

**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, 12 December 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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For di People
Friday, 12 December 2008

NO LAWYER FOR

WESTSIDE BOYS!

Justice Browne-Marke Adjourns Jan 8

JUSTICE NICHOLAS Browne-Marke yesterday had to adjourn to 8 January 2009 the appeal trial of the Westside Boys of Foday Kallay and seven others sentenced by Justice Patrick Hamilton in 2006 to 60 years imprisonment.

by **ABUBAKARR
KAMARA**

The charges include arson, rape, looting among the 11 count charges. The appeal came up 7 December and the Court sat yesterday 11 December but proceedings came to an abrupt end for lack of legal representation.

This comes just a few weeks after the death of popular Freetown law-

yer Osho Williams known to be the lawyer who normally represents accused persons in treason trials and for other crimes against the State.

However, there was visible disappointment among the accused who had hoped the State would have provided them legal representation as is normally the case in such matters lacking representation.

One of them said they had expected the government to provide a lawyer for them but however appealed for it to help them with a lawyer to defend their appeal.

It could be recalled that the Westside Boys which formed part of the group of mostly soldiers but including rebels stormed Freetown on 6 January 1999 leading to

widespread destruction of lives and properties and some of their ring leaders including Santigie 55 and Gullit are presently before the Special Court for crimes against humanity.

They were however eventually forced to retreat to the outskirts of Freetown to the base where the legendary Bai Bureh who fought against the British during the Hut Tax War had his base and

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No Defence Lawyer For Westside

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named Westside where they were attacked by a combined British and national troops in the famous Operation Barass and their base destroyed while Kallay and others were captured.

Also, the other batch comprising the rebel outfit of Foday Sankoh were sentenced by Justice Hamilton to 160 years but they were released by the SLPP towards the start of the last presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007 to have been used to perpetuate resistance to an APC victory but the operation failed because of the consequences it might have caused.

It is not known whether pro bono legal persons could step in to assist the accused as it has never been the case to elicit such representations from such groups.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
11 December 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

LNP Launches "Dragnet" to Arrest Armed Robbers

(Daily Observer, National Chronicle, The Monitor, The Inquirer, New Democrat)

- The National Chronicle reports that authorities of the Liberia National Police have launched a manhunt in an effort to arrest several hardened criminals in the coming days. According to Col. Kabina Kamara, a senior operational officer at the LNP, they have put in place security mechanisms to re-arrest the criminals who recently broke jail in Monrovia.
- Col. Kamara called on the public to report strange persons in their areas in order to have them re-arrested and brought to justice. He assured residents of Monrovia that the police are doing everything possible through a new security measure code named "Operation Dislodge" to make the city safe for the holiday season.
- The Senior Police Officer named some of the criminals on the run as, Jeff Williams alias "Fugee", Gioboy, Massalay and "School-Face". School-Face was the leader of a group of armed robbers recently arrested in Kakata, Margibi County. Of late there has been an upsurge in armed robbery with several communities in Paynesville, Logan Town and other parts of Monrovia.
- The Inquirer reports that armed men early this week attacked the homes of some employees in Harbel in Margibi County making away with several valuables and inflicting wounds on their victims.

Political Parties Women Target L\$10M to Support Women Candidates in 2011 elections

(The News)

- The Coalition of Political Parties Women in Liberia (COPPWIL) in collaboration with the Female Legislative Caucus is planning to raise L\$10 million to support women candidates during the 2011 legislative and presidential elections. The women are expected to hold their first fundraising activities Friday.
- The political parties women group said "as the effort on the part of women to ensure their full visibility at all levels come 2011 and realizing that there are lots of constraints like financial impediments, lack of leadership skills, low self-esteem and others, COPPWIL has designed plans and strategies to ensure that women achieve their desired goals."
- Meanwhile, COPPWIL President Ms. Marayah Fyneah has commended the International Republican Institute (IRI) for its numerous contributions to the political parties' women groups especially building the capacity of women in various political parties so that they can be prepared to participate in the political process.

