

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



The Registrar presenting a plaque to outgoing MONBATT Commander Lt. Col. Sodnomtsog Davaa yesterday, in appreciation for services rendered to the Special Court.

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, 15 July 2010

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

Local News

Ivorian Gov't More Accommodative to RUF Than Taylor / *Concord Times* Page 3

International News

Atrocities Increased in Sierra Leone When the RUF Joined Forces With AFRC / *Charlestaylortrial.org* Pages 4-5

Decision to Keep RUF Commander Sam Bockarie in Liberia Was Taken By... / *Charlestaylortrial.org* Pages 6-7

RUF Leader Testifies at Charles Taylor Trial / *International Justice Tribune* Page 8

Munyakazi's Defence Counsel Shot Dead in Dar es Salaam / *Hirondelle News Agency* Page 9

Last Gacaca Verdict to be Delivered "Any Time From Now" / *Hirondelle News Agency* Page 10

ICC to set up office in Addis Ababa / *Daily Nation* Page 11

UN Court Seeks 35 Years for Ex-Serb General for War Crimes / *Agence France Presse* Page 12

Men Charged With Attacking Serbian War Criminal in Wakefield Prison / *Wakefield Express* Page 13

Ivorian Gov't more accommodative to RUF than Taylor

LOCAL NEWS

By Alpha Sesay

As he took the witness stand for a second week, former rebel leader has testified that the Ivory Coast government gave his rebel group a base to stay for far longer than former Liberian president, Charles Taylor - again distancing the former Liberian president from charges that he supported and controlled the neighbouring rebels during the brutal 11-year conflict in Sierra Leone.

Issa Hassan Sesay, former interim leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group, currently serving a 52-year jail sentence in a Rwandan jail, has said that from 1996 to around 2000, the Ivorian government provided housing facilities where RUF leader Foday Sankoh was based together with his special adviser David Kallon and an RUF radio operator Memunatu Deen.

Prosecutors have long maintained that Mr. Taylor supported and controlled the RUF rebels during the conflict in Sierra Leone, including the provision of a guesthouse in the Liberian capital, Monrovia, sometime in the late 1990s. The guesthouse, according to prosecutors, served as a residence for RUF commanders when they brought diamonds to Liberia for Taylor to exchange for arms and ammunition.

Taylor himself has admitted that sometime in the late 1990s, he indeed provided a guesthouse for the RUF

in Monrovia - but it was solely to facilitate meetings geared towards bringing the conflict in Sierra Leone to an end. Sesay testified that another government - the Ivorian one - was far more supportive to his rebel group than Taylor was, at least in terms of places for his rebel forces to stay.

"Mr. Sesay, what was the distinction between the assistance provided by the Government of Ivory Coast to the RUF and the assistance provided by the Government of Liberia?" Taylor's lead defense lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, asked the witness.

"Well, the Ivorian government provided housing for the RUF from 1996, so they provided accommodation for a longer period than the Liberian government," Sesay responded. He said the RUF maintained the residence in Ivory Coast until the year 2000.

When asked about which RUF officials occupied the house in Ivory Coast, Sesay explained that "it was Mr. Sankoh who was there, but when they arrested him in Nigeria, his adviser Pa Kallon was there.

"When they both [Sankoh and Kallon] returned to Sierra Leone in 1999, Mr. Sankoh's wife Josephine Tengbeh was there up to 2000 with some wounded soldiers," he explained.

"Was there a radio operator based at those premises from 1996 to 2000?" Griffiths asked. "It did not go up to 2000 - but up to 1998 an operator was there and it

was that operator who left and moved to Liberia," Sesay said. "She was Memunatu Deen."

He added that Ms. Deen returned to Sierra Leone at some point in 1998, but that during the signing of the peace agreement between the Sierra Leonean government and the RUF in Togo in 1999, she was again deployed at the guesthouse in Abidjan. She was subsequently relocated to the RUF guesthouse in Monrovia, Sesay said.

As prosecutors have alleged that Taylor served as the main source of support for the RUF, defense lawyers now seek to establish that the RUF received assistance from several other sources, including foreign governments and West African peacekeepers. In Sesay's testimony, he has pointed out that the RUF did not receive assistance from Taylor but rather from officials in Burkina Faso who supplied them with arms and ammunition, and Ivory Coast where he said that housing was provided to the RUF leadership.

