

**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:**

Thursday, 20 May 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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**Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 19 May 2010

### **Special Court Hands Over Detention Facility to Sierra Leone Prison Service**

Special Court Registrar Binta Mansaray and Internal Affairs Minister Dauda S. Kamara on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding which formally allows the Government of Sierra Leone to take physical possession of the Court's former detention facility.

The detention block was handed over to the Government symbolically last November, but the facility had remained under the control of the Special Court for operational reasons.

Friday's agreement means that the Sierra Leone Prison Service will now take full possession with immediate effect. The Prison Service will operate the facility independently, under its own mandate, while sharing the premises with the Special Court and with UN peacekeepers who ensure the Court's security.

#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

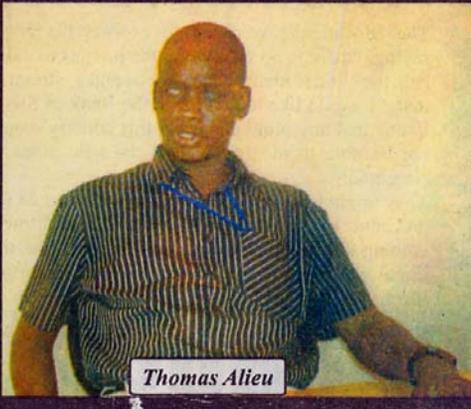
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Awoko

Thursday, 20 May 2010



*Thomas Allieu*

## New notes are not Blind friendly

*-Thomas Allieu*

### New notes are not Blind friendly - Thomas Allieu

**T**homas Allieu, the director of Educational Centre for the Blind and Visually Impaired has criticised the new bank notes launched last Friday as not blind friendly. Speaking in an exclusive interview with Awoko, he emphasized that "I must categorically state that my expectation was very high when the Central Bank made that pronouncement that they are coming out with new notes that can ensure the independence of the blind and virtually impaired in Sierra Leone." He however lamented that, "to my disappointment,

the money in circulation now do not have any label that can allow the blind to identify and distinguish the various denominations," stressing that "I believe the Central Bank had the good intention to help the blind with the subject matter."

Thomas Allieu went on that he was of the opinion that, "a senior and respected blind person or organization working for the blind should have been consulted to help design the various dominations," while describing the statement relating to the blind as "misleading."

The educationist went on to express his anger saying, "there is no symbol on the monies that can help the blind to identify the various notes" stressing that, "I would like to challenge the Bank of Sierra Leone that any blind person in this country would not be able to identify any of the new notes in circulation".

They might have got good intention, but lacked the procedure to execute them, Thomas Allieu affirmed, nothing that "to crown it all the blind and visually impaired cannot enjoy the independence of identifying the notes."

Note: Thomas Allieu was a staff member at Outreach.

Charlestaylortrial.com

Wednesday, 19 May 2010

## **Prosecution Witness Was A Desperate Man Seeking Assistance, Defense Witness Says**

By Alpha Sesay

A defense witness for Charles Taylor today described a former radio operator for Sierra Leonean rebel forces who testified against the former Liberian president as a “desperate” and starving young man who sought his help in Liberia during the country’s civil conflict.

Joseph Menson Dehmie, a former radio operator for Mr. Taylor’s Liberian rebel group, today sought to refute prosecution evidence that his forces gave support to Sierra Leonean rebels after they had retreated from attacks by their government’s troops.

The prosecution witness — Dauda Aruna Fornie, commonly called DAF – testified in 2008 that about 300 of Sierra Leone’s Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels were then taken to a Liberian rebel base at Bomi Hills in Liberia where they underwent advanced military training. Mr. Fornie also said that at Bomi Hills, the RUF rebels performed domestic chores for Mr. Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) commanders. According to Mr. Fornie, he was in the RUF group assigned to the NPFL Signal Unit at Bomi Hills and was trained in the use of communication or radio equipment by the NPFL Signal Regional Commander named “Joseph Dehmie”– the witness who is presently testifying in Mr. Taylor’s defense.

Mr. Dehmie today expressed his surprise to find out that Mr. Fornie was an RUF fighter. According to Mr. Dehmie, he only knew Mr. Fornie after the young man had approached him at Bomi Hills as a hungry man who was desperate to get food.

“I am only hearing this today,” Mr. Dehmie said.

“Up to the time he was with me, he did not tell me that he was a soldier. That is surprising to me. I am only hearing this now.”

Mr. Dehmie told the court that when Mr. Fornie approached him for help at Bomi Hills, “he [Fornie] was so desperate. He was tiny — even a Somalian refugee was better than him.”

Mr. Dehmie said that Mr. Fornie stayed with him for up to five months during which time he (Fornie) helped him with domestic issues.

Asked by defense counsel for Mr. Taylor, Morris Anyah, whether he ever recruited Mr. Fornie as a radio operator or let him into the NPFL radio room at Bomi Hills, Mr. Dehmie said that never happened.

“Non-radio operators were not allowed into the radio room. He used to be inside the building but never in the radio room. He did not use the radio, I did not recruit DAF,” he said.

