

**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, 25 June 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

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Premier News
Friday, 25 June 2010

Witness Provided Assistance To RUF Not Taylor

A Sierra Leonean businesswoman testifying for Charles Taylor said yesterday that while she helped Sierra Leonean rebels during the country's 11 year-civil conflict, she did not assist Mr. Taylor's rebel forces in Liberia during its own war.

Lead prosecutor, Brenda Hollis, today sought to establish that the witness, Isatu Kallon, was an influential figure and provided assistance to both the RUF and Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group in Liberia. The witness, while admitting her support for Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), denied any suggestions that she had links with the NPFL.

"Did you or did you not provide support to the NPFL during

the time NPFL controlled Herbel?" Ms. Hollis asked the witness today at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"I did not help them," the witness said.

When Mrs. Hollis pointed out that NPFL fighters used to eat the food that the witness cooked for sale without making any payment, the witness responded that "that is not direct assistance."

When confronted with the suggestion that while she was based at NPFL headquarters in Gbanga, she did provide assistance for the rebel group, the witness said that she only "used to work at the market" in Gbanga.

She admitted that when a rival rebel faction attacked

Gbangha in the 1990s, she "fled Gbanga with NPFL fighters and supporters."

Mrs. Hollis also pointed out that when the RUF signed a peace agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone in 1999, the witness was one of the persons selected by RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, as part of a delegation to attend a meeting with Mr. Taylor. The witness agreed that this was the case.

"You were selected because of your close association with both Foday Sankoh and Charles Taylor," Mrs. Hollis suggested.

"No, I don't know about that one," Mrs. Kallon said.

The witness denied claims that during the conflicts in both Sierra Leone and Liberia, she was known by the code name "Iron Lady."

According to Mrs. Kallon, nobody ever called her that name and if they ever did, it probably could have been behind her back. "And they referred to you as Iron Lady because you were such a strong liaison between the RUF and Charles Taylor, correct?" Ms. Hollis asked.

"No. Nobody ever called me that name," the witness said.

The witness agreed that she carried the code name "Sensitive" - but while admitting that she used that name to communicate with the RUF, while she was in Guinea, she denied using the same name to communicate with the NPFL while she was in Danane, Ivory Coast.

"I did not communicate with the NPFL," she said.

In her testimony today, the witness also told the court that after the RUF invasion of Sierra Leone in 1991, her business dipped because she had spent a huge portion of her money to finance the RUF. Ms. Hollis retorted that the downslide of her business was because Mr. Taylor and the RUF leader Mr. Sankoh stopped paying her for supplying food to RUF and NPFL trainees at Camp Naama in Liberia.

"No. I only had money business with Foday Sankoh," Mrs. Kallon replied.

As in her testimony yesterday, the witness again today stated that she never heard that Mr. Taylor supplied arms and ammunition to the RUF.

"Someone in your position - helping the RUF, having given assistance to the NPFL - you know this was going on," Ms. Hollis said to the witness.

"If I saw it, I'll say it but I did not see it, nor did I hear it," Mrs. Kallon insisted.

The witness also today told the court that while she travelled from Herbel to Camp Naama, where RUF fighters were being trained in Liberia, she did not see human skulls displayed at checkpoints as suggested by prosecutors. She did see small boys with guns among those manning the check-points, she said. When asked whether she saw small boys at these check-points on her way to Camp Naama, the witness said that "well, these children, they were there, those children, yes, they had weapons but I was not there when they shot them."

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Thursday, 24 June 2010

Liberia: As She Concludes Her Testimony, Witness Says She Was Not Loyal to Charles Taylor

Alpha Sesay

Charles Taylor's defense witness today said her efforts to help Sierra Leonean rebel fighters during the country's 11-year war were motivated purely by loyalty to one man: rebel leader Foday Sankoh - not the former Liberian president Charles Taylor, as prosecutors allege.

Isatu Kallon, a Sierra Leonean business woman who helped Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Foday Sankoh in recruiting fighters to invade Sierra Leone in 1991, has spent several days on the witness stand, telling the Special Court for Sierra Leone about her closeness to Mr. Sankoh and her role in helping his fighters.

Today, lead prosecutor Brenda Hollis challenged the witness: she was not only loyal to Mr. Sankoh, but to Mr. Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group as well. The witness denied Ms. Hollis's claims, insisting that her loyalty only lay with Mr. Sankoh and the RUF.

