

**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:**

Wednesday, 5 January 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News

Eight Sierra Leonean Prisoners in Rwanda.../ *Capital Radio* Page 3

International News

African Offer to Gbagbo Fails to End Ivory Coast Crisis / *BBC Online* Pages 4-5

Liberia: Regional Youth Groups on Reconciliation / *The Analyst* Pages 6-7

Ivory Coast: A Call for Return of Rule of Law / *Voice of America* Pages 8-9

Stephen Rapp, U.S. War Crimes Envoy, Continues International Crusade / *DesMoinesRegister.Com* Pages 10-11

The UN Has Failed the West African State of La Côte D'Ivoire / *Mathaba* Pages 12-14

Rwanda Rebel Mbarushimana's Extradition to ICC Upheld / *BBC Online* Page 15

International Court Suspect Quits Kenya Government / *AFP* Page 16

PM Would Never Accept Deal to Stop Tribunal Funding / *Naharnet* Page 17

Capital Radio (Freetown)

Wednesday, 05 January 2011

Eight Sierra Leonean prisoners who recently received their convictions from the Special Court for Sierra Leone and are presently serving their jail terms in Mpanga, Rwanda are living in deplorable and inhuman conditions. The inmates were jailed for war crimes and other related issues committed during the decade long civil war in Sierra Leone. It is said that allowances and other benefits that dues these prisoners are no longer effective. The detainees are not given fear treatment by the Rwanda prisons authorities of late.

BBC Online

Tuesday, 4 January 2011

African offer to Gbagbo fails to end Ivory Coast crisis



Mr Gbagbo (right) does not appear to have been swayed by the African delegation

A delegation of African leaders has apparently failed to persuade incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo of Ivory Coast to stand down following disputed polls.

The group went to Ivory Coast on Monday to offer him an amnesty if he left.

There was no official response from Mr Gbagbo, but a BBC correspondent in Abidjan says the key fact is that he is still in the presidential palace.

The UN says Mr Gbagbo lost the vote and West African countries have threatened to use force if he does not stand down.

His rival, Alassane Ouattara, is internationally recognised as the winner of the 28 November presidential election.

The leaders who travelled to Ivory Coast were Presidents Boni Yayi of Benin, Pedro Pires of Cape Verde and Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone - representing the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas).

It was their second trip to Abidjan in less than a week. On Monday they were joined by Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga, representing the African Union (AU).

During their latest talks, they were reported to have offered Mr Gbagbo a legal amnesty as well as a guarantee that his financial assets would be secure, if he left office.

Dialogue 'over'

In Washington, officials said the US could help Mr Gbagbo make a "dignified exit" by lifting a travel ban so he could move there.

Analysis



Mark Doyle BBC News, Abidjan

West African countries have threatened military force to make Mr Gbagbo leave power.

But they did this without apparently taking into account the fact that many of the states which would be expected to contribute soldiers to such a force have citizens living here in Ivory Coast as expatriate workers or settlers.

There are estimated to be up to two million Nigerians resident here for example, and three million citizens of Burkina Faso.

If either of these countries contributed soldiers to any military intervention force designed to overthrow Laurent Gbagbo it is quite possible there would be reprisals against their compatriots here in Ivory Coast.

"We hope that President Gbagbo will listen intently to the message that he needs to step down," US state department spokesman PJ Crowley said.

The African delegation also met Mr Ouattara, who is staying at a hotel protected by UN peacekeepers.

Afterwards, he said the time for dialogue was now "over" and urged Ecowas "to use all the means at its disposal including the use of legitimate force".

The African leaders have now returned to Nigeria to report to President Goodluck Jonathan - who as the current Ecowas chairman is expected to decide what to do next.

The grouping has been drawing up plans for a military intervention force, led by Nigeria.

But some doubt the region's willingness to carry out its threat given the unpredictable response of the Ivorian army, which publicly continues to support Mr Gbagbo.

The November election was intended to reunify the country - the world's leading cocoa producer - which has been divided since a 2002 conflict.

Mr Ouattara was initially proclaimed the winner by the country's election commission - a verdict backed by the UN, which helped organise the poll.