“He was a cook, he was a tiny little boy who was seeking assistance. He was never a radio operator,” Mr. Dehmie added.

Mr. Dehmie listened to portions of Mr. Fornie’s 2008 testimony in which the former RUF radio operator said that while in Liberia, the RUF worked in collaboration with NPFL commanders including One Man One, Yegbeh Degbon, Dickson Walo and others to launch attacks against enemy forces in Liberian frontlines. According to Mr. Fornie, NPFL rebels referred to RUF rebels as “Sankoh recruits,” in

reference to the name of RUF leader Foday Sankoh. Mr. Fornie said they were all based at Bomi Hills, the same place where the present witness Mr. Dehmie stayed at that time. Again, Mr. Dehmie expressed surprise at this account.

“I am dumbfounded because I did not know that this boy was even a soldier. We did not talk anything military. He was not my colleague, he was just like my little brother and I took care of him,” Mr. Dehmie said.

Also in his testimony today, Mr. Dehmie told the court that a rival rebel faction, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), “was formed from the sister republic of Sierra Leone.” He explained that some NPFL commanders including General Degbon, Anthony Menkunagbe, One Man One and Oliver Varney connived with ULIMO forces to overthrow Mr. Taylor as leader of the NPFL. These men, the witness said, were tried and executed.

“To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. They were executed,” the witness said.

Mr. Dehmie is the twelfth witness to have testified for Mr. Taylor, who is responding to charges that he provided support to RUF rebels in Sierra Leone during the country’s 11 years civil conflict. Mr. Taylor has denied the charges against him.

Mr. Dehmie’s testimony continues tomorrow.

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

By John Kollie

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**NEWS ITEM**

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*A Former NPFL Radio Operator, Joseph Dehmie testifying in The Hague has denied Prosecution claims that Mr. Charles Taylor summarily executed several senior commanders of his rebel organization without any due process of law. John Kollie reports for the BBC World Service on the trial of former Liberia President Charles Taylor in The Hague...*

Mr. Dehmie told the court that those executed were tried by the NPFL Court Marshal Board headed by one McDonald Boan.

The Prosecution through some its witnesses had alleged that NPFL Commanders, Oliver Varney, Legbeye Debon , Anthony Menkunagbe, Timothy Mulbah among others were executed without an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. Dehmie alleged Oliver Varney, the NPFL Former 6th Battalion Commander connived with other NPFL Commanders and surrendered NPFL territories to ULIMO, a Liberian rebel group opposed to the NPFL in 1992.

He said Legbeye Debon, one of the commanders executed by Mr. Taylor secretly disarmed about 300 NPFL combatants while they were fighting ULIMO.

Most of Mr. Dehmie's testimonies on Wednesday concentrated on his job as Radio Operator for the NPFL from 1990 to 1997.

**United Nations**  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary**  
**19 April 2010**

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

**UN News in Liberia**

**UNMIL**

**Fears over Rise in Sexual Violence, As UNMIL & NGOs Scale Down**

[New Democrat]

- There are fears of escalating sexual violence as United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and NGOs scale down their activities, leaving a void that national institutions, with limited capacity, cannot fill.
- The UN's Regional Information Network (IRIN) reports that humanitarian workers in Liberia worry that as the UN and NGOs scale down aid operations, the fight against sexual violence will suffer, given a limited capacity in national institutions to take it on.
- The fight against sexual violence, led by the Ministry of Gender and Development, is part of a wider four-year national plan to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; the resolution was passed in 2000 but Liberia - where a 14-year war ended in 2003 - began implementing it just last year.
- The action plan relies heavily on aid agencies and on international donors for funds, said the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) coordinator for sexual and gender-based violence, Anna Stone.
- "But after the presidential and legislative elections next year many international NGOs, including the NRC, will scale down operations in Liberia."
- Many aid agencies, including NRC and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) active in the fight against sexual violence are gradually cutting their programmes in Liberia.
- And the post-election role of the UN mission (UNMIL), which has supported much of the government's anti-sexual-violence programmes, is uncertain.

**Other UN News**

**WHO Hails Liberia's Progress on MDGs #4 Implementation**

[The Informer]

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has praised Liberia's progress on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relating to public health, in a document published for its 63rd World Health Assembly in Geneva this week.
- The WHO report notes the strides made by developing countries on Goals 4 (child mortality), 5 (maternal health) and 6 (malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis).
- Under the heading "Learning from Success," it singles Liberia as a model of achievement on Goal 4, having seen a reduction of over 20% in child mortality in recent years.
- According to the report, "there are signs of faster progress in Liberia, where child mortality fell by 20% or more between 2000 and 2007."

