

**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:

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Monday, 28 June 2010

Witness Denies Receiving Monetary Payments From Special Court Officials

By Alpha Sesay

Charles Taylor's defense witness today denied prosecution suggestions that he received money from court officials as an incentive to testify before taking the witness stand on behalf of the former Liberian president in The Hague.

As the cross-examination of Mr. Taylor's fifteenth witness, "DCT-190", finished today, prosecutors focused on payments made to him in connection with his appearance at the Special Court for Sierra Leone as a defense witness. The witness denied receiving money as an incentive for his testimony, telling the court instead that its Victims and Witness Section (VWS) indeed provided some money for him - but that such money went towards medical services, transportation and accommodation. He did not physically see the money paid on his behalf.

While being involved with the Charles Taylor team, have you received any payment from the court?" prosecution counsel, Kathryn Howarth, asked the witness.

"No," he said.

Ms. Howarth asked the witness whether he had received an amount of 899,000 Leones (about USD \$230) for medical services.

"I had a tooth ache and was treated and my daughter was ill and taken care of but I don't know if it went up to that amount," he said.

Ms. Howarth put before the witness a WVS document titled "Expenses incurred on DTC-190," which itemized the amounts of money spent on the witness and the purposes for which said monies were disbursed.

"As I have told you, this is a figure that is shown but I was taken to the hospital and given treatment," the witness said when asked again about the 899,000 Leones.

The witness agreed that he received about 760,000 Leones (about USD \$200) to cover expenses relating to transportation from his work place in Sierra Leone's provinces to the country's capital. Ms. Howarth pressed the witness on the number times he had travelled to Freetown and whether the amount was justified. The witness said he travelled to Freetown twice.

Ms. Howarth also pointed out that the witness received about 497,000 Leones (about USD \$130) for miscellaneous expenses and 250,000 Leones (about USD \$64) as attendance allowance. While the witness said he did not know what the meaning of miscellaneous allowance was, he denied in clear terms that he had received money for an "attendance allowance."

"I am completely unaware of attendance allowance. Nobody has ever given me money for attendance allowance," he said.

When asked about WVS's expense of 360,000 Leones (about USD \$92) on his accommodation while he was being prepared for his testimony, the witness said "that is correct, for my hotel."

Ms. Howarth pointed out that a total amount of 2,772,000 Leones (about \$706) was spent on the witness based on the document provided by WVS.

"I've never received that amount of money. The money they are claiming, one of it was paid for medications, so I've not received that kind of money," the witness responded.

The witness explained that if the money was spent on him, it could be justified because he would not be expected to leave his job, pay his way to Freetown and then pay his own accommodation bills without any support from the court. He, however, denied receiving physical cash from court officials.

"But I've told you I never received physical money from the court. In Sierra Leone, what we call physical is when they give money to you -- but they did not come and show me receipts that this is the money we have spent on you," the witness said.

As the witness concluded his testimony this morning, the judges granted a defense request that the trial be adjourned until Monday, July 5, 2010 because Mr. Taylor's lead defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, has been ill and unable to prepare the next witness.

The trial of Mr. Taylor will resume next Monday.


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
28 June 2010

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

UN News in Liberia

UNMIL

UN Deputy Envoy commends Nepalese peacekeepers for their contribution to the re-establishment of the Rule of Law in Liberia

[Public Agenda, The News, The Informer, In Profile Daily]

- The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu has commended peacekeepers from the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal for their contribution to Liberia's peace process.
- She particularly singled out their contribution to re-establishing the rule of law. She made the remarks at the medal award ceremony in Monrovia to decorate the 255 members of the Nepalese peacekeepers (240 Formed Police and 15 Military Police) who will soon end their tour of duty in Liberia.
- Paying tribute to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal for its continued long-standing and substantial contribution to peacekeeping operations around the world since 1958, the UN Envoy noted that this year marks the fifty-second year that Nepal has actively participated in UN peace-keeping operations.
- DSRSG Mensa-Bonsu highlighted the achievements by the peacekeepers, including support to the Liberia National Police and UN Police in curbing criminal activities and potential violent public disorder; joint patrols with the Liberian National Police; and provision of security at the Free Port of Liberia.
- Noting the professional skills they have transferred to their Liberian counterparts through working together in joint operation tasks, the DSRSG told the peacekeepers, "You have lived according to your maxim, Any Task, Any Time and Any Place."