But the Constitutional Council, headed by an ally of Mr Gbagbo, said he had won, citing irregularities in the north which is controlled by former rebels supporting Mr Ouattara.

Both men have been sworn in as president.

The Analyst (Monrovia)

Thursday, 30 December 2010

Liberia: Regional Youth Groups on Reconciliation

Following years of devastating civil wars in the West African sub-region, youths from the Minor River Basin have now embarked on a peace and reconciliation tour aimed at putting behind them days of bitter memories.

The youth groups, comprising of Christians and Muslims hailing from Sierra Leone and Liberia, have opted to chart a new period in their countries' histories by engaging in true and genuine reconciliation that they say would lead to peaceful coexistence among their respective citizens and say good bye to conflicts in the sub- region.

According to the new campaigners for peace, when the reconciliation is effectively carried out, they indicated that it will also lead to genuine healing and reconciliation and other positive vices that will once again see Liberians and Sirraleoneans working together as one people, and on a large skill as Africans.

In making this initiative practical and realizable, the nearly fifty(50) youths hailing Liberia and Sierra Leone from the Christian and Muslim Religion have gathered in Monrovia to participate in the second week of a Peaceful Youth and Civil Service with focus on 'Changing Minds and Changing Attitudes.'

The Fellowship of Christian Churches in West Africa (FECCIWA) and the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) are the brain behind the long week conference, which is currently taking place at the Baptist Youth Camp on the Roberts Field Highway.

It can be recalled that the first Sierra Leone and Liberian Youth Peace Camp was held last year in Sierra Leone.

At the Baptist Youth Peace Camp conference, several speakers including the Secretary General of the Fellowship of Christian Churches in West Africa, Rev. Dr. Tolbert Thomas Jallah, former Information Minister and proponent of the 'Changing Minds and Changing Attitudes' initiative, Rev. Dr. Laurence Bropleh and the Secretary General of the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia Mohammed Sheriff, as well as a man regarded as the Focal Point for Sierra Leone Shecku Mansaray and civil society advocate Lancedell Matthews collectively spoke on the importance of sustaining peace within the Sub-Region during that forum.

In a statement, the Secretary General of the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia Mr. Mohammed Sheriff called on Church Leaders to immediately engage the West African Regional body ECOWAS about its planned action to use military force against hostile Ivorian leader Laurent Gbagbo who has so far refused to turn over power to his long time political rival Alassane Quattara.

The Religious scholar told the congregation that African Leaders should not allow ECOWAS to turn the guns on innocent people in Ivory Coast, but rather, he suggested that the regional grouping should continue to negotiation with incumbent Laurent Gbagbo in order to find a peaceful settlement.

The Inter-Religious Council of Liberia Secretary General said Religious Leaders should play a leading role to tell African leaders and their Western counterparts not to use force as they carry out their last minute warning against Ivory Coast's leader Laurent Gbagbo.

Earlier, the Keynote speaker and Former Information Minister Dr. Laurence Bropleh, opined that only through transformation citizens of the two sisterly countries can move in a direction that will chart a path of creating oneness, togetherness and bring total healing and reconciliation, which according him, will lay the basis for the people of the two countries to develop a sense of changing their minds and attitudes if peace is to be maintained and sustained in the region and in Liberia and Sierra Leone particularly.

Dr. Bropleh called on West African Youths to formulate a new peace agreement that will focus on a new leadership which will inspire and empower young people to fight for social justice and reconciliation.

Speaking further, the Former Liberian Information Minister said peace can only be sustained if all religions will accept religious tolerance in its totality. For his part, Dr. Tolbert Jallah called on Political Parties and governments to increase the participation of young people into governance by empowering them that they will transform from violence. The FECCIWA Secretary General also challenged Liberian youths in Ivory Coast not to get involved in the crisis in that country, and at the same time, called on young people in the region to establish a foundation of trust and networking.

Voice of America

Monday, 3 January 2011

Ivory Coast: A Call for Return of Rule of Law

Joe DeCapua

“We are very concerned that Cote d’Ivoire won’t find a lasting solution for this crisis.”