Head of Sub-Standard University Arrested

(Daily Observer)

- The Ministry of Justice has arrested the President of a sub-standard university operating in the country. The President of the Monrovia University, Rev. Johnson Akimola, was arrested for his alleged failure to adhere to the closure order by government. Government earlier this year shutdown twenty-eight institutions for failing to meet its minimum requirements to operate as tertiary institutions but some refused to comply.

- The Daily Observer reports that the Director General of the National Commission on Higher Education, Dr. Michael Slawon said the arrest of Johnson Akimola followed a complaint the commission filed to the Justice Ministry. Dr. Slawon said prior to his commission's clampdown on bogus institutions, scores of these tertiary institutions were either closed down or given time to end their academic year in July 2008.
- Meanwhile, the President of the Vision University, Cyrus Kromah has also been arrested. Both men are currently in Police custody and several others are also expected to be arrested and prosecuted.

More Denials at TRC as former NPFL Commander Rebuffs Claims of Atrocities

(The Inquirer, Heritage)

- The media reports that a former senior frontline commander of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), Roland Duo has denied committing atrocities during the Liberia civil war. Testifying at the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) public hearings, General Duo denied knowledge of the Mahel River massacre in 2003 in which it was alleged that more than 700 people were killed upon his order.
- He dismissed allegations of atrocities against him by earlier witnesses appearing before the commission saying if atrocities were committed they were done so without his knowledge or acquiescence.
- The Analyst, The Monitor, The Inquirer newspapers report that almost all of the 40 former warlords and generals who testified to their roles in the war denied ever committing atrocities or going against peaceful civilians.
- Meanwhile, Duo has proposed the prosecution for some Liberians who committed grave crimes against the Liberian people saying reconciliation without justice is a recipe for the promotion of the culture of impunity.

Radio Summary

Local Media – Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 9:45 am)

Alleged Criminal Beaten to Death in Unification Town

- An alleged criminal has died from injuries he sustained after an angry mob beat him up yesterday in Unification Town, Margibi County.
- Correspondents say the victim only identified as Joshua, a resident of the Cotton Tree Community and two of his accomplices went to an entertainment centre with an apparent victim tied up in the trunk of their car.
- The reports say the residents grew suspicious after they noticed movement from the trunk of the car and apprehended the men.
- Two of the accomplices fled in time while Joshua was mobbed by the angry crowd and the car set ablaze.
- Meanwhile, reports say one of the two accomplices has been arrested by the police.

Three Day Peace Festival Kicks off in Monrovia

- Around 40,000 Chiefs, Elders and Traditional from Liberia, Sierra Leone Guinea and Ivory Coast are expected to converge on Monrovia beginning today for a three-day National Peace and Cultural Festival.
- The Liberian Government and its partners led by International Alert (IA) are championing the festival intended to allow traditional leaders greater participation in conflict resolution.
- The festival is also intended to restore the lost image of Liberian cultural.

RAL Documents Human Rights Abuses at Liberian Prisons

- A Prisoners Rights Group, Rescue Alternatives Liberia (RAL) has launched a report on the status of prisons and detention centres detailing the violations of the rights of prisoners in the country.
- The report titled: "The Prison Sector Must Be Autonomous" was launched yesterday by the group during programme marking the 60th celebration of the Universal Human Rights Day.

- The assessment report recorded several appalling conditions of prisons, prolonged pre-trial detention; lack of legal representation for prisoners and poor hygiene and healthcare.
- The report also highlighted overcrowding at detention facilities, lack of safe drinking water and proper ventilation among other things.

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

Ministry of Public Works Expresses Regrets over Flogging of Auditor

- The Public Works Ministry has expressed regrets for the “flogging” of Deputy Auditor General, Winsley Nenka by officials of the ministry.
- In an interview, the spokesman of the Ministry, Mr. Fassama Kollie said although an investigation is yet to be conducted, the Ministry feels Liberia remains a country of law.
- Mr. Kollie however said Deputy Public Works Minister Roderick Smith who allegedly ordered the act was indisposed of to comment.
- According to eyewitnesses’ accounts, Deputy Auditor Nenka was kicked, knocked down and dragged from the office of Deputy Minister Smith after he had gone to obtain further documentation on the on-going audit at the ministry when he was flogged by Assistant Minister Klon Jarba.