"You were loyal to Charles Taylor, right?" Ms. Hollis challenged the witness today.

"No. I never even spoke with him," Mrs. Kallon responded.

As Ms. Hollis highlighted the witness's activities in travelling to different places seeking materials and support for the RUF, she asked the witness: "so your actions were motivated by loyalty right?"

"Loyalty to who?" the witness asked Ms. Hollis.

"To both Foday Sankoh and Charles Taylor," Ms. Hollis said.



Transfer of Charles Taylor for trial for war crimes in the Hague, Liberia

"I was not loyal to two people. I was only loyal to Foday Sankoh and the RUF fighters," Mrs. Kallon responded.

"The activities you have described in this court served the interests of both Foday Sankoh and Charles Taylor," Mrs. Hollis shot back.

"I did not know whether it was between them. I only know that I served Foday Sankoh and the RUF," the witness said.

She denied suggestions that both Mr. Taylor and Mr. Sankoh had made her aware of their friendship.

"You were aware that Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh had known each other for a long time," Ms. Hollis put to the witness.

"I don't know," the witness said.

The witness had previously told the court that she had passed through NPFL checkpoints to take food to RUF fighters who were being trained at Camp Naama in Liberia -- a place where NPFL fighters also underwent training. The witness also described how she fled with NPFL fighters when rival rebels attacked the Liberian town of Gbarngaha, where she had been based, selling goods in the local market. Today, Ms. Hollis argued that the witness' freedom to move around NPFL-controlled territories was a product of her loyalty to both Mr. Sankoh and Mr. Taylor.

"The freedom you had to travel in NPFL territory, all the freedom of movement you had, was because you were loyal to both Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh," Ms. Hollis put to the witness.

"No, I was not benefitting from two leaders," Mrs. Kallon said.

When put to her that the RUF and NPFL were mostly two sides of the same organization, the witness said that "no, that is not how it happened."

One of the allegations against Mr. Taylor is that he is responsible for the crime of forced labor committed by RUF forces in Sierra Leone. Prosecutors say that Mr. Taylor knew or had reason to know that RUF fighters in Sierra Leone were forcing civilians to mine diamonds and work on farms -- and that he continued to provide support to them through the supply of arms and ammunition, and in planning operations. Today, Mrs. Kallon denied seeing civilians being forced to mine diamonds -- but admitted that civilians were forced to work on farms by the RUF.

"You know that civilians were being forced to produce food, right?" Ms. Hollis asked the witness.

"Yes," the witness replied.

The witness agreed that civilians were made to harvest the produce from the farms and were forced to carry the produce to the river side in Guinea where they were sold. She agreed that the civilians did this work because they did not have any choice.

The witness denied prosecution claims that when she did business with West African peacekeepers based in Liberia that she had actually bought materials, such as fuel, for both the RUF and the NPFL. She also dismissed Ms. Hollis's assertions that she obtained intelligence information from the West African peacekeepers and passed it on to Mr. Taylor.

The witness insisted that she was never "supporting Charles Taylor."

Mrs. Kallon concluded her testimony today, insisting that she had no idea of any collaboration between the RUF and the NPFL.

The protected witness TFI-190, whose cross-examination was put on hold due to a request by prosecutors, is expected to resume his testimony tomorrow.


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
24 June 2010

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

UN News in Liberia

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

UNMIL Pakistani Soldier gunned Down in Lofa

- A soldier of the Pakistani Fourteenth Battalion serving with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has allegedly shot and killed one of his colleagues in Lofa County.
- According to reports, the incident occurred Tuesday night in the provincial city of Voinjama.
- Private Muhze Mustaja allegedly killed his colleague, Kalim Khane while they were keeping guard at their Selega base in Voinjama.
- Kalim Khane according to the reports was shot five times in the head and in the back.
- Private Mustaja is in the custody of the Pakistani Battalion in Voinjama but details on the shooting incident have not been disclosed.
- Meanwhile, the body of Khane has been flown to Monrovia.