UNMIL Chartered Vessel Seized – Returning Weapons of Participating Nations

[The Monitor, Liberian Express]

- A Pakistan-bound cargo ship carrying a "huge quantity" of explosives and other weapons was detained by Indian authorities at a harbour near Kolkata on Friday.
- The vessel was heading for Karachi and was detained at Diamond Harbour, south of Kolkata, following an intelligence tip-off, police said.
- "The Indian coast guard and navy personnel have found a huge quantity of explosives, rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns and some bombs in two large containers," the West Bengal police chief said at a press conference in Kolkata.
- "The captain of the ship is being interrogated for further information," he added. The 153-metre-long ship was being taken to Kolkata for a thorough search by intelligence and other officials, Mr Singh said.
- "Customs have now decided to completely rummage the ship."
- Police identified the vessel as the MV Aegean Glory and said it was registered in Panama.
- The ship had sailed from Monrovia, Liberia, to Mauritius and on to Chittagong, Bangladesh, before making for Diamond Harbour. "The seized documents show that the vessel's origin was Liberia," another senior police official said. He said he could not comment on who was the intended recipient of the weapons.

Other UN News

Truth FM *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

ILO Praises Liberia for Drafting Decent Work Bill at International Confab

- The International Labor Organization (ILO) has praised Liberia for being the first country to draft the decent work bill.
- The ILO which played the supervisory role in the process recently submitted the draft bill to the government's delegation at the just ended ILO conference in Geneva, Switzerland.

- The Secretary General of the Liberian delegation at the conference Marcus Blama described the work bill as the best in seeking the rights of workers in the country.
- Mr. Blama expressed hope that government will speedily act on the bill for effective implementation.

Local News on Liberian issues

Bomi Citizens Ask President Sirleaf to Seek 2nd Term

[Liberia Journal]

- Citizens of Bomi County have petitioned President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to contest a second term in the 2011 Presidential Election.
- The Bomi citizens presented two separate petitions to Madam Sirleaf urging her to count on the people of her home county for their support.
- President Sirleaf gave no definite response to the citizens' petitions but urged the women of the county to engage more in agricultural activities.

Lawmaker Wants Measures against Nimba Superintendent

[Heritage]

- Nimba County Senator Prince Johnson has called for appropriate action against Superintendent Edith Gongloe Weh for violating the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission (PPCC) law.
- Senator Johnson said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf must take the appropriate action to serve as a deterrent in the fight against corruption.
- The Nimba lawmaker said the unilaterally withdrawal of US\$1.2 million from the county's social development funds by Superintendent Weh was illegal.
- According to him, the Superintendent violated six laws of the PPCC.
- The statement by Senator Johnson comes a day after the PPCC charged Superintendent Weh of violating procurement law.

Government Launches National Strategic Transport Policy

[Daily Observer]

- The Transport Ministry in collaboration with the Public Works Ministry has launched a National Strategic Transport Policy (NSTP).
- Transport Minister Aphanso Gaye said the policy was developed within the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) which considers transport as a vital tool to Liberia's economic development.
- Minister Gaye said the programme is a manifestation of the government's desire to modernize the Liberian Transport System.
- He said NSTP was formulated between 2008 and 2010 to join efforts of the Transport and Public Works Ministries in improving the transports system of the country with the support from Liberia's international development partners.
- The launch of the programme took place at the Samuel K. Doe Sports complex in Paynesville.

NEC Opens Campaign for July 20 River Gee By-election, Qualifies Four Candidates

[Liberia Journal, The New Republic, The News, Heritage, The Monitor, The Informer]

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) has officially declared campaign opened for the 20 July River Gee County District Number Three by-election.
- NEC acting Chairman Elizabeth Nelson said the period of political campaign will last until midnight 18 July 2010.
- Four persons have already been certified by NEC to contest the by-election.
- Those certified are Christian Chea of the ruling Unity Party; Philipbert Toe of the opposition Congress for Democratic Change and Independent candidates, Francis Younge Sr., and Marcus Quenneh.
- Cllr. Nelson said the qualification of the candidates followed rigorous period of nomination and scrutiny.