Fouamah Citizens Union Rejects Superintendent Jackson's Clearance

- The Fouamah Citizens Union has reacted to what is referred to as the partial clearance of Bong County Superintendent Rennie Jackson.
- The Internal Affairs Ministry announced on Tuesday that it has partially cleared Superintendent Jackson of financial malpractices in the county.
- The Secretary General of the Fouamah Citizens Union said Internal Affairs Minister Ambulai Johnson tried to cover up for Superintendent Jackson.
- Mr. Fahnlohn Gbakoyah maintained that Mr. Jackson transferred the US\$500,000 to an account without the acquiescence of the citizens.

President Sirleaf in Freetown for MRU Summit

- An extraordinary session of Heads of State and Government of the Mano River Union (MRU) opened Wednesday in the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown.
- Speaking at the opening, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said the Summit provides an opportunity to examine progress that has been made in member countries of the Union.
- The Summit will address, among other issues, agriculture, the global food crisis, security and global financial crisis and will also discuss measures to collectively confront challenges within these sectors.

LCC President Condemns Resurgence of Corruption

- The President of the Liberia Council of Churches has condemned the resurgence of the culture of corruption in the Liberian government.
- Bishop John Innis said it is unfortunate for people elected and appointed to places of trust to misuse public funds while the population lives in poverty.
- Bishop Innis who is also head of the United Methodist Church wants President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to prosecute corrupt officials in order to fulfil her campaign promise of ensuring good governance.

African Press Agency

Thursday, 11 December 2008

Former Liberian militia commander recommends punishment for perpetrators of atrocities

A former militia commander in Liberia General Roland Duo has recommended that perpetrators of atrocities during the civil war be made to account for their deeds.

General Duo told the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission public hearings Wednesday that perpetrators of heinous crimes should not be let to go scot-free.

Duo, who was commander of a special militia of Charles Taylor set up to combat the LURD and MODEL rebel groups during his presidency, however registered his opposition to the setting up of a war crimes court.

He maintained that perpetrators should undergo some sort of punishment, noting that Liberia cannot achieve total peace if the process of reconciliation is not completed, adding, "Justice must follow reconciliation".

The ex-militia general who also served as Chief of Staff of the Naval Division of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, said it was the prerogative of victims to show mercy to the perpetrators.

Duo denied allegations of atrocities brought against him, and registered regret for the wanton loss of life during the war.

The Economist

Thursday, 11 December 2008

A middle way for justice in Sudan

Instead of being carted off to The Hague, could Sudan's president be tried at home?

EVER since July, when the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague sought the indictment of the Sudanese president, Omar al-Bashir, on charges of genocide and war crimes, foreign diplomats, regional leaders and many Sudanese, including much of the political opposition, have been scrambling for a way out of a seemingly impossible dilemma. Most support the idea of prosecuting Mr Bashir and others for the carnage they are alleged to have inflicted on Sudan's western province of Darfur. But they also dread what could happen in Sudan as a result of the indictment of a serving president by an international court.



A vindictive Mr Bashir could stymie the national elections planned for next year, end a very fragile peace process in Darfur, expel UN troops from the region or retard the already slow implementation of a peace agreement between his government and the former rebels in south Sudan. He could do one of these things or all of them together. Surely there must be some better mechanism, many argue, for holding those responsible for the atrocities in Darfur to account without reversing some of the hard-fought and precarious political and humanitarian gains of the past few years?

Now Sudan's most prominent opposition politician, Sadiq al-Mahdi, thinks he has an answer: what he calls a "third way" between hauling Mr Bashir to The Hague and doing nothing about crimes in Darfur. He suggests setting up an independent "hybrid" court for Darfur, which would have both Sudanese judges and international ones and sit in Sudan.

It is an intriguing proposal. The idea of mixing national and international procedure has been accepted in Sierra Leone and Cambodia. And Mr Mahdi has huge weight, as head of the Umma party, Sudan's main opposition. He was the last prime minister to be democratically elected, back in 1986. He is also the spiritual leader of the powerful Ansar sect. Like many others, he says an ICC indictment of Mr Bashir would lead to "chaos" in Sudan; he hopes that his third way would "reconcile stability with accountability".