Local News on Liberian issues

Libyan Leader Seeks Liberia's Support for African Government

[The Monitor, In Profile Daily, Heritage, The Inquirer, The Informer]

- Libyan Leader Moammer Khadafi has again called on Liberia to support his dream for an African government.
- Col. Khadafi wants what he calls more concrete action to ensure the implementation of the plan.
- The Libyan Leader also called for collaboration between Liberia and Libya within the framework of the African Union and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States.
- His statement was contained in a message delivered Tuesday on his behalf to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf by his special envoy Mokhtar Elgannas.
- In response, President Sirleaf renewed her support for a united African government but wants the process to begin with strengthened sub-regional organizations which could serve as a firm foundation towards achieving an African government.
- Meanwhile, President Sirleaf has called for a review of the operations of the Libyan-financed rice project in Lofa County to make it more effective.

For Releasing Alfred Kogbelo: Ellen Was Angry With Her Son; Witness Testifies in Money Transfer Case

[Heritage]

- The first defense witness in the ongoing over US\$1 million Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) transfer case said he and others were told at the National Security Agency (NSA) that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was angry for her son Charles Sirleaf being around the agency at the time he went there to release one Alfred Kogbelo.
- "Charles Sirleaf had gone to the NSA to seek the release of Alfred Kogbelo who NSA personnel told us is the main person who transferred the over US\$1million from the CBL to Ecobank-Liberia, "witness Mars Jusu Passawe told the court.
- The first defense witness spoke Tuesday, 22 June 2010 at the Criminal Court 'C' at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia when he took the witness stand to testify on behalf of the defense.
- According to him, after Kogbelo was taken to the NSA, Charles Sirleaf angrily went there, demanding that he be released.
- "After he was released upon the request of Mr. Sirleaf, he was later brought back at midnight because of the anger shown by President Sirleaf for her son being around the premises of the NSA," the first defense witness said in court.

Vice President Boakai Dismisses Nigerian Businessman's Claim

[Front Page Africa]

- Vice President Joseph Boakai has cautiously reacted to claim linking him to a fraudulent scheme involving a relative and a Nigerian businessman.
- The Vice President dismissed the revelation as a lie and told a news conference Wednesday he has no connection with the scandal reported by Nigerian businessman, Bode Dellon.
- Mr. Dellon Tuesday accused the Vice President of recommending his relative Francis Nyumalin for an iron ore business in Liberia.
- According to Mr. Dellon, the iron ore transaction later failed as he was duped of US\$55,000 by the Vice President's relative.
- Reacting to the claim, Vice President Boakai said he did not arrange any transaction between his relative Nyumalin and the Nigerian.
- He however explained that he got involved in the case as a family man following complaint by his other relatives drawn in the transaction.
- He narrated that they complained their brother Nyumalin of failing to honor the deal after receiving the US\$55,000, a statement confirmed by his brother-in-law Chris Dawson and other relatives involved in the transaction.

NEC Says All TRC Indictees Free to Contest 2011 Elections, Wants IFES Appoints Country Director

[Heritage, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer]

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) has clarified that there is no legal instrument to ban Liberians indicted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report from taking part in the 2011 elections.
- NEC also clarified that no political party has the power to announce the results or declare itself winner of any elections, noting that the authority only lies with the Commission, quoting NEC boss James Fromayan in a release.
- Meanwhile, Chairman Fromayan has appealed to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to name a Country Director to Liberia.
- He said the appointment was necessary considering the critical role of the Commission in the forthcoming elections.
- The NEC Chairman also appealed to IFES to contract Dr. Afari Gyan, Chairman of the Ghana Electoral Commission to assist with planning the 2011 elections.
- The appeals followed a meeting in Washington DC with the Vice President of IFES Michael Svetlik and Deputy Regional Director for Africa Abigail Wilson.

Murder Convict's Family Still Fighting Angel Togba Murder Case

[Front Page Africa, Daily Observer]

- The family of murder convict Hans Williams has filed a lawsuit against the Cuban pathologist, the one whose work the state relied on to convict the couple.
- The spokesman of the family Bazzie Williams said they sued Dr. Josephar Hernadez at the Human Rights or High Court in Accra, Ghana.
- Mr. Williams who made the disclosure at a news conference Wednesday said the legal action is intended to expose the flaws of the 19 March 2010 verdict against Mr. Hans Williams and Mardea Parkue.
- They were convicted and sentenced to death by hanging for killing little Angel Togba after a long running trial.
- Reports say the Williams family is using international lawyers rather than Liberian legal practitioners.