The ex-RUF interim leader also testified about diamonds that were given to him in 1998 and which went missing while he was in Liberia. According to prosecutors, Sesay had taken these diamonds to Taylor in Liberia -- an account which Sesay has denied. The former rebel leader has said that he was on transit in Liberia on his way to Burkina Faso where the diamonds were to be used to pur-

chase arms and ammunition.

He explained that RUF commander, Sam Bockarie, instructed Ms. Deen to pick up Sesay in Sierra Leone and take him to Liberia to meet

RUF associate, Ibrahim Bah. Bah was to eventually take Sesay to Burkina Faso where the diamonds were to be delivered and arms and ammunition collected, the witness said. (Pros-

ecutors allege that Bah was a close associate of Taylor).

"She [Memunatu Deen] was instructed by Bockarie to come to Kailahun. The purpose

Contd. page 4

'Ivorian Gov't implicated by RUF's Issa Sesay

From page 3

for her to come when Bockarie called her was to take me to meet Ibrahim Bah. Ibrahim Bah was to meet us in Monrovia so that we can go to Burkina Faso," said Sesay.

The diamonds eventually went missing in

Monrovia and were never given to Bah, he said.

Issa Sesay refuted suggestions that the diamonds were to be taken to Taylor, saying that if that were to be the case, he would not have taken several days carrying the diamonds in Monrovia when they

eventually went missing.

"If the diamonds were to be given to Mr. Taylor, then they wouldn't have been missing from me because I was in Monrovia for six days," he testified.

Sesay's testimony continues on today.

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Tuesday, 13 July 2010

Liberia: Atrocities Increased in Sierra Leone When the RUF Joined Forces With AFRC, Issa Sesay Says

Alpha Sesay

Atrocities committed during the 11-year conflict in Sierra Leone increased when rebel forces teamed up with disgruntled members of the Sierra Leone armed forces after a 1997 military coup in Sierra Leone, according to testimony by a top level former rebel commander in The Hague today.

Issa Hassan Sesay, former interim leader of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has taken more than a week testifying about events that occurred during the conflict in Sierra Leone, denying prosecution allegations that Mr. Taylor was involved in a joint criminal enterprise with Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone. Mr. Sesay has refuted claims that Mr. Taylor controlled and supported the RUF and that RUF commanders including himself regularly took diamonds to the former president in Liberia in exchange for arms and ammunition, which prosecutors say were used to commit atrocities in Sierra Leone. In May 1997, members of the Sierra Leone army overthrew the elected government of Sierra Leone and formed the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC). The soldiers invited RUF rebels and together, the two groups formed a junta regime which ruled Sierra Leone from May 1997 to February 1998 when they were forcefully removed from the country's capital Freetown. As the two groups withdrew to the country's hinterland, they committed atrocities, culminating in the infamous rebel invasion of Freetown in January 1999, an attack which Mr. Sesay has said was undertaken solely by the AFRC with no RUF involvement. Today, as Mr. Sesay continued his testimony, he told the court that the massive increase in the commission of atrocities took place because the RUF joined up with the AFRC. These atrocities, Mr. Sesay said were committed mainly by the AFRC soldiers who had themselves become a rebel faction in the country. Mr. Sesay explained to the court the kinds of crimes that were committed once the AFRC joined forces with the RUF.

"Well, we are talking about amputations, burning down of houses, killing of civilians, and those were the practices they did up to the time they entered Freetown," Mr. Sesay said.

"And when they entered Freetown, they continued the same practice, they captured people forcefully, they asked them to carry their loads for them, they amputated civilians, burned and killed civilians, burnt down police stations, killed police men, such things," he added.

Prosecutors alleged that the Mr. Taylor was involved in a joint criminal enterprise with both the RUF and AFRC rebels and that it was in pursuit of such a common plan that the rebel forces invaded Freetown in January 1999. Prosecutors say that while the rebel forces were in Freetown in 1999, the high command of the RUF gave regular updates of their activities to Mr. Taylor and his Director of Special Security Services (SSS) Benjamin Yeaten, both of whom allegedly congratulated the rebels for their success in invading the country's capital. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations. According to Mr. Sesay, when the AFRC forces invaded Freetown in 1999, they did not communicate with RUF commanders until they got into Freetown and needed extra help from the RUF, a help which Mr. Sesay said never came in.