## Local News on Liberian issues

### **Senator Warns Against Leaving Defense Minister in Charge**

[The News]

- A Grand Kru Senator has alarmed over the tendency of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to leave the Defense Minister in charge of the country.
- Senator Blamo Nelson said it was not prudent for the Defense Minister who controls the military to be left in charge of the government.
- According to him, it was too risky for the Defense Minister to chair the cabinet while the President is away from the country, noting that it was possible that the Defense Minister could one day be tempted to seize power and control the government.
- The Grand Kru Senator said he was speaking from the experience of Liberian soldiers being involved in politics.
- Senator Nelson sounded the concern Tuesday after the Senate received a letter from President Sirleaf on her foreign travel in which she said Defense Minister Brownie Samukai would coordinate the affairs of the cabinet beginning May 22 to June 2.
- Meanwhile, Gbarpolu Senator Daniel Naatehn says it was not risky for the Defense Minister to chair the affairs of the state in the absence of the President.
- He argued that the Defense Minister is a civilian and there was no need for Senator Nelson to alarm without citing any evil motive harbored by the Minister.

### **Threshold Bill Goes To Supreme Court, Respondents to Appear May 28**

[Heritage, Daily Observer, The Inquirer]

- The debate surrounding the passage of the controversial population threshold bill has formally been forwarded to the full bench of the Supreme Court following a deadlock for an out-of-court settlement between the two parties.
- The case was advanced to the House of Representatives in an official notice by Justice-In-Chambers Kabineh Ja'neh.
- In the bill of information, Justice Ja'neh ordered the respondents to the case to appear before the full bench of the Supreme Court on May 28.
- The Justice-In-Chambers said the respondents, which include the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, National Elections Commission and the Legislature must appear to show cause why the writ of prohibition prayed for by the Concerned Setor Youth should not be granted.
- He said the respondents must also file in their returns to the writ on or before May 28 and stop all further proceedings on the threshold bill until otherwise ordered.
- The petition by the Youth group headed by one James Doe grew out of a protest against what it considered the poor and inappropriate conduct of the 2008 census.

### **House Summons Police Director, Chief of Public Safety**

[Heritage, National Chronicle, Public Agenda]

- The House of Representatives has summoned Police Director Marc Amblard and Police Chief of Public Safety Amos Nyenatoh to appear before it Thursday, May 20.
- The decision followed a letter by Montserrado Representative Edwin Snowe complaining to the House about the traffic violations of commercial motorbikes riders.
- Representative Snowe observed the lack of safety mechanisms in the operations of motorbikes is alarming and resulting to series of deaths and destruction of properties.
- The Montserrado lawmaker said it was important for the Police Director and his Public Safety Chief to brief the House on the regulations of motorcyclists.

### **Auditor General Challenges Government to Account for US\$50 Million**

[New Democrat]

- Auditor General John Morlu says he is prepared to resign if government proves wrong the HIPC findings on millions that are unaccounted for at several Ministries.
- The HIPC audits at five ministries show over US\$50 million was expended without documentation.
- Media reports quote Mr. Morlu as urging government to hire international auditors to prove his findings wrong.

- The Auditor General also vowed to pay back salaries the European Union has paid him over the years if his findings prove contrary.
- The challenge follows a series of counter-claims against the HIPC audit findings from government officials including Finance Minister Augustine Ngafuan.
- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who cleared the Finance Minister, declared she needed more evidence to act on the audits.
- Meanwhile, government has expressed shock over the Auditor General's challenge.
- Government in a release says though it supports Mr. Morlu's right to freely speak, he must be cautioned against mixing professional work with politics and encouraged him to advance policies to improve the economy instead of criticizing the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

### **Two Justice Working Groups Differ on TRC Report**

[Heritage, Daily Observer]

- The Transitional Justice Working Group has reacted to a recent report released by the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report.
- The Transitional Justice Working Group said the ICTJ report is intended to relegate the TRC report to a mere historical account leading to the civil conflict.
- The working group at a news conference Tuesday questioned the role of the ICTJ in the TRC process and wondered about the specific intent and timing of its report.
- The group accused the ICTJ of dedicating more explanations to the limitations of the TRC final report while a few lines were written on its merits.
- The group also frowned on the recommendation of the ICTJ calling for a fresh impartial professional investigation to be initiated by government.
- The Transitional Justice Working Group believes such a recommendation suggests that the TRC final report is unprofessional.
- The group however agreed that there were weaknesses within the TRC report but said the report provides the best framework for Liberia in addressing human rights violations.

### **"Corruption A Big Problem..." Says Former LPRC Managing Director**

[New Democrat]

- The dismissed managing director of the Liberia Petroleum Refining Corporation (LPRC), Mr. Harry A. Greaves, Jr., has now conceded that "corruption is a big problem" in the government hindering development.
- Mr. Greaves, who rejected similar allegations from the UN Panel of Experts in the past, and suggested that Auditor General John Morlu be charged with treason for reaching similar conclusions, told Reuters Liberia at this moment is not an investor friendly country.
- "This is not a very investor-friendly place," said Harry Greaves, now a local businessman.
- "The legal system is tough, laws are too favourable to debtors, people in government constantly harass business, doing all kinds of inspections. Corruption is a big problem," he told Reuters.