In Economic Sabotage Case: President Sirleaf's Son linked

[New Democrat]

- The son of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has again been linked to the economic sabotage case involving three Liberians.

- Richard Passawe, the second defense witness, said it was Charles Sirleaf who organized the dubious plan to withdraw the over a million US Dollar from the Central Bank.
- He claimed Mr. Sirleaf told them he was trying to establish a trust fund to support youth projects in Liberia.
- Richard Passawe who used the name E-Jee Sirleaf during the withdrawal, said Mr. Sirleaf used a man only identified as Gbotoe as liaison between him and them.
- He admitted withdrawing the first US\$2,000 but said the bank slip was filled in and given to him.
- Richard also admitted presenting photos for an ID card but said he did not sign the ID.
- Also testifying Tuesday, the first Defense witness said the entire plan was the brain child of Mr. Sirleaf.
- In his more than five-hour testimony, Mars Jusu Passawe said an emissary of Mr. Sirleaf in person of one Bill Findley always spoke with them while they were in prison.
- Mars Jusu said they were told they should have received three thousand US Dollars each from one Hans Williams while in prison.

“Fistula is Devastating” Says Official Asserts

[Daily Observer]

- The Acting Programme Manager of the Liberia Fistula Project says the consequences of fistula are life threatening.
- According to Mr. Sualaho Morris Koon, the effects of fistula often lead to the death of baby and chronic leakage by the mother.
- Fistula is a disease that develops in the internal organ of women that causes constant urine and makes it difficult for them to have children.
- Mr. Koon said women suffering from fistula are most often left abandoned or neglected by their husbands and families, and ostracized by communities.
- He made the statement at the end of a three day workshop for fistula survivors and upcoming advocates in Jacob town, Paynesville.
- The Liberia Fistula Project Acting Manager said the training was to renew the hopes and dreams of fistula sufferers and young campaigners.
- The Liberia Fistula Project was launched in 2007 by government through the Health Ministry with funding from the United Nations Population Fund.

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

Bomi Citizens Ask President Sirleaf to Seek 2nd Term

In Economic Sabotage Case: President Sirleaf’s Son linked

Lawmaker Wants Measures against Nimba Superintendent

NEC Opens Campaign for July 20 River Gee By-election

Ex-ATU officer, Others Sentenced for Armed Robbery

- Criminal Court ‘D’ has sentenced three men to 20 years in jail for armed robbery.
- Leroy Toe, a former Anti-Terrorist Unit (ATU) officer, Sonnyboy Moore and Slim Varsiah were sentenced Friday.
- Jurors found them guilty last week following a trial in which they were legally represented.
- The men committed the act in the AB Tolbert Road community in Paynesville.
- Following the sentencing, the men expressed disappointment in the justice system of the country claiming that they were falsely accused and wrongly prosecuted.

DEA to Burn over LD\$30 Million Drugs

- The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) says it would this morning set on fire over thirty million Liberian dollars worth of assorted dangerous drugs.
- The Director of the DEA Col. James Jaddah said the drugs would be burned simultaneously throughout the country.
- The burning exercise is in observance of this year’s International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.
- A DEA release said the burning exercise will be take place in Tubmanburg, Bomi County.

“Fistula is Devastating” Says Official Asserts

International Clips on Liberia

Ex-Liberian leader optimism about African progress in the 21st Century
<http://www.ghanaweb.com>

Professor Amos Sawyer, former interim President of Liberia, has observed that the development of youth leadership is a prerequisite to enable Africa "to achieve the dream of making the 21st century the African century". He said the spread of democracy in Africa in the latter part of the 20th century, encouraged many people to believe that an African renaissance would involve the youth as the driving force of the development agenda. The former Liberian leader made the observation in an address to a Strategic Future Convention of the Foundation for Future Leaders International, in Sunyani on the theme: "The African Youth as Architects and Builders of the New Africa." The 3000 delegates were drawn from members of the Foundation from more than 60 secondary and tertiary schools and other affiliates in the country. Prof. Sawyer stressed that the participation of the youth in political, social and economic governance is very important on every conceivable measure.