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

Libyan Leader Seeks Liberia's Support for African Government

Vice President Boakai Dismisses Nigerian Businessman's Claim

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

NEC Says All TRC Indictees Free to Contest 2011 Elections, Wants IFES Appoints Country Director

(Also reported Radio Veritas, Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

US\$12 Million Fishery Project for Liberia

- The Agriculture Ministry in collaboration with the World Bank has announced a US\$12 million fishery project across Liberia.

- The Fishery Director at the Ministry said the project will cover the construction of market and ice facilities, jetty for canoes, and storage among others.
- Mr. Yefiwo Subah disclosed Grand Cape Mount County with emphasis on Robertsport has been selected for the pilot project.
- Mr. Subah said Robertsport was selected for its artistry fishery company and the success story from there will be showcased in other communities.
- According to the Fishery boss the project would create more jobs for residents of Grand Cape Mount and other Liberians.
- Meanwhile, authorities of Grand Cape Mount County have made available five acres of land for the commencement of the project.

Agriculture Ministry Launches Self-help Project in Eight Counties

- The Agriculture Ministry in collaboration with partners has launched a six-month Agricultural Sector Rehabilitation Project in Maryland County.
- The project aims at helping farmers sustain themselves through marketing.
- A member of the Project Coordination Unit David Wounuah said farmers involved in lowland rice development are targets of the project.
- Mr. Wounuah disclosed hundreds of farmers in eight counties including Maryland, Grand Bassa, Grand Kru and Montserrado are benefiting.
- He disclosed the project also seeks to develop about 1,600 hectares of swamp land within six months.
- Meanwhile an authority of the county, Daniel Williams has encouraged farmers to take advantage of the project to stop relying on commodities from neighboring Ivory Coast.

Government Launches Vacation Job Programme for Students

- Government has launched its annual Vacation Job Programme for Liberian students.
- The annual exercise enables students acquire job training and become financially empowered for the next academic year.
- The scheme is under the auspices of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Youth Employment headed by the Youth and Sports Ministry.
- Assistant Youth and Sports Minister for Youth Services Nyan Twanyan said the committee has received funding for 1,000 students.
- Minister Twanyan said the exercise targets students between the ages of 18 and 35.
- He said the committee hopes to increase the number of beneficiaries depending on funds that will be received.
- At least 5,558 students benefited from the exercise last year.

Murder Convict's Family Still Fighting Angel Togba Murder Case

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Heavy Rainfall Stalls Traffic Flow in Monrovia

- Normal flow of traffic Wednesday came to a standstill at the Old Road Junction opposite President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's residence due to flooding.
- The flooding was a result of heavy downpour of rain in Monrovia which lasted for 24 hours.
- Reports say fleet of vehicles struggled out of the pool of water that overwhelmed Tubman Boulevard.
- Many drivers and passengers expressed frustration over the situation and called on government to swiftly find a solution to avoid future occurrences.
- Residents in the Old Road Community said a 2-year old baby got drown as a result of the flood.
- They said the child had followed the mother who did not notice her baby following her in the water.

Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 09:45 am)*

LCC Expresses Concern over Lawmakers' Action on Threshold Bill

- Amidst political bickering at the National Legislature on the passage of the Threshold Bill, the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) said it is greatly concerned over the action by some lawmakers to boycott normal legislative proceedings.
- The statement also called on all parties to exercise restraint in what it calls "the important matter and work in the interest of the Liberian people."
- The LCC said it will shortly meet to come up with a recommendation that may smoothen the way forward for the passage of the Threshold Bill.
- It has meanwhile assured Liberians of its continued prayers for peace, stability, love and harmony in the country.
- The lawmakers are today expected to be in session in another attempt to deliberate on the Threshold Bill for its possible passage.

