragedies," Mr. Williams said.

"But I want them to believe that with a lot of determination, dedication and education, we are able to rebuild lives. I want them to know they have been blessed and are lucky to have the opportunity to go to school without going through any constraints."

Students called the presentation inspiring and were more determined than ever to continue raising funds.

"His talk really made everyone feel that the stuff we've been doing around the school really made a difference to the kids in Africa," said Devin Moore, 13.

Devin said he'd like to focus more fundraising on aiding the victims of the civil war, who Mr. Williams described as "still suffering."

Classmate Tiffany McDougall, 13, said she felt differently about her life now that she knew what it was like for children in Sierra Leone.

"When you complain about having homework or going to school - he would risk dying just to go to school to get homework - it makes you realize how lucky we are and how much we take for granted," Tiffany said.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
27 November 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

GOL Ordered to Permit Delta Enter Re-bid of Western Cluster Iron Ore

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

- The Public Procurement and Concessions Commission (PPCC) have ordered the Government of Liberia to allow Delta Mining Consolidated (Delta) to participate in the re-bid of the Western Cluster iron ore concession in Liberia.
- The Independent Complaints Reviews and Appeals Panel of PPCC said Government had acted unlawfully in excluding Delta from participating in the re-bid.
- Early this year, Government declared Delta as the provisional winner of the concession but two months ago cancelled the agreement and barred the company from participating in a re-bid for the concession.

Six Diplomats to Present Letter of Credence Tomorrow

(Daily Observer, The Analyst, The News, New Vision, The Monitor)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will tomorrow receive in audience six Ambassadors accredited to Liberia.
- A foreign Ministry release said those expected to present their letters of credence include Miroslav Krenek, Ambassador of the Czech Republic; Keiichi Katalcami, Ambassador of Japan and Ambassador Stig Barlyng of the Kingdom of Denmark.
- Others are Wan Jaafar Bin Wan Mohamud, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Malaysia, Maria Auxiliadora Figueiredo of Brazil and Park Yoon-June of the Republic of Korea.

Liberia's Solicitor General Accuses Representative Gbollie of Ordering His Torture

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- Solicitor General Tiawon Gongloe has accused Representative Saah Gbollie of being "responsible" for the torture he suffered in detention.
- Appearing before the Truth and Reconciliation of Liberia (TRC) ongoing public hearing yesterday, Counsellor Gongloe said he was detained with inmates who were initially friendly but that the situation changed following a visit by the then Deputy Police Director.
- According to him, Mr. Gbollie held discussions with three of the inmates who tortured him naming one of them as Stephen Kollie of the defunct Special Operations Division (SOD) of the Liberian National Police.
- The Taylor regime on April 24, 2002 arrested Counsellor Gongloe after he addressed the Mano River Union Civil Society Conference in Conakry Guinea.

VP Boakai Frowns on Senate's Failure to Honour Supreme Court Decision

(Heritage, The Inquirer, The Analyst, The Monitor)

- Vice President Joseph Boakai has frowned on the Liberian Senate for not fully respecting the decision of the Supreme Court.
- The decision regards the re-instatement of suspended Senate Pro-temp Isaac Nyenabo.
- The Vice President said as Legislators they are to respect the laws of the country and implement the decision of the highest court.
- Vice President Boakai spoke today when he appeared on the maiden edition of a live phone-in programme titled "Our Government, Our Voice" to discuss a wide range of issues.
- Today's programme is the first edition in a series of radio programmes featuring Government officials and policy makers interacting with the public.

- It replaces "Conversation with the President" in which President Sirleaf participated in a live phone-in programme with listeners from across the country.

US\$28.1M Over Due Taxes Revealed In Audit Report

(The News)

- Lack of annual stock-taking and the preservation of important documents such as revenue flag receipts as well as tax credits ledger led to US\$28.1 million overdue taxes, audit report released by the General Auditing Commission (GAC) reveals.
- The Commission admits that although there were improvements in the collection of revenues in the last fiscal year 2006/2007, however, the lack of essential documentations suggests that the above figure could be more.
- The report strongly recommended that effective systems and controls be put into place for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with the Executive Laws, the Revenue Code, and any relevant regulations.

