

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Diamond mining along the Sewa River in Kono District

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, 30 July 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Daily Observer (Liberia)

Friday, 30 July 2010

Accepted RUF Leader



Says Top UN Official

By:

Alpha Sesay

Charles Taylor's lawyers cited a high ranking United Nations official who said that West African leaders supported the replacement of Sierra Leone's top rebel leader in the name of securing peace in the war-torn nation.

Reading from a 2008 statement, Mr. Taylor's team sought to further distance Charles Taylor from prosecution claims that he controlled Sierra Leonean rebels during their brutal rampage throughout the country's 11-year civil war.

According to a statement by the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) to Sierra Leone, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeneji, read in the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leaders were fully supportive of Issa Sesay – currently on the witness stand for Mr. Taylor – taking over the leadership of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) when peace negotiations were getting tough.

"ECOWAS was unequivocal in support of Sesay and were prepared to work with Sesay alone," the statement quoted Ambassador Adeneji as saying.

While Ambassador Adeneji noted the support Mr. Sesay received from ECOWAS leaders, he was clear in his statement that he could not remember the circumstances surrounding Mr. Sesay's appointment as leader of the RUF.

"I cannot remember the details of Sesay's appointment as leader of the RUF but I do know that ECOWAS accepted Sesay as leader of the RUF," the Ambassador said.

The Ambassador added in his statement that "it was agreed that [Foday] Sankoh was no longer a reliable point person for peace and that ECOWAS should identify a reliable commander in the RUF."

"Sankoh remained uncommitted to the peace process...Sankoh made quick promises to the resolution of the crisis but did not keep them," the Ambassador said, citing the abduction of UN peacekeepers by the RUF in May 2000 as an example.

Prosecutors have insisted — and witnesses have testified — that Mr. Sesay's appointment as interim leader of the RUF was made by Mr. Taylor because the former Liberian president allegedly had control over the Sierra Leonean rebels. Mr. Taylor has denied these assertions, telling the court that the said appointment was made by a group of ECOWAS leaders including former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, former Togolese president Gnassingbe Eyadema, former Malian president Alpha Oumar Konare and Gambian president Yahya Jammeh.

Mr. Sesay in his testimony has corroborated Mr. Taylor's account. The statement read in court was one which Ambassador Adeneji provided to Mr. Sesay's own lawyers when he was on trial in Freetown for his own role in RUF atrocities during the conflict.

Mr. Taylor's defense lawyer also today read a statement that was made to Mr. Sesay's lawyers in Freetown by the former Force Commander of UN peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, General Daniel Opande, who said that ECOWAS leaders were looking for a reliable person in the RUF that they would deal with because Mr. Sankoh was not reliable.

"Sankoh was no longer seen as a reliable leader for peace and they [ECOWAS] began to look among the RUF for another leader," General Opande said.

That search eventually led to the appointment of Mr. Sesay.

Charlestaylortrial.org

Thursday, 29 July 2010

Court Spends the Day in Private Session

Alpha Sesay

The Trial Chamber hearing the case of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor spent the whole of today in private session.

Mr. Taylor's defense witness, convicted former interim leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Issa Hassan Sesay, was refuting the testimonies of prosecution witnesses whose testimonies were heard only in closed or private session. For the protection of the identities of those protected witnesses, any response to their testimonies must be heard in private.

Mr. Sesay's testimony continues tomorrow.

FirstPost

Thursday, 29 July 2010

<http://www.thefirstpost.co.uk/66562,people,news,naomi-campbell-recruits-high-powered-london-qc-war-crimes-trial-hague-blood-diamond>

Naomi Campbell recruits high-powered London QC



Supermodel's legal team takes on former DPP ahead of war crimes trial appearance

By Sophie Taylor

Supermodel **Naomi Campbell** is lining up some formidable legal firepower after being subpoena-ed to give evidence at the war crimes trial in The Hague of **Charles Taylor**, the former president of Liberia who is accused of using so-called 'blood diamonds' to pay for arms for the rebels in Sierra Leone's recent civil war.

As *The First Post* has reported, Campbell has previously denied in media interviews being given any uncut diamonds by Taylor's henchmen following a dinner thrown by the former South African president, **Nelson Mandela**.

According to the *Times*, Campbell has now added to her legal team **Sir Ken Macdonald**, the former Director of Public Prosecutions, and junior counsel **Michelle Butler**, from the Matrix Chambers in London.

Her solicitor **Gideon Benaim**, a partner in the high-profile London law firm Schillings, has confirmed that he has retained their services ahead of Campbell's appearance at The Hague next week.

Why Campbell needs a top QC when she is only a witness, rather than a defendant, is the subject of speculation. The *Times* quotes a "source close to the proceedings" as saying: "Nobody knows exactly how things will turn out on the day. Maybe just

to protect herself it was safer to get a top QC involved. There could be serious consequences from what she says. It shows that she is taking this very seriously."

What Campbell's story will be when she appears before the court is certainly of fascination. She has constantly refuted - or refused to comment on - the claim that she received any diamonds, even storming out of one TV interview.

But the actress **Mia Farrow**, who attended the dinner hosted by Nelson Mandela, has said in written testimony to the court that Campbell told other guests the next morning that Taylor had sent men to her room late at night.