The AFRC, Mr. Sesay said, held a grudge against the RUF leadership because they believed "we were responsible for their being driven from Freetown because they said if we had reinforced them, they wouldn't have driven them from Freetown."

Mr. Sesay spoke extensively about the infighting that followed the AFRC retreat from Freetown, an operation that the RUF had refused to take part in. According to Mr. Sesay, there was massive break in

cooperation between the AFRC and that even in the RUF, there were serious infightings which made it difficult for commands to flow from an organized set up in the rebel group. Defense lawyers seek to establish that the infightings and lack of a central command system in the RUF and AFRC affected the existence of any common plan or purpose in the country and that claims of Mr. Taylor controlling the affairs of these groups in a organized manner are false.

When asked whether the RUF was a unified organization in the late 1990s, Mr. Sesay said "No."

"The RUF was not thinking as one during that period and did not have a single command structure during that period," Mr. Sesay said.

Mr. Sesay's testimony continues on Wednesday.

Editor's note: Apologies for the delay in posting.

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

Liberia: Decision to Keep RUF Commander Sam Bockarie in Liberia Was Taken By West African Leaders, Issa Sesay Testifies

Alpha Sesay

The decision to relocate a fellow rebel commander from Sierra Leone to Liberia in 1999 to promote peace in the war-torn country was not taken by Charles Taylor alone, but rather by West African leaders acting jointly, a former Sierra Leonean rebel leader told the Special Court for Sierra Leone said today.

Today, Issa Sesay - former interim leader of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) - said that after his group signed a peace agreement with the Sierra Leonean government in 1999, Sam Bockarie, who was one of the rebels' top commanders, resisted disarmament. Mr. Bockarie then moved to Liberia. According to Mr. Sesay, a meeting in of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leaders - including Nigeria's former president, Olusegun Obasanjo - decided it was best for Mr. Bockarie to stay in Liberia as he had become a hindrance to the peace process in Sierra Leone. This information was told to Mr. Sesay, he said, by the rebels' then leader, Foday Sankoh.

In his statements to the Special Court today, and consistent with his testimony since taking the witness stand last week, Mr. Sesay today continued to distance Mr. Taylor from the Sierra Leonean rebel group - and from prosecution charges that the former Liberian president controlled the RUF and its actions.

"He [Sankoh] went to Monrovia and they had a meeting about Sam Bockarie's issue and that himself, president Taylor, president Obasanjo of Nigeria attended that meeting and they decided, because Sam Bockarie was an obstacle in respect of the Lome Peace Accord, Sam Bockarie should stay in Liberia and Foday Sankoh should implement the peace process," Mr. Sesay told the court.

"Was the decision for Sam Bockarie to go to Liberia made by Charles Taylor alone as alleged by this prosecution?" Courtenay Griffiths, defense counsel for Mr. Taylor, asked Mr. Sesay.

"No, it was not Charles Taylor's singular decision," Mr. Sesay responded. "Obasanjo was involved in the decision for Bockarie to stay in Monrovia, including Mr. Sankoh,"

When asked whether Mr. Bockarie had gone to Liberia "on the invitation of Charles Taylor," Mr. Sesay said "No."

"Sam Bockarie went there because he had a quarrel with Mr. Sankoh. He knew that what he was doing was a bad thing that is why he left to go to Liberia because he knew that if we had met him, we would have disciplined him," Mr. Sesay said.

Mr. Sesay also told the court that Mr. Bockarie lambasted Mr. Sankoh when he left Sierra Leone for Liberia in 1999, telling other RUF fighters that the Mr. Sankoh was ungrateful for not listening to his advice that RUF fighters were not supposed to disarm to Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) soldiers, who were meant to oversee the disarmament process.