### **Star Radio** *(News monitored today at 09:00 am)*

#### **Senator Warns Against Leaving Defense Minister in Charge**

#### **Senate Orders Revision of Tax Exemptions Resolution**

- The Senate has ordered a review of the joint resolution seeking the abolition of the tax exemptions on the allowances of judicial officials.
- The decision followed the first reading of the resolution which was last week rejected due to what the Senate called constitutional breach.
- However, in its session Tuesday, the Senate accepted the joint resolution with the required two-thirds signatures from the House of Representatives.
- Earlier, confusion erupted over the title of the joint resolution.

#### **Threshold Bill Goes To Supreme Court, Respondents to Appear May 28**

#### **House Summons Police Director, Chief of Public Safety**

#### **Auditor General Challenges Government to Account for US\$50 Million**

### **“LBS Needs Improvement in Transmission, Coverage and Production Quality” Says Board Chair**

- The newly appointed chairman of the Board of Directors of the Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS) says there is a need for improvement in the transmission, coverage and quality of production at the entity.
- Professor Alhaji Kromah said the staff at the state-owned media entity is currently working miracles considering the equipment they are working with.
- Professor Kromah said the staff is producing programmes of higher quality than the equipment they have.
- He said the board is a supportive group and would work with management to find support to improve the operation of the entity.
- Professor Kromah who served as director general of LBS in the 80s disclosed a meeting would be held to identify goals and objectives and plan how to achieve them.

### **LNP Launches Sensitization Campaign in Gbarnga**

- The Liberia National Police (LNP) has embarked on Community Policing Sensitization and Awareness Campaign in Gbarnga, Bong County.
- Police spokesman George Bardu said the programme is part of efforts to improve the already existing relationship between Community and Police.
- Mr. Bardu said the programme is also intended to ensure that community members restore trust and confidence in the Police.
- Reports say as part of the campaign, police officers and community members have begun sweeping and brushing major areas in Gbarnga.

### **Two Justice Working Groups Differ on TRC Report**

#### **FLY Seeks Speedy Passage of Threshold Bill**

- The Federation of Liberian Youths (FLY) says the continuous delay in the passage of the threshold bill is inimical to the pending 2011 elections and the stability of the state.
- A FLY statement issued in Monrovia called on youth and civil society organizations to join the fight in ensuring the threshold bill is passed speedily.
- FLY observed as a youth organization, it feels obliged to speak on issues that have the propensity to jeopardize the country's fragile peace and its fledging democracy.
- The group also commented on media report quoting Cllr. Pearl Brown Bull as saying only Liberians, age forty, can be commissioners.
- FLY views the statement as contrary to Article 52 of the constitution which sets the age criteria for the presidency at thirty-five.

#### **Carter Center Begins Capacity Building for Local Leaders**

- Carter Center Liberia in partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Traditional Council of Liberia has launched a capacity building in five counties.
- The 18-month USAID sponsored programme aims at strengthening indigenous conflict management in Liberia would also seek to build the capacity of local leaders in handling indigenous situation.
- The training is being held in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Margibi and Maryland counties.
- Speaking at the launching ceremony Monday, Deputy Internal Affairs Minister Peter Karmei lauded the US government for its continuous assistance to Liberia.
- Minister Karmei identified land, tribe and religion as the three root causes of conflict in Liberia.
- The Associate Director of Carter Center for conflict Resolution Thomas Crick promised his organization will continue to work with government.

### **International Clip on Liberia**

#### **Liberian President Calls For Free Health Services**

**<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/west/Liberian-President-Calls-For-Free-Health-Services-94189749.html>**

Liberian President, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson is urging countries to make free health care available to the poor. The Liberian president told ministers attending the World Health Assembly that too many people in developing countries are suffering from ill health and are dying because they cannot get the care they need. Liberian President, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, says people should not have to die because they are poor. But, she notes poor people are dying all the time because they cannot get the treatment they need to keep them healthy and to keep them alive. She says the statistics in her country bear this out. She notes many improvements in health have been made since Liberia's 14-year civil war ended in 2003. For example, she says the prevalence of malaria has fallen by half and

child mortality rates have been cut by 50 percent. But, she says there has been a sharp increase in the number of women dying in childbirth. And, this is because they do not have access to the skilled care they need. She notes more than 90 percent of Liberia's population lives on less than \$2 a day. This makes health care unaffordable. Because of this sad reality, she says Liberia along with Nepal, Burundi, Sierra Leone and Ghana have established a new program, which allows the poorest members of their society to get the health care they need without having to pay for it up front.

## International Clips on West Africa

### **Guinea**

#### **ICC / OTP delegation to visit Guinea**

<http://appablog.wordpress.com/2010/05/19/icc-otp-delegation-to-visit-guinea/>

From 19 to 21 May 2010, a delegation from the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) will be in Guinea to follow up on the mission carried out by the Deputy Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, in February this year. The OTP made public its preliminary examination in Guinea in October 2009. At the same time the international community unanimously called for accountability either through ICC or Guinean proceedings. Since then, the OTP has benefited from the full support of Guinean authorities as well as Regional and International Organizations. The purpose of this second visit is to liaise with Guinean judicial authorities and gather updated information on the on-going national investigation into the events of 28 September 2009. Guinea has been a State Party to the Rome Statute since 14 July 2003. As such the ICC has jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide possibly committed in the territory of Guinea or by nationals of Guinea.

