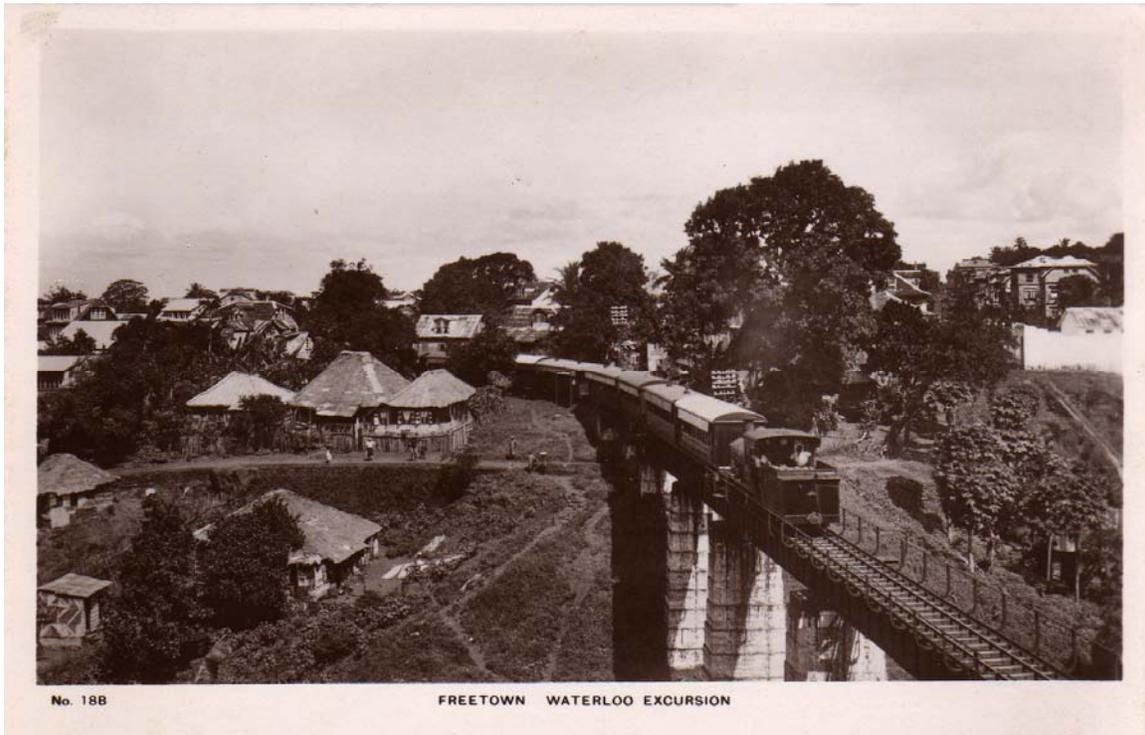


**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Historical postcard.

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, 9 December 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Special Court to be replaced

By Mohamed Kanu

The Principal Special Court Prosecutor in the Charles Taylor trial, a senior legal practitioner in International Criminal Law, Brenda Hollis, on the 2nd of December, 2010 disclosed that the Special Court for Sierra Leone would be replaced by an individual court that will continue to prosecute and try other perpetrators behind the 11 years mayhem in the country that the Special

Court will be unable to prosecute after its official mandate shall come to an end by 2012. She made this disclosure while giving a Public Lecture to students of the Mass Communications Department, Fourah Bay College in Freetown. Brenda Hollis referred to Sierra Leone as one of the most peaceful African states she has ever worked in considering the fact the people accepted in totality the establishment and existence

of the Special Court. She noted that the success of the Special Court was as a result of the recognition of the rule of law by the people of Sierra Leone as they wanted to see that perpetrators of the war brought to justice for their acts. "The court has established such legacies as leadership accountability and the assurance of the highest standard of coexistence in the country," she concluded.

Agence France Presse
Wednesday, 8 December 2010

Top human rights lawyer to defend Assange

High-profile human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson will represent WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in his fight against extradition from Britain to Sweden, Robertson's office said on Wednesday.

Robertson, a barrister who has dual British and Australian nationality, has appeared in some of the highest-profile freedom of speech trials in British history.

He was also among the defence team in the trial for the IRA bombing of the Brighton hotel which targeted then prime minister Margaret Thatcher in the mid-1980s.