"Bockarie said he had never come across somebody who was ungrateful as Mr. Sankoh," Mr Sesay said. "He said he had maintained the RUF in Mr. Sankoh's absence, when Mr. Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria, he was the one who ran the RUF, he had fought and defeated ECOMOG, he had secured the release of Mr. Sankoh and now Mr. Sankoh did not want to listen to him. He said Mr. Sankoh was the most ungrateful man on earth."

Mr. Sesay also explained that when Mr. Sankoh was arrested in May 2000, after having ordered RUF fighters to abduct United Nations peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, Mr. Taylor sent his Director of Special Security Services (SSS) Benjamin Yeaten to invite Mr. Sesay to a meeting with him (Taylor) in Liberia. Mr. Sesay said that upon arriving in Monrovia, Mr. Taylor was very angry about the action of the RUF.

"He [Taylor] looked very angry," Mr. Sesay told the court.

"He [Taylor] said if Foday Sankoh and I thought that we can fight the UN - He said that other people will be thinking now, like America and Britain, they will be thinking now that this is the handy work of Charles Taylor but as long as God almighty knows that my hands are clean," Mr. Sesay continued.

He said Mr. Taylor informed him that he had received a mandate from West African leaders that "he should talk to the RUF to facilitate the release of the peacekeepers."

Prosecutors allege that since Mr. Taylor was in control of the RUF, he used his powers over the rebels to secure the release of the peacekeepers. Mr. Taylor has insisted that he was only acting on the instructions of other West African leaders. Mr. Sesay, as he testified today, supported Mr. Taylor's position.

"Was he [Taylor] talking to you because he was in control of the RUF or because he had a mandate from the guarantors of the peace process," Mr. Griffiths asked Mr. Sesay.

"He talked to me because he had mandate from the guarantors but he was not controlling the RUF. RUF was under the control of Mr. Sankoh," Mr. Sesay said.

The witness said that his meeting with Mr. Taylor after the abduction of the UN peacekeepers was the first time he had spoken to or met with the former president.

Mr. Sesay's testimony continues on Thursday.

International Justice Tribune

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

RUF leader testifies at Charles Taylor trial

By International Justice Tribune



Leidschendam, Netherlands

Former rebel leader Issa Hassan Sesay last week told the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) that his Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group was not controlled by Charles Taylor. He also denied giving diamonds to the former Liberian president.

Sesay is serving a 52-year sentence in Rwanda after the SCSL convicted him of war crimes and crimes against humanity last year. But on July 5th the former RUF commander appeared once more before the court as a surprise witness for the defence in the case against Taylor.

“Has Charles Taylor ever been in charge of the RUF?” asked Taylor’s lawyer Courtenay Griffiths. “As far as I know, no,” Sesay replied. “Have you ever given diamonds to Charles Taylor?” Griffiths continued. “No, I do not remember having given diamonds to Mr. Charles Taylor,” the 40-year-old former rebel replied.

Sesay also said he had no knowledge of RUF founder Foday Sankoh or leading commander Sam Bockarie giving Taylor gems, a claim prosecution witnesses made before the court. They “never told me that,” Sesay said.

Taylor is on trial for helping the RUF wage an 11-year-long brutal civil war in Sierra Leone in exchange for the country’s diamonds. These so-called ‘blood diamonds’ have become the main topic at the trial, which has recently moved to a new courtroom provided by the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in Leidschendam.

On Friday, British model Naomi Campbell announced that she will give evidence at the trial on July 29th. The court subpoenaed Campbell to testify about a diamond she was allegedly given by Taylor after a dinner hosted by then South African president Nelson Mandela in September 1997.

Hirondelle News Agency

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

Munyakazi's defence counsel shot dead in Dar es Salaam

Tanzanian Professor Jwani Mwaikusa, lead defence counsel for Yusuf Munyakazi, who was sentenced to a 25-year term last month by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was shot dead by unknown bandits alongside two other persons on Tuesday night at his Salasala resident in Dar es Salaam.

"The Police force has already mounted a strong tracking team for the killers though we have not yet managed to arrest any suspects," Police spokesperson, Advera Senso told Hirondelle News Agency in a telephone interview.

She narrated that Mwaikusa was gunned down as he was getting into his house at 10.30 pm by unknown assailants together with two other persons who showed up to assist him as he struggled for his life.