Both legally and politically, the idea has its attractions. Such a hybrid court would dispense justice close to the scene of the crime, another ambition of the ICC. And if the special court were deemed to be a genuine, impartial attempt to obtain justice, rather than a stalling tactic, the ICC could, under Article 16 of its statutes, defer its indictment of Mr Bashir.

That would get everyone off the hook, and the move would probably be welcomed by the UN Security Council. But would Mr Bashir and his government bite? Maybe. In public, he and his supporters have been furiously denouncing the ICC and all its works as a Western imperialist plot. In private, however,

they have begun to accept that they will have to engage with the court. The government has hired a firm of British lawyers, Eversheds, to scrutinise the charges and help them with the case. A hybrid court might be a way out for the government too.

Several such tribunals have already been set up by the UN and the country most intimately concerned. The first, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, was set up in the capital, Freetown, in 2002 to try the leading figures in that country's savage 11-year civil war; it is now in the process of winding up. Three rebel leaders have been convicted of war crimes and sentenced to terms of up to 50 years in jail. Three others from a different rebel group are likely to get equally hefty jail terms when they are sentenced in January. Two senior members of a pro-government militia, also convicted of war crimes, got somewhat reduced terms in recognition of their help in ousting the brutal rebels from power.

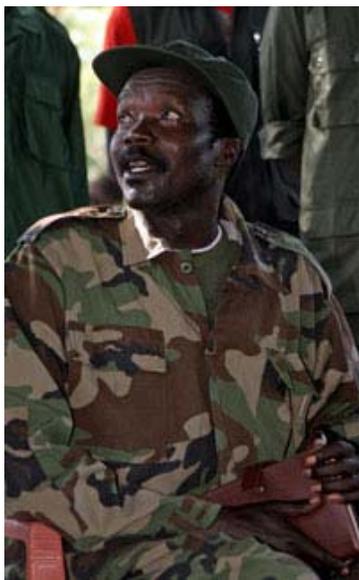
From Liberia to Lebanon

At the same time, the trial of Charles Taylor, the Liberian ex-president accused of planning and financing the rebel atrocities in Sierra Leone, continues in premises lent to the Special Court by the ICC in The Hague. The prosecution has already presented more than 80 witnesses and is due to conclude its case next month.

A hybrid tribunal has likewise been set up by the UN and the Lebanese government to try the alleged assassins of Rafik Hariri, a former Lebanese prime minister. It is due to start operations in The Hague in March. Hariri was killed along with 22 others by a huge truck-bomb in Beirut, the Lebanese capital, in February 2005. The new court's chief prosecutor, Daniel Bellemare, a Canadian, has said that a "network of individuals" were involved. It is widely believed in Lebanon and the wider Middle East that Syria's hand was behind the assassination. At least 17 other, possibly related, political murders are being investigated by the court.

Far away in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, a joint UN-Cambodian tribunal is due to start its first genocide trial early in the new year. The surviving leaders of the Khmers Rouges, a bunch of extreme agrarian communists, are held responsible for the deaths of about 2m men, women and children, a quarter of the population.

In Senegal, not a hybrid court but nevertheless a "special" one has been set up to try one man—Hissène Habré, a former dictator of Chad—"on behalf of Africa". In 2006 the African Union asked Senegal, where Mr Habré has been living in exile since 1990, to take on the case after coming under pressure from human-rights groups and Belgium, which had threatened to try him for crimes against humanity under its "universal jurisdiction" law. Senegal's constitution has now been amended, the necessary laws passed, and special judges appointed; the court can start its work as soon as a date is set.



APKony at large, unrepentant

In Uganda, there is continuing talk (though not much action) about setting up a special court there to try the three surviving leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) indicted by the ICC. Led by Joseph Kony, a half-crazed mystic, the rebel group terrorised northern Uganda for more than two decades with rape, murder, the torching of villages and the abduction of children, before decamping to Congo's eastern province of Ituri, where it continues to do the same. Two of the indicted leaders have been killed since the ICC issued arrest warrants, its first, in 2005.