Liberia: Water sector faces "deadly" financing gap
IRIN

Poor sanitation and bad hygiene cause the deaths of one in five Liberians, according to the World Health Organization, but despite NGO lobbying efforts to put clean water and sanitation high on donors' and the government's agenda, the sector still faces a "deadly financing gap" says NGO Oxfam. Three out of four Liberians have no access to safe drinking water and six out of seven cannot access sanitation facilities, such as toilets, according to Oxfam in a recently-launched report, Life and Dignity at risk: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Liberia. A further US\$93.5 million is needed to boost clean water access to 50 percent of all Liberians; and to improve access to toilets to 33 percent - goals set out in the government's 2008-2011 poverty reduction strategy. Diarrhoea kills 20 percent of children who die aged five or under in Liberia according to the report, which was released on behalf of the WASH consortium - a group of five international NGOs which advocate the improvement of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in the country.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

Four candidates stand out in Guinea's presidential polls
www.apanews.net

The early results, released by private radio stations that were deployed in different polling stations throughout Guinea, thanks to financial support from donors, reportedly give a big lead to four of the 24 candidates of the 27 June presidential elections. The outstanding candidates are Alpha Conde of the Rally of the People of Guinea (RPG), Cellou Dalein Diallo of the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG), Sidya Toure of the Union of Republican Forces (UFR) and Lansana Kouyate of Hope Party for National Development (PEDN). Lansana Kouyate created a stir by gaining ground on Alpha Conde's stronghold in Upper Guinea, where result trends put him second position behind the RPG candidate. The fact that Kouyate is also a native of this region, populated by Malinke people, played in favour of the former Prime Minister of Guinea. Cellou Dalein Diallo reportedly leads in Foutah Djallon as voters of this region have strongly mobilized for their kin. In this atmosphere characterized by ethnic vote, the Forest region of Moussa Dadis Camara was played between two contenders; namely Alpha Conde and Sidya Toure although Dalein also obtained good results from there. This region has the biggest number of voters, after the Guinean capital, thus the stake it represents. For its part, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is yet to release official results for these elections whose provisional results will be announced on Wednesday and the final results by next Monday. Some observers believe that there will be a second round considering the pace at which things are going. A run-off, if any, is scheduled for 17 July to decide between the favourites.

Guinea poll only adds to Ivorian despair at limbo
Reuters

A peaceful poll in Guinea has added to widespread scepticism among residents of neighbouring Ivory Coast about whether their leaders are really committed to holding an election already delayed for five years. Just like Guinea, Ivory Coast badly needs a poll to produce a government with the mandate to get the country and its economy back on its feet. But unlike its vastly poorer neighbour, the world's top cocoa-grower seems incapable of doing so, with half a dozen election dates missed since 2005 while politicians wrangle over voter identification or procedures for disarming rebels. "The difference between Ivory Coast and Guinea is very simple: Guinean politicians wanted to have an election," said unemployed geography lecturer Della Omer, taking shade under a palm tree on a muddy pavement. "No one is fooled anymore. If the politicians here wanted an election tomorrow, they could do it." In a chaotic 18 months, Guinea has seen a coup usher in a military regime whose forces went on to massacre pro-

democracy marchers in the capital Conakry, and a gun attack on the junta leader whose successor stunned the world by pledging elections. Years of slow-burn political crisis in Ivory Coast, once West Africa's show piece and economic hub, have wrecked the economy, scared off investment and sent unemployment skyward.

Guinea holds first free election
<http://english.aljazeera.net>

Guinea's presidential election, described as the West Africa nation's first free vote after decades of military rule, has passed off peacefully. International observers said the turnout was high on Sunday, with long queues seen in front of polling stations. "Voting is peaceful, orderly and there is a sense of excitement," Yakubu Gowon, the former Nigerian leader heading the observation mission of the US-based rights group Carter Center, told reporters. He estimated the voter turnout to be between 75-80 per cent. "For the first time in Guinea's history, the military has been called upon to act as guardians of democracy rather than suppressors of the people," Al Jazeera's Andrew Simmons, reporting from Conakry, the capital, said. Our correspondent described the prevailing sentiment throughout the country as one of "massive enthusiasm". Almost 4000 local and foreign observers were deployed for the election in a country with a population of 10 million.