### **Ivory Coast**

#### **Petra Foods in JV with French and US Chocolate Makers to Help Ivory Coast Farmers Improve Cocoa Bean Quality**

<http://www.flex-news-food.com/console/PageViewer.aspx?page=30177>

Petra Foods Limited, the Cemoi Group and the Blommer Chocolate Company today announced the formation of a tri-partite joint venture to produce fermented cocoa beans in Africa's Ivory Coast. The new Joint Venture (JV) Company, with an operating subsidiary in the Ivory Coast, will be named PACTS (Processors Alliance for Cocoa Traceability and Sustainability). PACTS' mission will be to improve the supply of high quality fermented cocoa beans from the Ivory Coast while at the same time improving the livelihoods of the local cocoa farming community. The three partners in the JV are all involved in the production of cocoa-derived products. Petra Foods is one of the world's major manufacturers and suppliers of cocoa ingredients and is a leading player in branded consumer confectionery products in the South East Asia region; Cemoi is the number one chocolate producer in France and the third-largest chocolate producer in Europe; and Blommer is the largest processor of cocoa beans and ingredient chocolate products in North America. Over a three-year period, the JV will establish up to 30 fermentation centres at a total investment cost of approximately €2,300,000. Initially, the JV will work with up to 50 local cooperatives covering approximately 10,000 farmers.

### **Sierra Leone**

#### **Mining groups target West Africa**

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/95809d38-62ad-11df-b1d1-00144feab49a.html?referrer\\_id=yahoofinance&ft\\_ref=yahoo1&segid=03058](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/95809d38-62ad-11df-b1d1-00144feab49a.html?referrer_id=yahoofinance&ft_ref=yahoo1&segid=03058)

Six of the world's biggest mining and steel companies have converged on an unprecedented scale on a mineral-rich corner of West Africa beset until recently by civil war. The companies plan to spend billions of dollars in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where some of the world's richest deposits of iron ore, the raw ingredient of steel, are found. The groups are Vale, the Brazilian iron ore miner, Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton, the Anglo-Australian mining houses, ArcelorMittal, the UK steel company, Russia's Severstal, and Chinalco, the state-owned Chinese mining company. Buoyant demand for steel has lifted iron ore prices, intensifying global competition for Africa's hitherto little exploited deposits, and pushing companies into increasingly risky territory.

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# Human Rights Watch

Wednesday, 19 May 2010

## **Liberia: President Should Act on Rights Commission**

Delays are Impeding Efforts to Promote and Protect Human Rights

President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia should demonstrate leadership in accelerating the establishment of the country's Independent National Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said in a joint letter to the president today.

The 2003 Accra Peace Agreement, which brought Liberia's years of armed conflict to an end, called upon the Liberian government to create an Independent National Human Rights Commission, and in 2005, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights Act was passed into law. Five years later, the government and parliament still have not established a human rights commission in Liberia.

"The government's failure to establish the Human Rights Commission has stymied progress in protecting human rights in Liberia," said Corinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. "An effective Human Rights Commission would help foster a culture of human rights in a country scarred by war, violence, and impunity."

The Liberian government's failure to establish the commission undermines Liberia's postwar recovery, respect for human rights, and its anti-corruption agenda, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said. While plans to establish the commission remain in limbo, the country has experienced ongoing violence and internecine conflict, striking deficiencies in judiciary, police, and corrections operations, vigilante justice, and high incidence of rape of women and girls. It is just such problems that the commission would be designed to address.

Establishment of the Human Rights Commission has met repeated roadblocks over the past five years. Most recently, in February 2010, the Liberian Senate rejected all proposed commissioners without offering any public explanation – and rejected them a second time in March, after the names were resubmitted in a last-ditch attempt to salvage the process. A new, reconstituted vetting committee, headed by the former head of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pearl Brown-Bull, was set up in April to select new candidates.

"The President needs to demonstrate leadership in pushing for the prompt establishment of a functioning independent and effective national human rights commission," said Etelle Higonnet, West Africa researcher at Amnesty International. "It should be one of her top priorities."

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International called on the Liberian government to help ensure the success of the new committee by making public the official budget and time frame for vetting commissioners, involving civil society in the process, and ensuring that the committee's work will be fully transparent. The groups further urged the Liberian Senate to consider the confirmation of nominated commissioners individually and not as a group.

"We are concerned that the selection process for commissioners is not adequately transparent with respect to process, time-frames, budgets, guidelines, or civil society consultation," Higonnet said.