It was Uganda that asked the ICC to intervene. Indeed, it was almost certainly the threat of being hauled off to The Hague, where the court is based, that induced Mr Kony and his henchmen to come to the negotiating table in July 2006. But as the talks dragged on and Mr Kony continued to refuse to sign any final deal unless the ICC charges were withdrawn, Uganda's president, Yoweri Museveni, seemed to undergo a change of heart. He offered to set up a special tribunal in Uganda which would try the rebel leaders, with an implicit understanding that they might get off lightly or maybe escape prison altogether.

Mind those hurdles

Under the ICC's strict principle of "complementarity", the court will take on an atrocities case only if the country itself is "unable or unwilling" to do so. The court may agree to hand over the prosecution of the case in midstream, but only if its judges are convinced that the proposed special domestic (or hybrid) court will be as strict and fair in its application of justice—including its sanctions—as the ICC itself. That will be a high hurdle for countries like Sudan and Uganda to overcome. So far, the court has shown no readiness to give up any cases, even when it has come under international pressure to do so.

Six months ago, the ICC faced a lot of flak—and some ridicule—when its first trial was suspended and the defendant, a Congolese warlord, ordered to be released after it was found that potentially exculpatory evidence, relied on by the prosecution, had been shown to neither the defence nor the trial judges. On an appeal by the prosecution, the court agreed to keep the defendant, Thomas Lubanga, in custody. But many saw the affair as a devastating blow both to the reputation of the court and to international justice in general.

The matter has now been cleared up, and Mr Lubanga's trial is set to start in The Hague on January 26th. If anything, the court's credentials have been enhanced, as a result of its determination to ensure fairness to the defence. Two other Congolese warlords, Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui and Germain Katanga, are awaiting trial in The Hague, while a fourth, Bosco Ntaganda, has been indicted, but is still at large. He is second-in-command to Laurent Nkunda, the rebel leader whose troops have terrorised Congo's eastern provinces of North and South Kivu. The ICC's chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, will soon announce the start of another case in Congo.

The neighbouring Central African Republic is the fourth country where the ICC has opened formal investigations—in this case, into the atrocities perpetrated by both rebel and government forces between October 2002 and March 2003 in the lead-up to the coup against the then president, Ange-Felix Patassé, by the rebel leader, now president, François Bozizé. Jean-Pierre Bemba, a former vice-president of Congo and warlord whom Mr Patassé called to his assistance, has already been arrested and transferred to The Hague. Further charges are expected to follow—of Mr Patassé and possibly Mr Bozizé, too. That is why the latter has followed Mr Bashir's suit in asking the Security Council to suspend the proceedings.

Meanwhile, as governments consider what to do about Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, a possible prosecution by the ICC is being mooted. Some say this would be impossible as the court normally acts only in the case of atrocities perpetrated either in a member state or by a member's nationals, and Zimbabwe has not signed up to the court. But Sudan is not a party either: in such cases, the UN Security Council can ask the court to investigate.

On the other hand, the ICC has jurisdiction only over the most serious crimes—genocide, war crimes, mass rape, crimes against humanity and the like—and only if they occurred after it began work in July 2002. Most of the atrocities carried out on Mr Mugabe's watch happened before that. The question is whether Mr Mugabe's failure to tackle the present humanitarian crisis could be construed as a crime against humanity. If it were, he too could find himself hauled off to The Hague. Like most other international courts, the ICC rules out immunity for anyone—even serving heads of state.

BBC Online

Thursday, 11 December 2008

France blocks Rwanda extradition

A Paris appeals court has rejected an extradition request for a man accused of a role in Rwanda's 1994 genocide.

A Rwandan court sentenced Isaac Kamali in his absence in 2003 to death for his alleged participation in the massacre.

Mr Kamali, a mathematics professor, who also holds French nationality, was detained at a Paris airport in 2007.

France and Rwanda have long wrangled over blame for the 1994 genocide when some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered in just 100 days.

Mr Kamali's lawyer, Jean-Marie Biju-Duval, told AP news agency the court's decision was in line with a recommendation by prosecutors that his client not be sent back to his native Rwanda.

But Alain Gauthier, a campaigner for genocide justice in France, accused French judicial authorities of being reluctant to try Mr Kamali and other suspects linked to the slaughter in Rwanda living in France.