US says Guinea vote went "extraordinarily well"
Reuters

The United States hailed on Sunday the holding of presidential election in Guinea seen as the first free vote in the junta-ruled West African state's post-colonial history. "Based on the assessment of local and international observers and our own election monitoring mission, the U.S. Embassy believes voting to have gone extraordinarily well," the embassy in the capital Conakry said in a statement. Results are not expected before Wednesday and a second-round run-off between leading candidates is likely in July.

Guinea poll went well despite hitches: observers
Reuters

Guinea's first free election since independence in 1958 was hit by some technical problems but appeared to have gone off smoothly, international observers said on Monday. Traffic started to roll and shops re-opened in the capital Conakry after a shut-down during the voting on Sunday, which saw Guineans flock to polling booths from before dawn to produce a turnout of up to 80 percent. "People are almost pinching themselves that it's gone so well so far," said a Western diplomat in Conakry of a poll that could help trigger more investment in the West African mining giant and unlock aid needed to rebuild an economy shattered by decades of graft and strong-arm misrule. Residents complied with a ban on large gatherings on polling day, and no trouble was reported overnight. The 24 candidates and their supporters are waiting for preliminary results from the election commission, expected by Wednesday. With such a large number of candidates, the first round of voting is unlikely to produce a winner and a run-off, pencilled in for July 18, will probably be necessary. Observers from the European Union, African Union, regional group ECOWAS and the U.S.-based Carter Center said they would publish their initial reports in the next few days. But immediate impressions of the poll have been generally positive, despite some technical hitches. The United States on Sunday hailed the poll's conduct and the Carter Center estimated a turnout of 75-80 percent.

Ivory Coast

Cote d'Ivoire to host maiden int'l colloquium on school canteens
www.apanews.net

The first international colloquium on school cafeterias in Africa will take place on 1-3 July 2010 in Yamoussoukro, the Ivorian political and administrative capital, APA learns here. Actors and partners in school canteens in Africa will take advantage of this meeting to assess the situation and define new prospects for this programme, Mrs. Odette Loan Lago Daleba, National Director of School Canteens in Cote d'Ivoire, said Sunday on RTI, the Ivorian public broadcaster. "About 20 countries are expected at this international colloquium," she said, adding that national education ministers from Cameroon, Senegal, and Rwanda will attend the Yamoussoukro gathering, which will be opened by President Laurent Gbagbo. The European Union, the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP) and other development partners will also be attending this first colloquium. "Today, Cote d'Ivoire has good expertise in dealing with school canteens, thanks to the support we get from the country's highest authorities," Mrs. Loan Lago Daleba went on.

Daily News Online

Tuesday, 29 June 2010

<http://www.civil.ge/eng>

ICC Prosecutor: ‘No Impunity to Crimes in Georgia’

A delegation from the Office of Prosecutor of International Criminal Court (ICC), which visited Georgia last week, received an update on national investigation being carried out by the Georgian prosecutor’s office into alleged crimes committed during the August war, ICC’s Prosecutor’s Office said in a press release.

“The Rome Statute ensures the end of impunity,” ICC Prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, said referring to the statute, which entered into force in 2002, establishing ICC.

“States have the primary responsibility to investigate and prosecute; the Court only steps in if there are no genuine national proceedings,” he said.

Shortly after the war, the ICC Prosecutor announced on August 20, 2008 about the preliminary examination of the situation in Georgia. During the preliminary examination ICC Prosecutor’s Office assesses if an investigation should be opened.

“The Court potentially has jurisdiction over ICC crimes allegedly committed on the territory of Georgia, including forced displacement of civilians, killing of peacekeepers and attacks against civilian targets,” the ICC Prosecutor’s Office said on June 25 in a press release headlined “No impunity for crimes committed in Georgia.”

During the visit on June 22-24, the ICC Prosecutor’s Office delegation met with Georgia’s chief prosecutor, the Chairman of Supreme Court, the State Minister for Reintegration, senior officials from the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs and Defence, as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations.

“We appreciate the co-operation of the Georgian authorities,” ICC Prosecutor said. “It is mandatory that those most responsible for serious crimes be investigated.”

His office said that both Georgia and Russia were providing “substantial information” on their respective national investigations. The delegation from ICC Prosecutor’s Office paid its previous visit to Georgia in November, 2008 and to Russia in March, 2010.

Amnesty International (AI)

Monday, 28 June 2010

Timor-Leste: Justice in the Shadow

"The establishment of the Court is still a gift of hope to future generations, and a giant step forward in the march towards universal human rights and the rule of law."

Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, 18 July 1998 at the signing of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in Rome.

A few months before Timor-Leste's accession to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (thereafter called the Rome Statute) on 6 September 2002, Peace Laureate José Ramos-Horta, today's Timor-Leste President, praised the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC), qualifying the new institution of "the sharpest expression of developments in international humanitarian and human rights laws". He further added:

"It is crucial not only for East Timor to ratify this treaty at this time in history but for countries in Asia and elsewhere in the world that have witnessed and experienced first hand the atrocities committed by those in power and those who hold guns and use them against innocent civilians, most of whom are women and children... There is a need to prevent violence and allow the rule of law to take its due course in trying to bring to justice those responsible for such horrendous crimes... The ICC can be a rallying point for those who seek peace through the use of the rule of law."

Timor-Leste's accession to the Rome Statute constituted a significant step towards reaffirming the need to uphold the rule of law and condemning the most heinous crimes under international law, which occurred on a large scale in Timor-Leste during Indonesia's occupation. It stands in sharp contrast with the recent attitude of the Timorese government towards justice for past crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations which occurred under Indonesian occupation between 1975 and 1999 and the prevailing culture of impunity.

As stated in the Preamble of the Rome Statute, the States Parties to this Statute, recognize "that such grave crimes [genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes] threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world", affirm "that the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole must not go unpunished and that their effective prosecution must be ensured by taking measures at the national level and by enhancing international cooperation", are determined "to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes and thus to contribute to the prevention of such crimes", and recall "that it is the duty of every State to exercise its criminal jurisdiction over those responsible for international crimes."

The Christian Science Monitor

Monday, 28 June 2010

Rwanda takes a strict line on genocide denial. The US should support that.

To help Rwanda protect its postgenocide democracy from renewed ethnic divisions, Washington must be more alert to ideology at work there.

By Richard Johnson, Kigali, Rwanda

Arrogance, ignorance, and indifference to African victims of genocide have long been hallmarks of Western treatment of Rwanda. The US government should take care not to perpetuate this unfortunate tradition in the run-up to Rwanda's presidential election in August and fan ethnic tensions in Rwanda.

US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton admonished the Rwandan government on June 14 for its legal prosecution of "opposition figures" and "lawyers," which she called political actions that should be reversed. Whoever drafted and vetted the secretary's comments did her, and Rwanda, a disservice.

The "opposition figure" in question is Victoire Ingabire, a Rwandan émigrée who returned to Rwanda from Europe in January to run for president. She had been living outside Rwanda since the 1994 genocide. Upon her return this year, she was soon charged with genocide denial, stirring up ethnic hatred, and collaborating with a rebel force based in eastern Congo – the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), which is led by the remnants of the military officers and politicians who planned and perpetrated the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda.

The "lawyer" Secretary Clinton referred to is Peter Erlinder, an American who is a defense attorney for accused genocide perpetrators at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and a public spokesman for their cause. He portrays himself as a seeker of truth and justice, but is widely viewed within Rwanda as a conspiracy theorist and genocide denier. Mr. Erlinder came to Rwanda in late May to advise Ms. Ingabire. He was arrested, charged with genocide denial and endangering Rwandan security, then released on bail on June 17, on grounds of compassion for his physical and mental health problems. Though he has since returned to the US, Rwanda still aims to try him.

To Americans who follow what passes for news about this far-away African country (there is a lot going on right now, often troubling, but with no Western journalists based here, there is a dearth of in-depth reporting), Clinton's remarks might seem like sound advice. But her intervention was harmful to Rwanda's efforts to protect its post-genocide democracy from renewed ethnic divisions. The stakes are too high for an ad hoc approach.

In the case of Erlinder, the US has a duty to ensure that any American arrested overseas gets fair treatment. But to characterize his prosecution as "political" and to urge he be released on compassionate grounds, as the State Department did, goes well beyond this duty. It supposes that genocide denial is a victimless crime, and not legitimate grounds for legal action. Europe doesn't see it that way. Nor of course does Rwanda, with its 300,000 still-traumatized genocide survivors. Why should we?