As mediators seek a solution to the political crisis in Ivory Coast, Amnesty International says the protection of human rights should be at the heart of their efforts.

ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, has sent mediators to meet with the rival presidents Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. The U.N. says Ouattara won the recent election. But Mr. Gbagbo refuses to step down.

In Paris, Amnesty International Salvatore Sagues addressed the mediation efforts and the role of the U.N. force in Ivory Coast (UNOCI).

He says, “We are calling effectively the mediators of the ECOWAS to focus on the human rights situation because during...December we have seen that segments of the population have been attacked either by security forces or by militiamen loyal to Laurent Gbagbo. And these people are without any protection.”

The human rights group says it has documented cases of extrajudicial killings of unarmed people by security forces during a protest march. It also cites cases of beatings and abductions of people whose whereabouts remain unknown.

Sagues adds, “The only people that could protect them are the peacekeepers of the UNOCI. And as you know, UNOCI has been prevented notably from investigating allegations of mass graves and other human rights violations.”

Amnesty is calling on mediators to take specific steps.

“One, to ensure that UNOCI is able to carry out its (U.N.) mandate of protection and investigation on human rights violations. And secondly, that there is a final sign sent to the population telling them that they will be protected against the people who are abducting them, killing them or arresting them arbitrarily,” says Sagues.

Military response?

But can Amnesty’s recommendations be carried out without some sort of military intervention?

The Amnesty researcher says, “We have no position on a military intervention. But...you have some 10,000 peacekeepers in Ivory Coast and from what we hear from the UNOCI, is that it is not a problem so much for the time being of a number of people, but of their freedom of movement. Several times they were either attacked or prevented from going to several places to investigate allegations.”

Sagues says initially ECOWAS was “quite strong” in its position on Ivory Coast.

“I think that the political settlement is something that will be settled in one way or another. We are strongly convinced that to get a lasting solution of this crisis we need to restore the rule of law in the

country where for the last 10 years there has been impunity for human rights violations committed by both sides,” he says.

He says without justice and the prosecution of human rights abusers, “we are very concerned that Cote d’Ivoire won’t find a lasting solution for this crisis.”

The United Nations says at least 173 people have been killed in post-election violence and more than 14,000 people have fled the country, mostly to Liberia.

DesMoinesRegister.Com

Monday, 3 January 2011

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article>

Iowa's Stephen Rapp, U.S. war crimes envoy, continues international crusade

By LEE ROOD • lrood@dmreg.com

Stephen Rapp will return to The Hague next month to witness closing arguments in the historic war crimes trial against Charles Taylor. But these days, helping to bring the notorious warlord and former Liberian president to justice is just one critical goal among many.

A former U.S. attorney from Iowa, Rapp was until last year the lead prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. But 15 months ago he traded in his black robe to help the U.S. State Department pursue perpetrators of large-scale violence around the globe, from central Africa, to Burma and Sri Lanka, to Cambodia, Chad and Bangladesh.

"I am still doing everything I can to make justice possible," said the nation's ambassador for war crimes, who returned to Iowa to celebrate the holidays with his family.

A passionate believer in bringing the world's worst killers to justice, Rapp resigned as U.S. attorney in 2001 to move to Arusha, Tanzania, to prosecute those responsible for bloodshed in Rwanda. In 2007, he headed to The Hague to take on Taylor, whom some historians rank as one of history's top killers. He's blamed for as many as 1.2 million deaths in western Africa.

Here are some of the ambassador's most recent efforts since assuming his new job in 2009:

Democratic Republic of Congo

Rapp has made five trips to this nation since leaving his previous job.

He tried to get the United Nations, other countries and the government to bring to justice those responsible for the targeted killings of 1,400 civilians and another 7,500 rapes during armed conflict between government forces and the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda, also known as the FDLR.

At least three people have been brought to trial, but Jean Bosco Ntaganda, a former Rwandan rebel and senior military commander, has yet to be arrested.

Ntaganda led assaults on the FDLR while backed by U.N. peacekeepers and is now wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes tied to the recruitment of child soldiers, civilian massacres and illegal mining operations.