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

International Clip on Liberia

Liberian man sentenced for lying about role in anti-terrorism brigade in immigration hearing **The Associated Press**

BOSTON — A man who prosecutors say was a member of former Liberian President Charles Taylor's notorious anti-terrorism squad has been sentenced to 10 months in prison for committing perjury during immigration proceedings. Prosecutors said Richard Willie came to the United States to testify as a defence witness in the federal trial of Taylor's son, Roy Belfast, also known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr., in Florida. Willie did not testify and later went to Massachusetts, where he applied for political asylum. Prosecutors said that during a court hearing on his asylum application, Willie falsely denied being a member of the Liberian Anti-Terrorist Unit, a violent paramilitary unit once headed by Taylor's son that was accused of numerous human rights violations. Willie was sentenced on two counts of perjury Wednesday in US District Court.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

DJ Guinea Political Party Supporters Injured Ahead Of Sunday Poll **AFP**

Clashes broke out between supporters of two Guinean parties Thursday, injuring several people three days ahead of the country's first free election since independence in 1958, the parties said. Supporters from both parties were injured as they pelted stones at each other in the town of Coyah, 50 kilometers east of the capital Conakry, and an editor of French television channel TV5 "was hit in the head by a stone," a doctor at the town hospital told AFP. Witnesses said supporters of former Prime Minister Sidya Toure's Union of Republican Forces, known as UFR, were awaiting a rally when they clashed with those of the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea, known as UFDG, the party of another ex-prime minister Cellou Dalein Diallo. Toure, reached by telephone, confirmed the clashes and called for calm. "We don't want these types of incidents which are not characteristic of our members, we ask our brethren of the UFDG to regroup," he said. UFDG Vice President Amadou Bah Ory, said: "These are unfortunate incidents that we must banish from our behavior." The UFR and UFDG are not considered violent parties," he said. The violence between the two parties is the first since the beginning of the historic electoral campaign May 17. After 52 years of successive dictatorships, half of which under military rule, the troubled west African nation goes to the polls Sunday for the first ever transfer of power to a civilian leader.

Guinea to Buy 20% of Rio's Simandou Iron Ore Project **Bloomberg**

Guinea said it will exercise a right to buy a fifth of Rio Tinto Group's Simandou project, described by the company as the world's top undeveloped iron-ore deposit, as a dispute over ownership of the West African site escalates. The government sent a letter yesterday to Rio, the world's third-largest mining company, informing the producer of plans to take the stake in blocks 3 and 4 of the site, Mines Minister Mahmoud Thiam said in an interview in Conakry. Rio's London-based spokeswoman Faeth Birch declined to comment today. Rio controlled the concession until the state ordered it to hand over blocks 1 and 2 in December 2008 to closely held BSG Resources Ltd. In April, Brazil's Vale SA, the world's biggest iron-ore exporter, agreed to pay \$2.5 billion for deposits in Guinea including those confiscated from London-based Rio. Guinea has an option to buy 20 percent of the project, Rio said in a March statement, adding it had spent \$600 million in pre-development work at the site. That month Aluminum Corp. of China agreed to pay \$1.35 billion for 44.65 percent of the site. Any acquisition by Guinea would proportionately reduce the interests of other holders, Rio said at the time.

Two hundred observers of ECOWAS to supervise Guinea election **Xinhua**

A delegation of 200 members of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) has been sent to Guinea to supervise the first round of Guinea presidential election on June 27, according to an official bulletin. The delegation is lead by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, former President of Sierra Leone. As to the bulletin, the delegation consists of the observers coming from all nations of ECOWAS, including delegates of ECOWAS Parliament, delegates of ECOWAS Community Court of Justice, Ministers of foreign affairs, experts on the election issues,

members from the Human Rights Organizations. The delegation has met with the Guinean parties, authorities and president candidates.

Fool-proof ballot papers made in SA for Guinea presidential poll **PANA**

Some 5.2 million ballot papers, made in South Africa for the presidential poll scheduled Sunday in Guinea, "cannot forged", said the Guinean Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in a statement issued Wednesday in the capital, Conakry. The ballot papers, funded by the European Union (EU), to the tune of 700,000 euros, include all guarantees of transparency for a credible poll. The INEC declared that it preferred a unique type of ballot paper displaying the pictures and acronyms of the parties of the 24 candidates to avoid vote rigging and ballot-box stuffing. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Public Affairs and the INEC assured that there would be 13,200 polling stations for 4,297,000 voters. The Guinea presidential poll will be supervised by national and international observers, including 70 EU representatives and 30 of the Carter Centre, named after former US President, Jimmy Carter.