As for Ingabire, it is astonishing that the US would appear to go to bat for her. Ingabire claims to want reconciliation and democracy for Rwanda. Human Rights Watch (HRW) has campaigned for her to be allowed to compete in Rwanda's election. But, surprisingly, HRW has not told its readers (including, no doubt, folks at the State Department) a word about the ideology and background of Ingabire's party or the nature of her campaign. This can be remedied.

Ingabire is president of two Rwandan émigré parties based in Europe. One is the RDR, the other the FDU; they are essentially the same, save for the alphabet-soup acronym intrigue of émigré politics. Both are the descendents of the RDR party established in 1995 in eastern Congo by Rwandan military leaders of the 1994 genocide against the minority Rwandan Tutsi. Their intent was to replace, with less compromised faces, the Rwandan interim government that had committed the genocide and then retreated to eastern Congo.

The founding RDR ideology and strategy, never repudiated since 1995, is to return the genocide perpetrators and their supporters to power in Rwanda by force or by negotiation. Ingabire's predecessor as RDR president in Europe, Charles Ndereyehe, is the subject of an Interpol warrant for genocide crimes committed against Tutsis in 1994. Ingabire's RDR and FDU have long had ties with the FDLR in eastern Congo. The United States and the United Nations treat the FDLR as a terrorist group; two of its Europe-based leaders are under arrest in Germany.

Ingabire's personal links to the FDLR are cited in a 2009 UN Experts' Report about the FDLR. Her public statements in Europe since 2000 are a rich trove of genocide ideology and denial. And Ingabire's campaign in Rwanda prior to her arraignment was clearly aimed at mobilizing ethnic divisions between Hutus and Tutsis.

Her first stop once back in the country was to visit Rwanda's main memorial to the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis, where she raised the issue of remembrance of Hutu victims. This is like going to Auschwitz to raise the issue of the German victims of Dresden. Ingabire also chose to meditate at the tomb of the first president of the Rwandan regime, which took over on independence from Belgium in 1962. This regime institutionalized racism against Tutsis and organized an initial mass killing of some 15,000 of them in 1963-64. Next, she visited with convicted perpetrators of the 1994 genocide in hospitals in two Rwandan towns, repeated her often-stated condemnation of the special genocide courts that convicted them, and promised to abolish these courts if elected. (Thanks to these 15,000 courts, set up in 2001 and already projected to end their work this summer, there are over 500,000 genocide perpetrators in Rwanda who have confessed or been convicted. Many are now at large again after having served their sentences.)

To my knowledge, the US never admonished Germany for banning the Nazi-like "Socialist Reich Party" in 1952, or for prosecuting Holocaust deniers, or for banning the two dozen right-wing hate groups it has shut down over the past 18 years. We should treat Rwanda with the same understanding and respect.

Ingabire will be brought to trial soon. She is, of course, innocent of the charges against her until proven guilty. The US government will be able to assess the Rwandan government's case against her, its conduct of the trial, her defense, and the court's ruling.

In the meantime, the State Department should certainly reconsider whether it really wants to make comments that appear to press Rwanda to welcome into its political life an émigré party that is heir to the genocidal regime of 1994.

Richard Johnson is a retired American diplomat living in Kigali.

The New Times (Kigali)

Sunday, 27 June 2010

Rwanda: Genocide Suspect Lied to Get Citizenship - U.S. Prosecutors

James Karuhanga

Kigali — FEDERAL prosecutors in the state of New Hampshire in the United States, Thursday arrested and indicted a Rwandan woman suspected of having participated in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, on two counts of unlawfully procuring US citizenship.

The Nashua Telegraph, a daily newspaper in Nashua, New Hampshire, says Beatrice Munyenyezi, 40, lied to get U.S. citizenship and had previously depicted herself as a victim of atrocities that happened in Rwanda during the Genocide.

She was arrested, Thursday, on immigration charges and Nashua Telegraph mentions a federal search warrant application and affidavit written by Thomas Andersen, Jr., a special agent with Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Boston.

She is married to Arsene Shalom Ntahobali, a Genocide suspect who is on trial, together with his mother, Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Nyiramasuhuko was the minister of Gender in the Genocidal Government. It is alleged that during their trial in 2006, in February 2006, Munyenyezi was called as a defence witness and gave false testimony.

"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 [in the] 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 is reported to have written.