Thousands of youths have been abducted this year in eastern Congo by officers loyal to Ntaganda, according to Human Rights Watch.

Kyrgyzstan

Rapp has worked to build support for an international inquiry into war crimes stemming from interethnic violence last summer.

The clash near the southern city of Osh, which followed the overthrow of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, resulted in the deaths of 400 Uzbeks and Kyrgyz men, women and children.

Rapp describes the post-Soviet country as a "very difficult part of the world," but he said he is hopeful progress is being made to prevent greater upheaval in the region.

An independent commission has been established to look into differing accounts of who was responsible for the death and destruction, he said. A report is expected this spring.

Taylor trial

Rapp continues to raise money for the Taylor trial, traveling to five foreign capitals to make the case for its successful conclusion despite dire funding problems.

A verdict in the years-long case involving 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity is expected this summer, followed by appeals.

Congress agreed to chip in another \$7.5 million in 2010 to help fund the special court, which is seated at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Another \$4.5 million is being sought for 2011.

Rapp said the trial will wind up costing "north of \$230 million" by the time it is over. But he said it is important that the world pursue justice regardless of cost to deter future war crimes.

With no prospect of additional money beyond what has been committed thus far, Rapp said he is seeking a special \$12 million grant from the United Nations to carry the court through the final verdict and appeal.

Other efforts

Rapp said he has also worked to gain support for International Criminal Court prosecutions in Congo, Uganda, Central African Republic, Sudan and Kenya.

Last year he called on Sri Lanka to investigate allegations of war crimes by government troops and the Tamil Tigers during the final months of that country's 25-year civil war.

Between 7,000 and 20,000 Sri Lankan civilians were killed between January and May, according to the United Nations and human rights groups. Both sides have been blamed for mass killings, using child soldiers and enlisting suicide bombers.

Rapp also has pushed Serbian officials to do more to arrest Ratko Mladic, the commander responsible for genocide at Srebrenica in 1995, and Croatia for documents needed to prosecute Croatian generals by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia at The Hague.

In spite of a grueling travel schedule, Rapp said he remains optimistic and enthusiastic about his post, "even in situations where it is very difficult to succeed." He said he has no idea what he will be doing a year from now, but he plans to continue helping the cause of international justice.

Mathaba

Sunday, 2 January 2011

<http://mathaba.net/news/?x=625628>

The UN has failed the West African state of La Côte D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

Akyaaba Addai-Sebo gives a profound Mathaba Analysis on the `Ivory Coast` as another U.N. failure

By Akyaaba Addai-Sebo

Polarised and violent political crises that recur in nation states do signal that the political formulae adopted to resolve the crises have not worked. Such is the stark reality in La Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast, West Africa). The United Nation Organisation (UN)'s strategy to oversee elections and install a winner-takes-all Western-style "democratically elected" state president has failed. La Côte d'Ivoire is an avoidable disaster. For disaster to resurface is a marked failure of the UN and a grave disappointment as one cannot help recalling a similar disaster in the Congo in the 1960s and the current election chaos in Haiti.

Responsibility of the UN Secretary General

The intended consequence of the UN arrogating itself the right to certify results of sovereign elections in a polarised La Côte d'Ivoire is the current messy state of two presidents with one endorsed by the UN and the other by the Constitutional Court. Here, the "international community", signalling the collective wishes of the US-led Western world, saw the need for a regime change in La Côte d'Ivoire and poured in resources to the tune of \$400 million (and rising) to effect that change through the agency of the UN. To make sure that everything went on according to plan, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, installed his own kinsman to be in charge of affairs on the ground. Ban Ki-moon therefore had direct and unadulterated communication channel through Mr. Y. J. Choi, his special representative. Mr. Ban Ki-moon was on top of happenings on the ground with good intelligence across the country supported by those of the EU delegation, World Bank, NGOs and Western embassies in the country. All essentials were therefore in place for the UN not to fail to deliver a credible election results which in turn would deliver a "universally" accepted state president. And what is of great psychological importance here is that the exhausted population expected the UN not to fail them.