When his client, Rwandan businessman Munyakazi, 75, was sentenced to 25 years after being found guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity (extermination), Mwaikusa had immediately, in consultation with his client, vowed to appeal against the verdict.

Professor Mwaikusa was a holder of doctor of philosophy degree (PHD) in law from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He was the first defence counsel to lead a successful rejection of the Prosecutors motion to transfer the case of his client to be tried in Rwanda.

Hirondelle News Agency

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

Last Gacaca verdict to be delivered "any time from now"

The verdict in the last ongoing trial before a Gacaca court should be delivered "any time from now," the National Service of Gacaca jurisdictions (NSGJ) told Hirondelle news agency on Wednesday.

"The only trial left is a rehearing trial before Kagano sector's jurisdiction in Nyamasheke district", the head of the Judiciary department of NSGJ, Gratién Dusingizemungu, stated. Nyamasheke district is in the South-West of Rwanda.

According to Gratién Dusingizemungu, 415 out of the 416 sectors in the country have already completed their work and delivered their final briefs.

"We have already written half of the general final report", he added.

SRE/ER/GF

© Hirondelle News Agency

Daily Nation (Kenya)

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

ICC to set up office in Addis Ababa

The International Criminal Court is set to establish a liaison office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to acquaint African countries with its work.

The decision eases the discomfort of African member states to the Rome Statute.

They were fearing that The Hague was stalling on financing the liaison office after African countries resolved not to cooperate with the ICC in arresting and handing over Sudanese President Omar El-Bashir.

The inactivity

Attorney-general Amos Wako, who was mandated by African countries to write to the ICC to question the delay, was yesterday happy that finally, The Hague had agreed to fund the office.

“Those are good news because African member-states to the Rome Statute were concerned about the inactivity of the ICC when it had agreed to set up the office. It is a good reply to the letter that I wrote on their behalf,” he said.

The decision to go ahead with financing of the liaison office, which will play the diplomatic role for the ICC, was reached at a weekend meeting between The Hague president, Judge Sang-Hyun Song, and the chairman of the African Union Commission, Mr Jean Ping, in Addis Ababa.

Agence France Presse

Wednesday, 14 July 2010

UN court seeks 35 years for ex-Serb general for war crimes

THE HAGUE - Serb general Vlastimir Djordjevic should be jailed for at least 35 years for the 1999 murders of hundreds of ethnic Albanians and the deportation of 800,000 others from Kosovo, a UN war crimes court said Wednesday.

"The prosecution called yesterday for a sentence ranging from 35 years to life," International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) spokeswoman Nerma Jelacic told journalists in The Hague, with the defence calling for an acquittal.

The prosecution has accused Djordjevic of taking part in a campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against Albanians in Kosovo between January and June 1999.

During the campaign, Yugoslav and Serb armies expelled one third of the Albanians living in Kosovo, according to the ICTY.

The indictment alleges that Djordjevic "willingly participated in a joint criminal enterprise whose aim was to expel the majority of the Kosovo Albanian population to ensure continued Serb control over the territory."

The 61-year-old former assistant internal affairs minister and police commander faces charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for deportation, murder and racial persecution.

Djordjevic was arrested in Montenegro in June 2007 after nearly four years on the run. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges.

He was an aide to Slobodan Milosevic, the former Yugoslav president who died in March 2006 of natural causes while on trial before the same tribunal.

Wakefield Express

Thursday, 15 July 2010

Men charged with attacking Serbian war criminal in Wakefield Prison

By Gavin Murray

THREE men are expected to appear in court accused of attacking a Serbian war criminal in HMP Wakefield.

Today police said the men have been charged with wounding with intent Bosnian Serb Radislav Krstic, 62.

Krstic, a former general, was sentenced to 35 years after being convicted of aiding and abetting genocide during the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

He was moved to the Love Lane high-security jail from The Hague in 2004 after being sentenced.

In May Krstic was taken to hospital with neck cuts.

Krstic was indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in connection with the murder of an estimated 8,100 Bosnian men and boys on July 11 1995 in Europe's worst atrocity since the Second World War.

Krstic was only the third person convicted under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The three men are expected to appear before Wakefield magistrates via video link on Monday.