"I do believe he is representing him," a member of staff at Robertson's Doughty Street Chambers in London told AFP.

According to his personal website, Robertson is a member of the United Nations Justice Council, having served as the first President of the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

Assange was denied bail on Tuesday and ordered to appear in court again on December 14 after he was arrested in London on a European arrest warrant linked to allegations of rape and molestation in Sweden.

The 39-year-old Australian is being held in Wandsworth prison in London.

His supporters claim the arrest warrant is politically motivated because WikiLeaks has angered governments around the world by releasing thousands of US diplomatic cables.

Agence France Presse
Wednesday, 8 December 2010

War crimes court cuts Serb's massacre sentence

The international war crimes court on Wednesday cut seven years from the jail sentence of a Serbian ex-army officer related to the 1991 killing of about 200 people in Vukovar, Croatia.

The International Criminal Court overturned Veselin Sljivancanin's conviction for the murder of people who had taken refuge in a hospital during Croatia's independence war, but imposed a higher sentence for a torture conviction.

Sljivancanin, 57, was convicted of torture in September 2007 and sentenced to five years in jail.

In May 2009 this was increased to 17 years in jail on appeal when he was also convicted of murder.

Judge Theodor Meron quashed the second conviction after new evidence was presented to the court, in a first for The Hague-based court established in 1993.

"The Appeals Chamber vacates the additional conviction for murder," Meron said.

He imposed a new sentence of 10 years for torture, saying the initial five-year sentence "did not adequately reflect the level of gravity of these crimes".

The charges relate to the massacre of about 200 Croat and non-Serb men who were among hundreds of people who had taken refuge at a hospital when Vukovar came under siege by Serb forces at the start of the 1991-1995 war.

The 200 were taken from the hospital and meant to be exchanged with Serbian prisoners of war.

They were however locked into a hangar at Ovcara, close to the town, and beaten and killed by Serb paramilitary forces and self-defence units in November 1991.

Their bodies were thrown into a mass grave. It was the worst massacre of the conflict.

Vukovar was besieged for three months, during which more than 1,100 people died and the town virtually razed, making it one of the deadliest incidents of the war. It fell in November 1991.

Sljivancanin's defence presented as new evidence testimony from a former Yugoslav People's Army general that partially exonerated him.

Ex-general Miodrag Panic told the court on June 3 that Sljivancanin had not received an order to remove the Yugoslav People's Army troops who had been in charge of guarding the men who were later taken away and killed.

In reaction to the new jail term for torture, defence lawyer Novak Lukic told AFP, "Ten years is maybe a little bit big."

And in Croatia, the ruling provoked anger among Vukovar survivors.

"For crimes that he had committed in Vukovar, notably at Ovcara, he should have been jailed for life. I'm outraged," Vesna Bosanac, current and wartime head of the Vukovar hospital, said quoted by HINA news agency.

"The Hague(-based) tribunal has showed again that it is not just a tribunal," she added.

Danijel Rehak, the head of an association of Croatian detainees in Serb wartime camps, said that the "shock of families whose beloved ones were killed at Ovcara is unimaginable."

Rehak stressed that the court "made a crucial mistake by accepting a statement of a JNA officer to whom Sljivancanin was a commander. I cannot understand that."

President Ivo Josipovic warned in a statement that "regardless of Sljivancanin's sentence... those who have ordered crimes in Vukovar have not been punished yet."

Josipovic said he expected "that although now already late, those who have ordered horrible crimes in Vukovar and other massacre sites will be justly punished eventually."

Lusaka Times

Thursday, 9 December 2010

<http://www.lusakatimes.com/2010/12/09/pressure-mounts-albashir-arrest-icc-probes/>

Zambia: Pressure mounts on Al-Bashir arrest, as ICC probes on



Al-Bashir with Rupiah Banda

Zambia's compliance to international law will be under test next week as Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for genocide committed in Darfur, is expected to attend a regional summit slated for December 15, in Lusaka.

Human Rights groups across the world have maintained that Zambia being a member of the ICC is legally obliged to execute the arrest warrant against Al-Bashir upon setting his foot on the territory, but there remains a lot of uncertainties on whether President Rupiah Banda will necessitate this.

President Banda who is chairperson of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) has reiterated that his invitation to the indicted Sudan leader was purely on grounds that the country is part of the region.