Under the Independent National Commission for Human Rights Act, the commission is mandated to monitor and report on human rights violations in Liberia, as well as to review and, where appropriate, act on the recommendations of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, released in December 2009. Some of the recommendations, including the establishment of a hybrid international-national tribunal to prosecute individuals for serious crimes committed during the armed conflict, and the barring from public office of former supporters of the warring factions, have sparked considerable controversy.

To read the letter to President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, please visit: <http://www.hrw.org/node/90547>

## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Thursday, 20 May 2010

### Mladic notebooks show 'new evidence'



*Belgrade, Serbia*

UN war crimes prosecutors have found useful new evidence in 18 recently discovered "military notebooks" thought to belong to fugitive Bosnian Serb military commander Ratko Mladic, they said Thursday. The prosecution wants to add the notebooks as evidence in

three trials before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, including that of Mladic's former political head: Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic.

Mladic, 68, has been on the run since being indicted by the court in 1995 for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity - including his role in the Srebrenica massacre - as Yugoslavia tore itself apart.

#### **3500 handwritten pages**

The 3500 handwritten pages found last month in the Belgrade apartment of Mladic's wife Bosiljka, 'constitute a significant volume of new evidence,' prosecution spokeswoman Olga Kavran told AFP.

In documents filed with the tribunal, the prosecution states the notebooks were among 169 items seized by an official of the Serbian interior ministry in a search of Bosiljka Mladic's apartment on February 23. They cover the period June 1991 to November 1996.

#### **Everything that Mladic did**

"The prosecution believes that the notebooks are contemporaneous notes taken by General Ratko Mladic," said Kavran. A court official, who has seen the notes but declined to be named, told AFP: "They recount everything that Mladic did during the war years: he noted his meetings, the dates, whom he met and what they discussed."

Kavran said 120 audio and video recordings, a computer memory stick, medical records, mobile phone SIM cards, and "miscellaneous papers" were among the items seized. The Serbian government initially provided the notebooks to the office of the prosecutor in scanned format. The originals were presented to the tribunal on May 11.

#### **Authenticity**

The prosecution had "persuasive evidence" of the notebooks' authenticity, said Kavran, adding their origin had been corroborated by Mladic's former deputy, General Manojlo Milovanovic. He has reviewed all of the scanned Mladic notebooks and recognised the handwriting to be that of Ratko Mladic."

In a separate filing seeking permission to add the notebooks as evidence in the Karadzic trial, the prosecution said Mladic wrote of meetings with Karadzic and several others tried by the tribunal, at which they discussed "strategic objectives" and military operations. The notes were "taken during meetings with the accused (Karadzic), high level military and political officials, and others throughout the conflict in the former Yugoslavia," said the filing.

The charges against Mladic relate to "ethnic cleansing" committed in the 1992-95 Bosnian war, the 44-month siege of Sarajevo that left 10,000 dead, the July 1995 massacre of more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica, and the taking of UN hostages. He is charged in his capacity as former commander of the Bosnian Serb Army, and stands accused with Karadzic of pursuing the "permanent removal" of Croats and Muslims from Serb-claimed Bosnian territory.

Reuters

Thursday, 20 May 2010

## Court confirms Serb nationalist contempt conviction



*The Hague,  
Netherlands*

The Appeals Chamber of the Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal (ICTY) on Wednesday confirmed the conviction of Serbian

nationalist Vojislav Seselj, who was given a 15-month sentence for contempt of court.

Seselj, leader of Serbia's ultra-nationalist Radical Party, was the first suspect charged with contempt of court while on trial for war crimes at the Hague-based tribunal and was sentenced last July to 15 months imprisonment.

"The Appeals Chamber dismissed all eight of Seselj's grounds of appeal," the ICTY said in a statement. Seselj had revealed information about three protected witnesses, and was charged again with contempt of court in February for disclosing information on 11 protected witnesses.

The trial of Seselj, charged with inciting violence against Bosnians and Croats in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, resumed in January after a year's delay, with witnesses giving testimony behind closed doors to protect their identity.

The trial had been suspended after prosecutors said the case had been compromised by threats against a witness. Seselj has pleaded not guilty to 15 counts for crimes between 1991 and at least 1993, including torture, murder and forced deportation of non-Serbs by his party's militia.

(Reuters)

## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Wednesday, 19 May 2010

### Ocampo in Kenya: high hopes but low expectations

By Thijs Bouwknecht



*Nairobi, Kenya*

The Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno Ocampo, is back in The Hague after a five day trip to the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. He was there to meet with

victims of the violence that swept the country following disputed presidential elections in 2007.

*By Thijs Bouwknecht & Eric Beauchemin, Nairobi*

In the space of four months, more than 1,300 people were killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. But after the dust settled, the Kenyan parliament voted down a bill to establish a national tribunal to prosecute those responsible for the killings, rapes and forced evictions that took place during the fighting.

Ocampo was keen to step in and as a signatory to the Rome Statute, Kenya accepts the ICC's jurisdiction. But the government chose not to send an official invitation to the court. At that point Ocampo took matters into his own hands and asked ICC judges for permission to start an investigation into possible crimes against humanity committed during the bloodshed.