Farrow stated: "She told us ... she had been awakened in the night by a knocking at her door. She opened the door to find two or three men I do not recall how many who presented her with a large diamond which they said was from Charles Taylor."

If there is any truth in the story, prosecutors believe it could be crucial to support their argument that 62-year-old Taylor, charged with 11 war crimes and crimes against humanity, used blood diamonds to support the rebels in the 1991-2002 civil war in Sierra Leone. Taylor has pleaded not guilty to murder, rape, conscripting child soldiers, enslavement and pillaging. ■

Agence France-Presse

Thursday, 29 July 2010

Mia Farrow to testify on Naomi Campbell 'blood diamond'

THE HAGUE — Actress Mia Farrow and models' agent Carole White will testify next month about a "blood diamond" Naomi Campbell is said to have been given by Liberia's Charles Taylor, court papers showed Thursday.

The two women's names are on a witness list for Monday, August 9, that the prosecution in Taylor's war crimes trial filed with the court in The Hague and which have been obtained by AFP.

The filing specifies that White's evidence would take about two hours, and that of Farrow one hour.

The prosecution says both women have agreed to testify about the late-night gift allegedly presented to supermodel Campbell after a celebrity dinner hosted by then South African president Nelson Mandela in September 1997.

Campbell herself was subpoenaed to testify about the events, after refusing to talk to prosecutors voluntarily, and is due to take the stand in The Hague next Thursday.

Taylor, 62, has been on trial since 2008 for his alleged role in the civil war in Sierra Leone, accused of arming rebels in return for illegally mined diamonds.

He has pleaded not guilty to charges of murder, rape, conscripting child soldiers, enslavement and pillaging.

White and Farrow, both present at Mandela's dinner, claim to have proof that Campbell was given a diamond by Taylor.

White told prosecutors she was present when the diamond was delivered, while Farrow "was told by Ms Campbell the next morning about the gift".

The prosecution alleges the rough diamond was among those Taylor had obtained from Sierra Leone rebels and took to South Africa "to sell ... or exchange them from weapons".

Mail & Guardian Online

Friday, 30 July 2010

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-07-30-supermodel-in-a-jam-over-gem>

Supermodel in a jam over gem

ED PILKINGTON - Jul 30 2010 06:00

The picture speaks volumes. At the centre of a group of 10 people stands Nelson Mandela and beside him his partner and later wife, Graça Machel.

On Mandela's other flank is a short man dressed in a military-style jacket with his hand held out as though he, and not the great South African leader, were hosting the gathering.

He is Charles Taylor and the photograph was taken a month after he was elected president of Liberia. Now Taylor is in prison at The Hague, the first African president to face trial for war crimes.

The events that surround the photograph could prove to be a significant part of the case against Taylor, who is charged with 11 counts, including murder, rape and turning children into soldiers.

The picture was taken in 1997 at Mandela's home in Cape Town and the assembled guests, who included Jemima and Imran Khan, music producer Quincy Jones and Chinese actor Tony Leung, had been invited to mark the reopening of the Blue Train.

To Taylor's right is Naomi Campbell, the British model, dressed in an elegant white dress with a cross pendant around her neck. Five places to Taylor's left is actress Mia Farrow, who starred in Rosemary's Baby and former husband Woody Allen's films.

The interaction of Taylor, Campbell and Farrow is likely to come under the spotlight at The Hague next month when both Farrow and Campbell are due to appear as witnesses.

Their testimony goes to the heart of the case against Taylor -- that he obtained illegally procured "blood diamonds" from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone, smuggled in mayonnaise jars.

The prosecution alleges he used profits from the sale of the diamonds to traffic weapons to the RUF, thus fomenting and prolonging Sierra Leone's brutal civil war, which claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.

Taylor has always denied the charges. "I'm supposed to be such a scumbag that people bring me diamonds in nothing more than a mayonnaise jar? How much more can you demonise me?" he told the court.

But Farrow has claimed that on that night in 1997 Taylor, struck by Campbell's beauty, arranged for the model to be given a rough diamond.

Farrow told ABC News that Campbell told her that during the night Taylor's men "knocked on her door and that they had given her a huge diamond and it was like, Oh my gosh!"

Farrow, who was in South Africa with some of her children, insists her memory of the conversation with Campbell is accurate. "You don't forget when a girl friend tells you she was given a huge rough diamond in the middle of the night," she said.

She said Campbell had told her that she was going to donate the diamond to Mandela's children's charities. She added she thought no more about it until the Taylor prosecution unfolded.

The prosecution at The Hague says the incident corroborates its case that Taylor was involved in trafficking blood diamonds. But Campbell denies receiving a diamond and has refused to speak on the subject, attempting to avoid appearing before the court.

When ABC News tried to ask her about it, she ended the interview and lashed out at a camera. "I didn't receive a diamond and I'm not going to speak about that, thank you very much, and I'm not here for that," she snapped.

In May Campbell told Oprah Winfrey that she had no desire to be involved in the case against Taylor. "He has done some terrible things and I don't want to put my family in danger," she said. -- © Guardian News & Media 2010