National Interests and UN Failure

It is all too clear that a smooth regime change strategy of the UN has failed. What is striking about this UN failure is that it has led to further violence and the loss of life. The primary function of UN intervention in a war-torn state is the prevention of the loss of life and destruction of property. It has become apparent that the UN fails to achieve such objectives when the mission is seen to be dictated by the national interests of powerful voices in the UN Security Council (UNSC). A case in point is Haiti in 2004, when the US, France and Canada ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide even though he had been democratically elected by a clear majority of Haitians simply because the powers that be wanted a regime change. The crisis in Haiti continues to fester despite the scale of resources being poured in there via the UN and by the US.

It is the failure of the UN to impartially address the question of transition in the national interest of La Côte d'Ivoire that has led to the current state of heightened tension and threat of violent disorder. Haiti is a glaring example where lessons learnt, shrewdly applied and without prejudice, could have prevented this avoidable disaster in La Côte d'Ivoire. The UN has abysmally failed the long-suffering people of La Côte d'Ivoire by seeking to play poker game with the egos of the very three leaders who have contributed to the destruction of the very country they want to rule at all cost. The three protagonists, Henri Konan Bédié, Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo could have been prevented from contesting for state power through a transitional arrangement that embraced all three egos but with a caveat preventing each one of them from participating in future elections as they laid down the foundations to reorder the Ivorian society. The challenge here is harnessing what each of the three has to offer for the betterment of the Ivorian society. The combined experience of the three is a national asset that must not be left polarised to the

disadvantage of the country. This is what the UN has denied the people of La Côte d'Ivoire. It hurts as the UN has the capacity to do better if the political will to do so reflects first the national interest of La Côte d'Ivoire.

When political crisis explodes in a country and the crisis turns violent this means that the nation's centre can no longer hold. The political body is then signalling a need for the reordering of society. What matters here most is the ability of mediators to humbly listen to and interpret, without prejudice, the intestinal disquiet like a trained doctor would with a stethoscope. The disorder also presents an opportunity for sober examination and the creation of a new society in the collective national interest. If the status quo ante had worked things would not have fallen apart in the first place. The old centre could not hold. Why then intervene only to foist the old political establishment on the suffering people again? Why did the UN think that they could placate the three egos with an election contest when the very UN knew that each of the three protagonists felt it to be their manifest destiny to rule La Côte d'Ivoire at the expense of the other? It was the UN's manifest destiny to save the people of La Côte d'Ivoire from the destructive egos of Bédié, Ouattara and Gbagbo. This, the UN has failed!

Historical Experience

I am writing from experience of dealing with the UN in the field of preventive diplomacy during the Sierra Leone crisis. I was part of the team that worked invisibly, between 1995 and 2003, to assist in laying the foundation for bringing the devastating war in Sierra Leone to an eventual end. I also quietly worked on triggering Liberia to hold elections in 1997 after brokering an entente cordiale between the Federal Government of Nigeria and Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) in 1995. Long before then I had managed to persuade Uganda's President Museveni to offer to send troops to Liberia to break the state of mistrust that hitherto existed between the NPFL and the ECOWAS intervention force, ECOMOG. President Museveni went further to persuade Tanzania and Zambia to make their presence felt in Greater Liberia with their troops to ease tension. Kenya offered General Opani who saved so many lives across the divide and made an African solution possible in Liberia.

Between 1995 and 1996, as the Special Envoy of International Alert, I managed to negotiate: (1) a unilateral ceasefire with Corporal Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL); (2) the release of 19 hostages including 10 Europeans; and (3) for an RUF/SL peace team to leave the forest in Sierra Leone to prepare themselves for peace talks in La Côte d'Ivoire. It was this singular effort that contributed to the processes leading to peace negotiations in Abidjan and Lome. In helping with the drafting of the Abidjan Peace Agreement, some of us saw an opportunity to facilitate measures that will enable the people of Sierra Leone to patiently reorder their own society after their own interest and image. Others were impatient to let the status quo they were familiar with re-emerge.