"Munyenyenzi also took and received personal property and belongings that were taken from victims who were murdered."

It is alleged that Munyenyezi participated in the genocide using a wooden club to murder a Tutsi boy and directing the serial rape of Tutsi women and girls.

U.S. Attorneys say she lied about her involvement to obtain immigration and naturalization benefits, in 1998. She was admitted to the US 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.

As noted in the daily, 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, who also took part in the genocide, told Thomas that Munyenyezi directed the serial rape of Tutsi women, ran the roadblock outside a hotel and once killed a Tutsi boy by hitting him in the head with a wooden club, according to the affidavit. She lied again in 2002 on forms she filed to obtain her naturalization.

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

Her husband and mother-in-law are in custody in Tanzania on genocide charges. In February 2006, Munyenyezi gave false testimony during those trials.

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

Hirondelle News Agency

Monday, 28 June 2010

MNRD officials had no plan to stage coup d'etat, claims bagosora

Genocide-convict Theoneste Bagosora, Monday refuted prosecution claims that top leaders of then Rwandan ruling party, MRND, refused to nominate a successor of President Juvenal Habyarimana because they had a plan of staging a coup d'Etat to take over power.

"There is a paradox here. Those required to take power after death of president on April 6, 1994 refused to accept the offer given to them by the international community. This means, the theory of launching a coup d'Etat is not true," he told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Bagosora, who has been jailed for life for masterminding the 1994 genocide, was referring to MRND President Mathieu Ndirumutse, Vice-President Edouard Karemera and Secretary General Joseph Nzirorera, when defending the latter.

The prosecution claims in the indictment that the trio staged a conspiracy of forming interim government to implement genocide policy by meeting with Bagosora on April 7, 1994 in the Ministry of Defence office, where he served as Director of Cabinet.

Examined by Nzirorera's co-counsel Patrick Mayidika, the witness testified, however, that he had met with MRND officials to convey a message from the UN Secretary General Representative for them to replace the deceased president.

"Paradoxically, they did not obey that message. They said they were not in a position to nominate the successor according to their party's constitution, which required calling for a congress. By that time it was not possible to convene a congress meeting," he testified.

Bagosora, now waiting for the hearing of his appeal case, continues with his testimony on Tuesday. Nzirorera and his colleagues are charged with crimes allegedly committed by members of their party. The prosecution has indicted them for their superior responsibility as top officials of the party then in power in 1994.

FK/NI/GF

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Balkan Insight

Monday, 28 June 2010

Witness Testifies About Siege of Sarajevo



Radovan Karadzic and his defence team - ICTY

The prosecution at the trial of wartime Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has called a protected witness, a former member of the French Battalion with UNPROFOR in Sarajevo, whose testimony was conducted in large part in a closed session.

During the open part of the testimony the prosecution at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, ICTY, read the statement given previously by the same witness and submitted it into the evidence. This was followed by a short

period of questioning.

Witness KDZ 185 was in Sarajevo in 1993 where he witnessed the constant shelling of the city. According to his statement, about 1,200 shells were fired toward the city on a daily basis, often not targeting military targets.

The witness said that in this way the city was in a constant “state of terror”.

He also said that the Army of Republika Srpska, VRS, held the city under siege.

According to the indictment, between April 1992 and November 1995, Karadzic “established and implemented a strategy that used sniping and shelling to kill, maim, wound and terrorize” the civilians of Sarajevo. Thousands were killed and wounded.

Karadzic, whose cross-examination of the protected witness also started today, complained about the measures given to protect the witness' identity, saying that only victims should be given protection. He also said that he is afraid that the trial chamber will not get the right picture about Sarajevo.

“Most of the witnesses who have been in the courtroom up to now did not know what was going on in Sarajevo. Now we have here a witness whose job was to know what was going on and who was doing what,” Karadzic said.

He asked for five hours with this witness, and his cross-examination should end on June 29.

The prosecution asked that this witness be given protective measures and be examined in partly closed sessions. They also asked that he be cross-examined only on issues directly mentioned in his statement, and that a representative of the French government be present in the courtroom “in order to intervene should matters of national security arise”.

The witness previously testified at the trials of generals Momcilo Perisic, whose trial is ongoing and Stanislav Galic, who was sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment for the siege of Sarajevo.