In March of this year, the court granted his request and Ocampo immediately sent a team of investigators to the East African country to find witnesses who could testify against their leaders.

The purpose of Ocampo's visit to Nairobi last week was to explain what his people are doing and what he can do for Kenya. While there, he also publicly pledged that by Christmas he will file charges against six people most responsible for the violence and try them in two cases. He was also there to hear victims' concerns, he said, telling them that he is their "civil servant."

Kenyans are now putting their hopes on the ICC prosecutor to ensure that all perpetrators are brought to justice. But he is already warning them it is a challenge he will not be able to meet.

#### **'The Hague or Arusha?'**

Ocampo had some difficult encounters while in Nairobi, in particular during a two and a half hour meeting

with 30 witnesses of the post-election violence. It was their fear that struck him most during his visit, he said. "They're still living in fear. They're afraid that the violence will happen again. But they have hopes too. They hope I can help them."

On Sunday, he talked to some 30 people - including many young students - who had gathered at the Kenyan National Museum. Ocampo asked his favourite question: where they would like the trials to be held, Arusha, Tanzania or The Hague, in the Netherlands? ICC judges can also sit in Arusha, only an eight-hour bus drive from Nairobi. Almost everyone said The Hague because they fear their leaders still have too much influence in the region. But not everyone agrees. Jonathan has just finished high school and wants to become an architect. He thinks that the trials should be held in Africa. "It's time," he says, that "Africans try their own human rights abusers."

### Slums

Ocampo's next stop was in Maathare - one of Nairobi's most notorious slums, and one of the first areas where the post-election violence broke out. He was scheduled to meet residents at a small gathering in one of Maathare's bigger buildings. Because of security concerns, his visit wasn't announced in advance but as soon as he arrived people noticed him standing on the balcony of the four-storey building and stood outside staring at him.

The meeting started with a short video about Eric Kioko, a DJ who lost his left arm during the violence when he tried to protect a woman who was being raped by 17 men. After a little girl read out a personal letter to the prosecutor, he was taken to the balcony from where he was shown some specific spots where some of the violence took place.

As he was leaving the building, a crowd which had gathered in front of the building started chanting "Ocampo! Ocampo! Ocampo!" as if a Hollywood movie star were in their midst. The prosecutor rolled down his window, smiled and waved them goodbye. "It was a good experience," he said.

Restore peace

"Restore peace," is written on one of the fragile walls in the small streets of Kibera. Kibera is another Nairobi slum - the biggest in Africa and the locus of much of the post-election violence. But it wasn't on Ocampo's itinerary because Kenyan authorities thought it would be too dangerous for him to visit. Nor can he go to the Rift Valley, where the violence was at its worst. But Ocampo hasn't forgotten those areas. "I trust Kenyan journalists to be my intermediaries," he said.

And the residents of Kibera - like so many Kenyans - are hoping they can trust Ocampo.

Jane Wanjiru Wangari is an old woman whose house was burned to the ground during the fighting. She now lives in a makeshift shack, made of metal sheeting. She wants peace, she says. But that's not all.

"I want justice to be done. The people who did this should be punished. I want Ocampo to come visit us and make sure that the evidence we give him is used to ensure that rule of law is respected here. I believe the ICC will accomplish something as long as it doesn't involve the Kenyan government in the investigation."

Inside her small house, she has a calendar covered with pictures of Ocampo. "It's The Hague," it reads. "2010: the year to end impunity."

Peter Wario Mwamgi lost his brother during the violence. "It was simply because he was a Kikuyu," Peter says. His brother was in the streets when he was attacked by a mob of 30 men using crude weapons to bash his head and the rest of his body. Peter found him later in the mortuary.

The police said that they would start an investigation but it never happened. Peter doesn't believe Kenya will ever punish the culprits and has pinned his hopes on the ICC. "If there is no justice," he says, "the violence will return."

Stories like this are common. Throughout Kibera, the police took reports after the violence but nothing happened. The government promised compensation but only a very few people have received anything.

Ocampo sympathised with their plight, but stressed that these issues fall outside his mandate. "We do our case but that is not the only point on the agenda. The Kenyan citizen has to do more for the victims. The

people who lost their house don't need to wait for a court decision to be assisted," he said. "It's time to do it now."

### **High expectations**

The Argentine prosecutor has become a superstar in a country where trust in government is almost non-existent. Kenyans are counting on Ocampo to bring their leaders to The Hague. "Let them not return," says Mozes, a local journalist.

But Ocampo has repeatedly said that people's expectations are too high. He will only prosecute a few big fish and can only protect the witnesses he needs for his trials. "I think we can help Kenya create justice, end impunity, and organize peaceful elections in 2012. I think we can achieve that." But, he's quick to warn, "you never do things perfectly. In this case, people will be disappointed. They will always expect more, but they have to understand they have to do more themselves."