In 1997, with my hands-on experience and the benefit of hindsight, I tried to let the newly-elected President of Liberia, Charles Ghankay Taylor, see the futility in his winner-takes-all electoral victory as I tried to explain to him that he had handed himself a poisoned chalice. As a prosecutor of a protracted war he could not unify and at the same time build the country alone through his National Patriotic Party (NPP). His victory was a means to an end and not an end in itself. By this, I explained to President Taylor that he should see his election as a transitional presidency to reorder the Liberian society and hand over to a new generation groomed to take Liberia forward into a period of all-round accelerated development. His duty was to immediately put in place structures to demonstrably raise the quality of life of his people and wage a relentless war against corruption and mediocrity in all areas of national life to prepare the ground for the next generation of leaders. To succeed in this he had to change his "Ghankay" persona and assume an all embracing transitional bearing that would attract all hands and brains on deck to steer the nation to a purposeful future. To demonstrate this I beseeched President Taylor to effect a change in the nation's motto from the alienating "The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here" to the more embracing "The Love of Liberty Unites Us". This is how I tried to help President Taylor to interpret his mandate as then I had my finger on the pulse of Liberia.

After several visits and with other promptings from within his ruling party, the NPP, President Taylor agreed to a form of a national conference, in 1998, to chart an inclusive way forward. The outcome of the conference did not see the light of day. President Taylor instead went on to style himself after President Tubman.

I could not give up on Liberia. In 1998 I approached Major Kojo Boakye-Djan in London and persuaded him to go with me to Monrovia to convince President Taylor to use his presidency to create a transitional space that could usher in Liberia a brave new society making use of modern advances in agriculture, medicine, science and

technology that were at their disposal. Major Boakye-Djan and I had some useful sessions with President Taylor and out of these emerged a working document, which [again] never saw the light of day. Despite having access to several African leaders and intelligentsia, I decided on Major Boakye-Djan precisely because I saw in him an organised mind that delivers under pressure from competing interests. What was important to me was the fact that Major Boakye-Djan had helped to successfully transfer state power, in a violent state of affairs during the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) period (June to September, 1979), when he was the deputy head of state of Ghana and spokesperson.

I was to call on Major Boakye-Djan again in early 1998 to go to Sierra Leone to sit down with Major Johnny Paul Koroma to initiate a transitional arrangement to reorder the Sierra Leonean society. Major Koroma's AFRC had booted out President Tejan Kabbah into exile in neighbouring Conakry, Guinea in May 1997 and with the help of the newly elected British New Labour Party Prime Minister, Tony Blair, President Kabbah was fighting back.

The task of finding African solutions to Africa's problems led Major Boakye-Djan and I to develop a conceptual framework for effective political transition through a phased bottom-up transfer of state power from the local authority level upwards. We believe that societies coming out of war have an enabling opportunity to create a new society in their own collective interest and progressive image. Inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) deployed to assist in bringing about change must exercise extreme patience so that they do not end up further deepening the crisis by seeking to shape that weak and traumatised society in the image and interest of those who paid the piper.

In 1996, I first witnessed the depth of Africa's problems when in a heated discussion with a top UN official over the psychological importance of evolving "African solutions to Africa's Problems" and the leading role that must be accorded the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the search for peace in Sierra Leone, this top African UN official raged into me that: "...the UN cannot play second fiddle to the OAU..." Unfortunately, his Commonwealth colleague also held the same view. It is such vaunted view that has led to the violent stalemate in La Côte d'Ivoire. Meanwhile ordinary Africans continue to lose their life and property inexplicably in an avoidable disaster. The assertion by Ban Ki-moon that "mercenaries, including freelance former combatants from Liberia, have been recruited to target certain groups in the population", collaterally exposes ordinary Liberian citizens in La Côte d'Ivoire to retribution. Here, Ban Ki-moon throws caution to the wind to attract sympathy to his failing operation thus deepening the chaos. Ban Ki-moon makes African life expendable.