Heavily criticised for his foreign relations including diplomatic ties with the donor community, President Banda has also downplayed mounting media pressure and tension from his opposition.

On Tuesday President Banda told the national broadcaster ZNBC through his press aide that he would not respond to both local and International media queries on whether he will arrest and handover Al-Bashir to the ICC because his country had not yet confirmed his participation.

According to the Sudan New Agency President Banda's labor deputy minister Simon Kachimba met with the beleaguered Sudan President on Monday last week were an official invitation was extended to him to which he responded in the affirmative.

The question that remains unanswered is why President Banda specifically invited Al-Bashir's to the Lusaka Summit when he would simply be comfortable with just diplomatic representation from that country.

Why didn't President Banda, aware of the ICC demands, see it prudent to ask Al-Bashir in the invite to delegate an official to the Summit?

Suppose Al-Bashir showed up next week for the ICGLR, would President Banda betray the man he personally invited and order for his arrest? And if that is possible

why has he failed to categorically state whether he would adhere to the ICC obligation?

Opposition political players locally have expressed doubt about Rujiah's commitment to ensure Al-Bashir's arrest alleging that he fell in the same category as his track record on human rights was not impressive.

Other critics of his regime stress the need for observance of international law adding that failure to comply with demands of the International Criminal Court would bring shame upon the country.

"What is expected of this government is to ask the Sudanese government to send another official who should represent Al-Bashir otherwise if it's him, this country is obliged to necessitate his arrest," said Love Mutesa a former diplomat.

Human rights groups have also asked president Banda to ensure that Al-Bashir is arrested once he steps into the country. Meanwhile The prosecutor's office at the ICC will soon decide whether there are new cases that warrant investigations in war-ravaged area of Darfur in Western Sudan.

According to the Sudan Tribune, ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo the ICC will be verifying whether to press more charges on culprits inside the Sudan government including Al-Bashir.

Last week Al-Bashir was forced to cancel appearances at events in Libya and the Central African Republic after both countries asked him to stay away as a result of diplomatic pressure by the European Union (EU).

Reuters

Thursday, 9 December 2010

ICC prosecutor to name 6 next week in Kenya clashes

By Arlene Getz

NEW YORK (Reuters)--Three years after an eruption of ethnic violence in Kenya killed 1,220 people and displaced more than 350,000, the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor is poised to identify six politicians he believes orchestrated the post-election mayhem.

The six will be named on December 15, Luis Moreno-Ocampo told Reuters in his first confirmation of the date during an interview on Wednesday.

Moreno-Ocampo, prosecutor at the world's first permanent court set up to try individuals for war crimes, says he will bring two cases in Kenya, with three people charged in each.

Rather than issue warrants for their arrests, however, Moreno-Ocampo said he would request summonses for them to appear in court, enabling them to remain free until they are tried at the court headquarters in The Hague.

Plans to name the six that the ICC considers "most responsible" for crimes committed in the weeks after the December 2007 election have already roiled Kenya.

Top politicians, including suspended Higher Education Minister William Ruto, accuse the ICC of trying to influence the outcome of the country's next presidential election in 2012. Ruto is a key political leader in the Rift Valley, site of most of the post-poll violence.

Legal challenges have also slowed the ICC's seven-month-old investigation. Kenyan judge Kalpana Rawal postponed testimony from police officials on Tuesday after they requested immunity from prosecution for their statements.

But Moreno-Ocampo said he "can't concern himself" with the possible political impact of the ICC charges on the 2012 vote.

"If we don't investigate the crimes, they will be repeated," he said. "And it's not just a Kenyan issue; it will affect neighboring countries economically and in terms of refugees as well."

NO TIME FRAME

Moreno-Ocampo, in New York this week to address the U.N. Security Council on Sudan's troubled Darfur region, has also said he is looking into whether North Korean forces committed war crimes when they shelled civilian areas in South Korea last month and allegedly sank a South Korean warship in March.

The legal situation is complicated by the fact that North and South Korea are still technically at war. Moreno-Ocampo said it was "too soon" to decide whether the ICC will open a formal investigation. "I have no time frame," he said.

On Darfur, the prosecutor said ongoing rapes of women by Sudanese soldiers and militias stationed around refugee camps constituted a continuing form of genocide -- a crime of which the ICC has already accused President Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

"Normally we think about people killed by bullets," he said, "but (ICC) judges are confirming that this is a systematic campaign of rape." Bashir's forces "are not stopping the crimes, they are stopping information about the crimes."