Ivory Coast

Ivory Coast toxic waste deaths a 'myth', say defence **AFP**

Lawyers for a firm charged with dumping possibly deadly waste in the Ivory Coast in 2006 argued Thursday that the case against it was based on a "myth", spread by greens, politicians and the media.

The Ivorian government says 17 people died after caustic soda and petroleum residues were shipped away from the Port of Amsterdam and redirected to Abidjan, where they were dumped on city waste tips. Multinational Trafigura, whose chartered ship the Probo Koala dumped the waste in Ivory Coast, is charged with breaking Dutch environment and waste export laws and faces a two-million-euro fine at its trial in the Netherlands. The company, which has already reached an out-of-court settlement with the Ivory Coast government, denies any link between the waste and casualties. "It has not been proven that the events in Ivory Coast caused serious harm to the health of the population, or that they could have done," defence lawyer Mischa Wladimiroff told the court Thursday. He said the toxic waste had fuelled "a defamation campaign against Trafigura by environmental activists, journalists and politicians." The case, he argued, was built on a "myth", based on "numerous suppositions based on the incorrect facts" relayed by the media and politicians on the harm caused by the waste. "Were it not for political pressure... Trafigura would not be appearing here as a defendant in your court," he told the judges.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone sets up body to clamp down on illicit arms: official **AFP**

Sierra Leone has set up an arms commission to control the illicit circulation of weapons in the hope of preventing the kind of violence seen in its decade-long civil war, a minister said Thursday. Presidential Affairs Minister Joseph Koroma told reporters the commission, set up in line with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) small arms convention, would start operations on July 1. "The commission will set in place programmes of action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacture, trade and use of small arms and illicit weapons in all aspects," Koroma said of the 10-member body. "We want never again to get into the 10-year rebel war situation and one of the steps we have taken is to set up the commission," Koroma said, referring to the country's devastating civil conflict which ended in 2002. He said the decision to adopt the ECOWAS convention was made due to "several historical events such as war, military coups and similar mayhems that have pushed the African countries to backward status." He said it would enhance lasting peace in the Mano River Union (MRU), including Liberia and Guinea.

Toledo Blade.Com

Wednesday, 23 June 2010

<http://toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?>

Youths with rifles

The use of children as soldiers is one of the darkest marks in recent years on the record of some of the most brutal regimes and militias known to mankind.

In Africa, child soldiers have been one of the trademarks of armies such as that of Charles Taylor in Liberia, Foday Sankoh in Sierra Leone, and the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, known particularly for amputating limbs, killing randomly, and coercing other children to serve as recruits and concubines.

The United States has been providing money and equipment to the armed forces of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, which employ child soldiers, some as young as 9 or 10. It is estimated that as many as 2,000 youths are under arms, according to a report in a recent New York Times. The United States, in the form of the U.S. Africa Command, was involved in providing military training in Uganda to some of them.

It is nothing new that the United States, acting in the name of anti-terrorism, has played an unhelpful role in Somalia.

The 2006 invasion and occupation of the country by the armed forces of neighboring Ethiopia benefited from U.S. intelligence support and jet fighter-bomber attacks on Ethiopia's Somali opponents.

Nor is it new that the United States supports the desperate attempt of the transitional government, organized and imposed from outside the country, to hold on to the few city blocks of the capital Mogadishu that it controls. But paying child soldiers?

The United States needs to step away publicly from the Somali Transitional Federal Government, stating its reason and cutting off its funding, until the United Nations or other human-rights organizations can verify that it has abandoned the practice of using children as soldiers. It should be easy enough to see.

Tamilnet

Wednesday, 23 June 2010

<http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=32039>

UN chief appoints Sri Lanka war crimes panel

UN chief Ban Ki-moon Tuesday set up a panel to investigate allegations of war crimes in Sri Lanka during the government's war against the Liberation Tigers, a UN spokesman said. The three-strong panel would be chaired by Marzuki Darusman from Indonesia, the UN's special envoy for North Korea, and hoped to complete its work in four months, AFP reported. The other two members of the panel are human rights expert Yasmin Sooka from South Africa and Steven Ratner, an expert in international law of war from the United States. Mr. Ban launched the investigation "to advise him on the issue of accountability with regards to any alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law during the final stages of the conflict in Sri Lanka."