We must not forget that whenever the West and/or the UN mess up in Africa it is left with African leaders to clean up the mess. In 2003 in Liberia, it was Obasanjo, Konare, Kufuor and Mbeki who came to the rescue with the skills of His Excellency Amara Essy and Dr. Ibn Chambas, then heading the African Union and ECOWAS respectively. They persuaded President Taylor to quit his presidency. I had earlier been sent in June by Essy and Chambas to discuss options with President Taylor. In 2007 in La Côte d'Ivoire, President Mbeki cleared the mess for Gbagbo to assume and share state power. In 2005 in Liberia it took the skills of Presidents Kufuor and Mbeki to get Ambassador George Opong Weah to concede defeat to Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in order to save Liberia from imminent collapse. In Haiti in 2004 Mbeki had to offer a safe haven for President Aristide of Haiti. And now in La Côte d'Ivoire, the African Union (AU) is busy trying to clean up the mess and also clear the air of statements purported to have been issued on behalf of the member states.

The UN has all that it takes to save La Côte d'Ivoire from collapse but it cannot do so, so far as the UN continues to play "second fiddle" to those who pay the piper.

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BBC Online

Tuesday, 4 January 2011

Rwanda rebel Mbarushimana's extradition to ICC upheld

France's highest court has upheld an order to extradite Rwandan rebel leader Callixte Mbarushimana to face trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

A lawyer for Mr Mbarushimana said the court had rejected his client's appeal against extradition.

Mr Mbarushimana is accused of 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, allegedly committed in the Democratic Republic of Congo last year.

The lawyer told the AFP news agency his client could soon be extradited.

The ICC in The Hague says there is evidence suggesting that Mr Mbarushimana, who has lived in France as a political refugee since 2002, contributed to the crimes in DR Congo via local and international media.

Mr Mbarushimana's ethnic Hutu FDLR group is at the heart of years of conflict in eastern DR Congo, near Rwanda.

AFP

Tuesday, 4 January 2011

International Court suspect quits Kenya government

NAIROBI — A Kenyan minister named by the International Criminal Court as one of six suspects in 2007-2008 post-election violence on Tuesday quit over graft allegations.

Industrialisation Minister Henry Kosgey told reporters he had offered to resign and surrender to the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC) officers investigating him.

"I have today written to President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga offering to step aside as minister for industrialisation to allow for these charges to be fully investigated," he said.

Kosgey, 63, is being investigated over the importation of over-age vehicles, a relatively minor crime compared to the raft of corruption charges he was linked to in a US diplomatic cable recently published by WikiLeaks.

"I wish to state that my actions in this matter are above reproach, because I have committed no wrongdoing," said Kosgey, also the chairman of Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement.

An official at the KACC had told AFP Monday that a green light had been given by Attorney General Amos Wako for Kosgey's arrest and prosecution.

Kosgey appeared in court Tuesday and denied 12 counts of abuse of office brought against him.

He was released on bail and the case set for mention on March 2.

The ICC prosecutor last month described Kosgey as a "principal planner and organiser" of violence against supporters of Kibaki's Party of National Unity during the violence that rocked the country three years ago.

Kosgey had reacted to his name appearing on the ICC list of six suspected masterminds by expressing surprise but vowing to cooperate with the court in The Hague.

His demise is the latest in a string of high-profile resignations over corruption charges, including those of ICC suspect William Ruto from the higher education ministry and of Moses Wetangula from the foreign ministry.

Naharnet

Wednesday, 5 January 2011

Hariri Sources: PM Would Never Accept Deal to Stop Tribunal Funding

Sources close to Premier Saad Hariri ruled out to As Safir newspaper a deal to stop the funding of the international tribunal and withdraw the Lebanese judges from it.

Hariri will never accept such a settlement, the sources said, adding "such a step would be similar to a coup on Lebanon, which is currently a member of the U.N. Security Council."

They expected the settlement to draw the roadmap on how to deal with the repercussions of the indictment that will be issued by the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in ex-Premier Rafik Hariri's assassination case.

The sources confirmed to As Safir that Hariri wasn't informed about a possible solution to the Lebanese crisis during his meeting with Saudi King Abdullah in New York, where he is recuperating after his back surgery.

They urged the March 8 forces to contribute to the calm political atmosphere by facilitating government work to help the birth of a settlement.