President Sirleaf Advocates Fast Track Court for Corrupt Official

(New Democrat)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says government will advocate the setting up of a fast track court to try government officials accused of stealing state funds.
- President Sirleaf said corruption was "systemic and endemic" in the country and thought the establishment of the court will lead to the speedy trial of corruption cases.

Radio Summary

Local Media-Radio VERITAS (News monitored today at 1:30 pm)

Kolleh Town Murder Case Resumes

- Criminal Court "B" today began hearing the murder case involving detained Margibi Senator Roland Kaine and 15 others.
- The men are accused of "gruesomely" murdering at least 16 men during a farmland dispute in Kolleh Town massacre on June 7 this year.
- Several others are still feared missing.
- Senator Kaine has persistently denied any involvement.

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. ELBC and Sky F.M.)

Liberia's Solicitor General Accuses Representative Gbollie of Ordering His Torture

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. ELBC and Sky F.M.)

Vice President Boakai Discusses Several National Issues Today

STAR RADIO (Culled from website today at 8:45 am)

TRC Cautions Stubborn Witnesses

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) has warned witnesses refusing to appear before it to seriously consider their actions.
- The TRC said witnesses boycotting the public hearings are missing the opportunity to respond to allegations of major human rights violations.
- TRC Chairman, Cllr. Jerome Verdier said the refusal of the witnesses amounts to a denial to be heard saying there are several options including subpoena to decide the fate of witnesses refusing to show-up at the TRC.
- Chairman Verdier spoke to reporters following the failure of several key witnesses to appear before the Commission.
- Meanwhile, former Transitional Speaker George Dweh is expected to appear before the Commission today.

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)***TRC Witness Says Executive Mansion Not "Safe"**

- A former member of the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) and a fighter of the defunct rebel Movement Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) Johnson J. Jayeswen have called for the construction of a new Executive Mansion to protect the Presidency.
- Testifying before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission ongoing thematic hearings yesterday he said the security of the President depends on where he or she sits.
- He described the mansion as a "grave yard" claiming a lot of killings took place there.
- Meanwhile, the former LURD fighter has frowned on the current composition of the Liberian security apparatus saying they cannot be trusted.

The Philadelphia Enquirer

Friday, 28 November 2008

<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/weekend>

Liberia's women bond together to end violence

By Steven Rea

They had had enough, watching their not-yet-teenage sons armed with weapons, incited to kill. Seeing their daughters raped and terrorized. Being raped, beaten, threatened.

A testament to the determination and wisdom of a group of Liberian women who banded together in 2003 to stop a civil war and bring peace to their West African nation, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* is at once inspiring and horrific.

Inspiring, because it shows what people can do, people resolved to bring about change. After years of horror and carnage, a coalition of Liberia's women, Christians and Muslims alike, rallied together, organized and undaunted, using their numbers and their message to bring about change.

And horrific because of that carnage: the blood-soaked streets, the hundreds of thousands murdered, perpetrated by tribal warlords and a dictator - Charles Taylor - gone mad.

Directed by Gini Reticker with clarity and concision, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* combines archival footage, BBC radio news feeds, and newspaper reports with on-camera interviews with key leaders of the female movement. Leymah Gbowee speaks with eloquence about her dream to assemble wives and mothers in a church to pray for peace, and how that first meeting spread to larger protests.

These crowds of women, dressed in white T-shirts, camped in front of a government palace and refusing to budge, are heartening to behold. Bridging the same cultural and religious divide that provided the excuse for a civil war, Gbowee's group and a like-minded team of Muslim women combined forces with a unified goal: remove the guns and bring on the peace.

Voice of America

Friday, 28 November 2008

DRC War Crimes Suspects Plead Not Guilty

Two Congolese militiamen accused of trying to wipe out a village in 2003 have pleaded not guilty before the International Criminal Court.



AP Photo

Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo face charges of murder, rape, and using child soldiers. The charges stem from a deadly attack on the village of Bogoro in the Congo's Ituri province in February 2003.