Mr. Marzuki Darusman



Ms. Yasmin Sooka



Prof. Steven Ratner

Mr. Ban's spokesman, Martin Nesirky, emphasized the group had a primarily consultative role, and that "primary responsibility for investigating rests with the authorities of Sri Lanka."

"It will look into the modalities, applicable international standards and comparative experience with regard to accountability processes, taking into account the nature and scope of any alleged violations in Sri Lanka," he said.

But Peggy Hicks, global advocacy director with Human Rights Watch, warned it has "long been abundantly clear that the Sri Lankan government is unwilling to seriously investigate wartime abuses."

"Secretary-General Ban's new panel will only be of value if it can quickly produce a roadmap for an independent investigation that the secretary-general implements," she told AFP.

Mr. Marzuki Darusman was the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia for the period 1999 to 2001. He is a member of the National Commission of Human Rights in Indonesia (Komnas HAM). Mr. Darusman served as Chairman of the Joint Fact Finding Commission established in Indonesia with regard to the riots of May 1998. UN Secretary General appointed Mr Darusman to the Commission of Inquiry into

the facts and circumstances of the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Mr. Darusman graduated in 1974 from the International Maritime Law Faculty, University of Parahyangan.

Ms. Sooka joined the Foundation for Human Rights in 2001 and serves as its Executive Director. She practised as a human rights lawyer during the apartheid era. In 1995, she was appointed as a Commissioner on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and was responsible for the final report.

From 1998-2001, she was also an acting Judge of the Witwatersrand High Court. She is widely regarded as an expert on transitional justice and has been a consultant to a number of governments, commissions and civil society organisations. She was appointed by the United Nations to the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Prof Steven Ratner is the Bruno Simma Collegiate Professor of Law at the University of Michigan Law School and in 1998-99, he was appointed by the UN Secretary-General to a three-person group of experts to consider options for bringing the Khmer Rouge to justice. His teaching and research focuses on public international law and on a range of challenges facing governments and international institutions, including ethnic conflict, border disputes, counter-terrorism strategies, and accountability for human rights violations. Professor Ratner has written and lectured extensively on the law of war, and is also interested in the intersection of international law and moral philosophy and other theoretical issues.

Reuters

Thursday, 24 June 2010

Gabon arrests Rwandan doctor over 1994 genocide

By Hereward Holland,



Pictures of some of the people killed in Rwanda's 1994 genocide are displayed inside the Gisozi memorial in Kigali. File photo.

Photograph by: Radu Sigheti, Reuters, National Post

KIGALI - Gabon has arrested a Rwandan doctor accused of planning and participating in the 1994 genocide in which 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed, a Rwandan prosecution spokesman said on Thursday.

Jean-Chrysostome Ndindabahizi was arrested in Gabon over the

weekend on charges of genocide complicity, conspiracy to commit genocide, public incitement to commit genocide, crimes against humanity, murder, extermination and creation of criminal gangs.

"His crimes were inciting and preparing the genocide, drawing lists of Tutsi victims for killing, participating himself in the murder of Tutsis and also setting up roadblocks," Rwandan state prosecution spokesman Augustin Nkusi told Reuters.

Ndindabahizi could face trial in Rwanda itself or at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania, Nkusi said, even though he is not on a list of 11 outstanding suspects wanted by the ICTR.

Nkusi said Ndindabahizi worked as a doctor at the Rwandan national university in Butare in 1994, and may have been working in the Gabonese presidency before his arrest.

Gabon denied that and said at the time of his arrest, Ndindabahizi was working under a false identity at a hospital 11 km (7 miles) outside Libreville.

The spokesman for the Gabonese presidency, Guy Bertrand Mapangou, said the west African country did not have any extradition treaty with Rwanda and that the suspect was handed over to Interpol.

Rwanda will have to go through regular procedures to seek Ndindabahizi's extradition, he added.

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<http://www.nashuatelegraph.com/news/777888-196/woman-allegedly-took-part-in-genocide.html?i=1>

Woman allegedly took part in genocide

By JOSEPH G. COTE

The federal search warrant application and affidavit written by Thomas Andersen, Jr., a special agent with Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Boston.

MANCHESTER – A Manchester woman who has depicted herself as a victim of atrocities that happened in her native Rwanda during the 1990s was arrested Thursday on immigration charges and accused of, in fact, taking part in the genocide during which more than 500,000 were murdered over only a few months.