Moreno-Ocampo has warned ICC signatory countries of their obligation to arrest Bashir if he visits their territory.

Diplomatic pressure recently forced the Sudanese leader to stay away from high-profile gatherings in Libya and the Central African Republic. "Bashir is under a form of house arrest," said Moreno-Ocampo. "It's country arrest."

The court, which as well as Bashir has also charged two Sudanese officials and two rebel leaders with crimes in Darfur, is gathering information and plans to bring more charges against Sudanese officials next April, he added.

Moreno-Ocampo also said ICC ties were improving with the United States, which has not ratified the 1998 Rome treaty that established the court and consequently is not a member.

U.S. President George W. Bush's administration adopted what Moreno-Ocampo called a policy of pragmatic engagement over Sudan and this relationship has become more "open and friendly" under President Barack Obama, the prosecutor said.

One example was when Washington allowed the ICC to interview several Kenyans on U.S. soil as part of preparations for next week's charges.

Reuters

Thursday, 9 December 2010

Sudan: Hague Tribunal Accuses Rebels

Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court in The Hague accused two Sudanese rebels on Wednesday of responsibility in the killing of 12 African Union peacekeepers in Darfur in 2007. The prosecutors said that the rebel leaders, Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain and Saleh Mohammed Jerbo Jamus, “personally led and physically participated in the attack.” The court will decide whether the two men should stand trial for the deaths. They did not appear at the hearing but have said that they were revolutionaries and that they would clear their names.

Valley News

Wednesday, 8 December 2010

<http://www.valleynewslive.com/Global/story.asp?S=13638851>

UND Professor Prosecutes Genocide



U.N.D. Law Professor, Gregory Gordon will lend a hand in prosecuting one of the worst cases of genocide of our times.

Gordon is an internationally known expert on the prosecution of war crimes.

He's currently in Cambodia helping to train prosecutors in a case against the leaders of the Khmer Rouge.

Under the leadership of Pol Pot, who has since died, the Khmer Rouge killed, tortured and starved nearly two-million people between 1975 and 1979.

Gordon has also researched and helped with other genocide cases against Nazis and leaders of Rwanda, Africa.

Gregory Gordon: "I worked on Nazi cases with the U.S. Department of Justice. I worked on Rwanda cases with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. It's very gratifying for me to be able to help with this case. I'm very privileged to help with this case. I'm very privileged to take some small role in helping them prepare."

The trial against four leaders in that 1970's case of genocide in Cambodia is scheduled to begin in April.

The Huffington Post
Thursday, 9 December 2010

December 10th Is Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day, December 10th, is an opportunity to reflect on the gains and losses of the human rights movement. The first decade of human rights in this new century has been a serious setback to the progress that was made up until then. Peter Benenson, founder of Amnesty International, was instrumental in creating the momentum that the human rights movement saw in the later part of the 20th century. He died on February 25th, 2005 at the age of 83. Citizens should use his life as an example of the gains of human rights so that we can reclaim the roots of the movement. During this time of fear and uncertainty we must revive his model of action and accountability, a model that helped cultivate one of the biggest developments that the human rights movement has ever seen: the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Peter Benenson lived his life by the principles of the declaration; the rest of us at Amnesty International just followed the wisdom of the piper.

Take a moment to remember the last few years of the previous century: the military dictatorships of Latin American are for the most part gone; the communism of the USSR dissolved rather than exploded; majority governments occurred in all of southern Africa; Central America ceased being a killing field for the poor; and human rights was on a march forward. The world governments created the International Criminal Court (ICC) and it looked and felt like the bad folk of governments would be chased and maybe imprisoned for crimes against humanity. Human rights groups were popping up all over the world and progress was being made.

Then, 9/11 occurred and America lost thousands of people. American anger channeled fear instead of courage; Iraq is invaded for unknown reasons still; torture begins in the jails of Iraq by our forces; water boarding, a torture technique, is used often and repeatedly; secret prisons are set up in many countries and we send prisoners to these places to be tortured by others; Guantanamo becomes a prison of infamy and reduces the respect for law to this day; unmanned drones are put into frequent use in targeted killings as weapons with no accountability while official statistics on the number of innocent civilians killed are absent (some studies suggest ten to fifty civilians are killed for every one militant insurgent); the new President enlarges the war in Afghanistan; Bagram prison rivals Guantanamo in another attempt to reduce our level of decency and thus up the hatred of American forces in the region; and all the while, Bin Laden roams the earth freely ten years after his hits on our cities. American efforts to mix security issues with human rights lowered the prestige, interest and support of human rights. Press and media move as the governments move--away from human rights. What happened to the momentum, to the wave that swept human rights through our streets and past our doors? It seems as though the tide has gone out.