Prosecutors say more than 200 people were killed during the attack, and that some survivors were turned into sex slaves for the fighters.

Katanga and Ngudjolo entered their pleas at a pretrial hearing at The Hague, in the Netherlands Thursday. The court has not set a starting date for their trial.

Germain Katanga looks up from his screen as he waits for the start of his trial at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands (File)

The two are among four men the court has charged with war crimes stemming from violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

The DRC government has struggled to assert control over the region's many militias since the end of a brutal civil war in 2002.

The court recently said the trial of another militia leader, Thomas Lubanga, will begin on January 26. That trial will be the first the court has held since its formation in 2002.

Some information for this report was provided by AFP and AP.

Voice of America

Friday, 28 November 2008

Kenyans Express Doubt Over Post-Election Violence Tribunal

By Peter Clotney
Washington, D.C.

Some Kenyans are doubtful about the effectiveness of a tribunal soon to be established to prosecute those complicit in the country's post-election violence. They say the move is a calculated attempt by some political leaders to outwit a possible indictment from the international Criminal Court for the roles they played after the December 27 election dispute. This comes after the coalition government agreed yesterday (Thursday) to establish a tribunal to judge senior politicians and businesspersons accused of organizing the bloody ethnic violence that took place after the disputed election. The violence erupted after incumbent President Kibaki and then main opposition leader Raila Odinga both claimed victory in Kenya's presidential election. From the capital Nairobi, Kenyan political analyst Michael Tiampati tells reporter Peter Clotney that Kenyans have reason to be skeptical.

"Here in Kenya the reality is that Kenyans have always been treated to melodramatic situations by their leaders. First of all there has been outright hostility towards the recommendations of the report about the post-election violence and this has kind of split the leadership right in the middle. But in a strange twist, which I believe was a kind of pressure from both local and international personalities and of course institutions, the government or parliament has decided to come up with a body to address the issues on the causes of the post-election violence," Tiampati pointed out.

He said Kenyans are doubtful because previous independent set up to investigate political leaders alleged to have been complicit in breaking the law have often failed to live up to their mandate.

"Kenyans tend to believe things actually when they do happen because our system that has something to do with our leadership is prone to so many issues, such as manipulations. So, we tend to believe things when they do actually happen," he said.

Tiampati described as unfortunate the history of bodies previously set up to probe Kenya's leaders who have been alleged to have broken the law.

"The skeptical nature of this tribunal I cannot say is unfounded because we have a history in this country where so many tribunals in their dozens have been set up, but nothing was achieved and the recommendations never get implemented. And Kenyans are afraid that this new tribunal would follow the same path and become yet another tribunal, which has been set up using taxpayers money. And the result of which does not benefit the people that it was intended to benefit," Tiampati noted.

He said there seems to be a lot of interest in the latest report, which has been presented to the former UN Secretary General about the alleged complicity of some political figures in the December 27 post-election violence.

"There is a great deal of political interest in the report arising from the mysterious envelope that is said to contain names of perpetrators of violence, which is of course in the custody of the lead mediator Kofi Annan. And this has led to a lot of speculation and one part of the system is wishing for the implementation and the other part of the system is opposed to it. And it has been like a yoyo kind of thing, moving from side to side," he said.

Tiampati said there is an overwhelming unanimous call among Kenyans for those complicit in the post-election violence to be held accountable for their actions.

"Indeed Kenyans need justice and they want to see justice served or done. But the problem is that the situation, as it were and their sentiments are informed by history. So here in Kenya we adopt a system of let's wait and see. So, in as much as we want to see justice served or happen, we cannot pull all our cards on the fact that it is going to happen. So, it is a delicate political balance," Tiampati pointed out.

The Waki Commission, which looked into the post-election bloodshed that killed over 1,300 people and drove about 300,000 from their homes issued its report last month. It recommended that about 10 people should face a special Kenyan tribunal or be sent for prosecution to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

An official statement said both President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga would head a committee expected to prepare an implementation work-plan of the Waki report.

Meanwhile, the government also agreed on Thursday to implement the report of another commission of inquiry, which called for extensive reform of the electoral system to avoid a repeat of this year's chaos.