Beatrice Munyenyezi, 40, of 73 Goffe St., was arrested Thursday morning in Manchester. She has been indicted on two counts of procuring citizenship unlawfully, according to John Kacavas, New Hampshire's U.S. Attorney, and Carmen Ortiz, Massachusetts, U.S. Attorney. A federal affidavit alleges that Munyenyezi participated in the genocide by, among other things, using a wooden club to murder a Tutsi boy and directing the serial rape of Tutsi women and girls.

The investigation of an alleged perpetrator of the Rwandan genocide who then lied about it to gain entrance to the United States appears to be one of the kind. Munyenyezi's sister, Prudence Kantengwe, has been accused of lying about her political memberships and events she witnessed during the genocide to get into the country, but has not been accused of actually taking part, according to U.S. Department of Justice spokesperson Christina DiIorio-Sterling.

The federal indictment against Munyenyezi alleges that she "participated, committed, ordered, oversaw, conspired to, aided and abetted, assisted in and directed persecution, kidnapping, rape and murder" during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Munyenyezi then lied about her involvement to obtain immigration and naturalization benefits, the U.S. Attorneys said.

During the 1990s, Munyenyezi and her husband were active supporters of the Mouvement Republicain National pour le Developpement (MRND) and leaders of the party's youth militia, the Interahamwe in Byumba – a state within Rwanda, according to an affidavit written by Thomas Andersen, Jr., a special agent with Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Boston.

The affidavit was attached to a search warrant application for Munyenyezi's house in Manchester.

Munyenyenzi lived at the Ihuriro Hotel, which her husband's family owned, during the genocide, Thomas said, and there were several roadblocks nearby, including one in front of the hotel.

It was there that Munyenyezi participated and committed in the genocide, Thomas said, based on "several witnesses I have interviewed."

"Munyenyenzi assisted in many ways, including but not limited to, participating in and speaking at meetings and public rallies of the MRND and Interahamwe, bringing supplies to Interahamwe and others who participated genocide against Tutsis including those who manned roadblocks in Butare, identifying and discussing Tutsis to be killed and encouraging others to rape Tutsi women and kill Tutsis, checking identity cards and otherwise identifying Tutsi at roadblocks, and selecting Tutsis to be kidnapped, raped and murdered," Thomas wrote. "Munyenyenzi also took and received personal property and belongings that were taken from victims who were murdered."

Thomas spoke to several eye-witnesses who were victims of the genocide, according to his affidavit, including one who positively identified Munyenyezi as the person who directed the victim's gang rape, which took place while the victim's husband watched.

Another witness, one who also took part in the genocide, told Thomas Munyenyezi directed the serial rape of Tutsi women, ran the roadblock outside the hotel and once killed a Tutsi boy by hitting him in the head with a wooden club, according to the affidavit.

Munyenyezi was admitted to the United States as a refugee in 1998 after providing false information on a number of immigration forms regarding her actions during the genocide and membership in the MRND, Thomas said in the affidavit.

She lied again in 2002 on forms she filed to obtain her naturalization, Thomas said.

In 2005, Munyenyezi told National Public Radio about the challenges she faced in Manchester and said she had escaped the genocide with her family. She said she was discriminated against as an African refugee and described herself as "a fighter against adversity," Thomas wrote.

Last year, Munyenyezi wrote a story for the National Endowment for the Arts about her experience in Africa, Thomas wrote.

If convicted on the immigration charges, Munyenyezi could face up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, along with the revocation of her citizenship, the U.S. Attorneys said.

Munyenyezi's fate regarding her alleged war crimes is more complicated, DiIorio-Sterling said. If she is convicted, she would automatically be stripped of her citizenship and may end up serving her sentence in the United States. Another possibility is that she would be deported to Rwanda where she could face genocide charges, DiIorio-Sterling said.

Munyenyezi's husband and mother-in-law are already facing charges for their alleged actions during the genocide before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Tanzania, according to Thomas' affidavit. During several days in February 2006, Munyenyezi gave false testimony during those trials, he said.

Munyenyezi's case was investigated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alope Chakravarty and Jeffrey Auerhahn from the District of Massachusetts.

Joseph G. Cote can be reached at 594-6415 or jcote@nashuatelegraph.com.