Instead of getting depressed and angry and disillusioned, I offer a model to emulate who I got to know over three meetings and one letter. His name was Peter Benenson, the founder of Amnesty International. Most of the world does not know him or about him: he never sought the lime light, the TV shows or the award chase, and he even refused to go to Oslo when Amnesty won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977. A simple lawyer in London, Peter refused the knighthood nonsense of the crown. He had time to write a long, warm and personal note to me once I left Amnesty after twelve years, but you could not get him to a fancy dinner. He was a humble man who sought solace in the Catholic shrines of Europe after a car accident. But make no mistake, his idea and action of that idea changed the world. This Human Rights Day is a time to stop and remember how Peter Benenson brought that idea to life.

Peter loved both the Conspiracy of Hope and Human Rights Now tours as well as Sting as he mobilized support for the human rights movement from Chile's stadium. Before this, human rights was an ideal that people shared; but these concerts helped transform human rights into a movement by using music to

attract a whole new generation of people. It brought the awareness and income that was needed to drive the international human rights movement, and Peter Benenson recognized this immediately.

When speaking of those concerts, Peter said that the simple idea of human rights is everyone's possession and those concerts were perfect expressions of that idea in action. I asked him once about how he accomplished everything that he had. "I did what I could with what I had," he replied simply. He took up a pen of positive ink when he saw two students in Portugal go to prison for toasting to freedom--Peter would not have it. Even more importantly, he cultivated a wave of support and urged others to do the same. It was time to write, to organize and to embarrass those responsible for obstructing the rights of others.

His first assignment for Amnesty was Haiti. Upon arrival, he was questioned by Haitian officials. He told them about his mission, and was therefore sent back to Miami. On the way out, he saw some of the primitive paintings that Haiti is famous for. So when he got to Miami, he bought paints and went back to Haiti. When questioned again why he had come to the country, he said, "I am a primitive painter." That was and must be the spirit of the human rights movement: unpredictable, caring, clever and ready to protect people and their rights at all costs.

Peter Benenson created what we see today as the human rights movement. It is embodied by Amnesty as well as all other human rights groups, and defined by the Universal Declaration of Human rights. While Eleanor Roosevelt and John Humphrey coordinated and brought the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into fruition, Peter Benenson put the constituency behind that document. It was an ideal that changed the human rights movement by breaking down the borders of countries, of people--no longer was human rights something that must be preserved in every country; it was something to be preserved universally regardless of geography. Not only did Peter see the importance of this shift in understanding, he acted to implement that understanding all over the world.

Along with Nelson Mandela, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, Peter Benenson was among the greatest people of the 20th century, but he stands out from the rest because while the others changed their countries and inspired hope throughout the world, Peter actually changed the world: he got the innocent out of prison, he stopped the persecuted from being tortured, and he did it all beyond the borders of his homeland. He put Amnesty International in every country because he believed that everyone has a responsibility to protect human rights everywhere. Since then, Amnesty has had a continuing impact on people's lives worldwide for fifty years. In a century of blood and gore, Peter leapt to the forefront as the leader of the change that was needed. His simple life and person put human rights onto the tables of governments and no one will ever get them off--that is the legacy of this man. Simple, plain, sweet and caring. A man for this season. A man of courage and vision unseen in history's annals.

The depth of decency in this man was total. Even more important than Amnesty as an organization about to turn fifty was Peter's idea that we--each and every one of us--all have rights and those rights must be protected by all of us regardless of where we live. To paraphrase Seamus Heaney in honoring Seán MacBride, the other founder of Amnesty International, we all are ambassadors of the world to each other.

I humbly submit to the British to place a statue of Peter Benenson in the Hyde Park Speaker's Corner where all are free to air their peace. Furthermore, I humbly urge all governments to print the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in all passports in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt and Peter Benenson. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights belongs to the citizens of the world. It's about time we give it to them.

To my beloved nation, move back into the light.