And he knows that, most Kenyans, expect much more from the ICC. They know it's important to nab the "big men" who ordered the violence, but they want to see those who committed the crimes punished too. They also want more simple things: to return to their homes, find work and live in peace.

## The New Times (Kigali)

Thursday, 20 May 2010

### **Rwanda: When the 'Learned Fraternity' Become Criminals' Godfathers**

Activities by a group of defence lawyers working with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), who have taken it upon themselves to advocate, outside the court rooms, for fugitives of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, must be roundly denounced.

During an upcoming conference organised by these lawyers, they intend to shamelessly give a platform, as speakers, some of the most wanted suspects for their role in the Genocide.

As lawyers, who are supposed to be the custodians of the law, they are the least expected to be offering intellectual cover to the genocidaires.

Providing a forum to fugitives, such as Eugene Rwamucyo, whose role in the Genocide is well-documented, is simply unacceptable and should be condemned.

Relevant Links

Having defended suspects of the Genocide, at the UN-backed tribunal in Arusha, should not warrant these lawyers the right to help the fugitives escape justice.

It turns out that the very professionals who started out as defence attorneys for the Genocide criminals, have themselves been converted to the very ideology that led to the deaths of over One Million Rwandans.

Genocide is a crime that was not only committed against Rwandans, but the entire international community, and it would naturally be expected for these lawyers to know better.

This, however, is not the case, because they have openly denied the Genocide, even after the UN court categorically pronounced itself on the matter, that a Genocide was committed against the Tutsi.

## The Lubanga Trial (ICC)

Wednesday, 19 May 2010

Daily Report

### **OTP Investigator, Intermediaries To Testify In Lubanga Trial**

By Wairagala Wakabi

Two intermediaries and an investigator from the Office of The Prosecutor (OTP) at the International Criminal Court will testify in the Thomas Lubanga trial, according to presiding judge Adrian Fulford.

The judge made the disclosure today as he asked Mr. Lubanga's defense to give an indication of when they are likely to make their planned application to the court to dismiss the case against the accused. From today's hearing it emerged that besides one defense witness who is expected to give evidence next week, the trial will hear from the investigator and the two intermediaries, then the defense will ask judges to stop the proceedings on the grounds of abuse of process.

Mr. Lubanga stands accused of the war crimes of recruiting, conscripting, and using children under the age of 15 in armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Prosecutors claim that he committed the crimes during 2002 and 2003 while he headed the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC), a political group that had an armed militia.

Judge Fulford today asked the defense to provide information on the arrangements that were being made for the two intermediaries and the OTP investigator who he said were going to take the witness stand. "There will undoubtedly be travel arrangements in relation to two of those individuals and there may be security assessments that have to be made as well," he stated.

Mr. Lubanga's defense has accused intermediaries of the OTP's investigators of bribing and coaching witnesses. The defense has also said all witnesses who claimed in court that they were former child soldiers in the UPC actually never served with the group. Because of this alleged abuse of process in putting together evidence against Mr. Lubanga, the defense in January declared that it would ask judges to dismiss the case after producing witness who would give evidence on how the evidence was allegedly corrupted.

"At present it is very difficult to establish a firm agenda as to precisely when the different parts of the abuse of process application will be dealt it," Judge Fulford said today. He added, however, that one area which judges wanted the defense to have reflected on by next Monday was the suggested length of time which the defense would need for writing their submissions.

"You have flagged up for us back in January the fact that this is an application that you intended to make and we would have expected that whilst the weeks and months have been going by, the draft of this application would have been an ongoing process and as the evidence has evolved, so the final work would have come closer to completion," said Judge Fulford.

The judge added that the defense would be given time to make final adjustments to the evidence of the last witnesses. But he cautioned that if the defense asked for a lengthy period to finalize its submissions this would lead to serious delays to the trial since the prosecution was likely to ask for a similar length of time to make its response.

Meanwhile, 'Witness 297', a former child soldier in the UPC, was today cross-examined by defense attorney Jean-Marie Biju-Duval. This witness, who was formerly on the prosecution witness list but failed to testify last April due to ill health, started his testimony on Monday.

Mr. Biju-Duval pointed out that that in the statement the witness gave to the OTP in 2007 he never mentioned where UPC soldiers abducted him from, yet in court he stated that he was abducted from Katoto School. The witness said he did not recall what he said to OTP investigators on the issue, but he was certain that he was abducted from Katoto School.

The defense attorney also asked 'Witness 297' to explain why in his interview with Mr. Lubanga's defense last December he stated that soldiers who abducted him took him to Aru, yet in court he claimed they took him to Nizi.

"When I discussed this with you I had forgotten the names of the towns or villages. If I said Aru it's probably because my memory was not working correctly and I forgotten," replied the witness.

He added that when he met the defense lawyers he was not informed that they were going to interview him. "I did not know whether you had come to arrest me. I was afraid."

The defense will continue its cross-examination of 'Witness 297' on Monday May 24, 2010.

Tags: abuse of process, Biju-Duval, concocting evidence, defense case, intermediaries, OTP