

**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

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

Friday, 27 May 2011

Special Court trains Sierra Leone Police Prosecutors

Special Court Prosecutors last week conducted intensive trainings in the theory and practice of police prosecution for 102 police prosecutors drawn from all regions of Sierra Leone. The trainings, which took place May 12-13 at the Police Training School at Hastings,

are part of the Office of the Prosecutor's ongoing contribution to the wider legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and are meant to complement national efforts to end impunity and to build a culture of respect for the rule of law.

Senior Trial Attorney, Mohamed A. Bangura,

who led the two-day training exercise, said it "focused primarily on the fundamentals of police prosecution, including the management of witnesses and victims, and also gender-based crime."

Mr. Bangura headed a team of Special Court staff, working closely with members of the

Sierra Leone Police.

Special Court Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda Hollis, in her statement at the official opening of the training thanked the Sierra Leone Police for their continuing cooperation with the Court in preparing and presenting the training.

Ms. Hollis noted that "a high percentage of

criminal cases in the Magistrates' Court are handled by Sierra Leone Police Prosecutors," and expressed hope that the training would assist the prosecutors "to ensure justice for the victims and rule of law for the people of Sierra Leone."

The bulk of criminal

cases in the Magistrates' Court are tried by police prosecutors, but they often require additional development of basic legal skills in order to carry out their duty effectively.

In 2009, the Office of the Prosecutor launched a series of similar trainings for police prosecutors to fill this needs gap.

Standard Times
Friday, 27 May 2011



NOTORIOUS WARLORD ARRESTED

NOTORIOUS Serbian warlord Ratko Mladic - accused of the genocide of 8,000 people - has finally been caught. The British army general has been on the run since 1995 after leading the Bosnian Serb army during the Balkan Wars.

Mladic is accused of war crimes including orchestrating the slaughter of thousands of Muslim men and boys in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica.

The genocide - alleged to be attempted "ethnic cleansing" - was the worst European massacre since World War Two.

Serbian president Boris Tadic confirmed today confirmed Mladic had been picked up by security forces after 16 years on the run - saying it closed a chapter in the country's history.

Secretary William Hague today welcomed Mladic's arrest as "a historic moment" and said it was right that he should now face international justice.

Prime Minister David Cameron, who is at the G8 summit in France, said: "We should remember why it is that we are pursuing this man and why he is pursued by the international tribunal in The Hague.

"He is accused of the most appalling war crimes, both in terms of what happened in Srebrenica but also in Sarajevo. There is a very good reason why the long arm of international law had been looking for him for so long."

Mr Hague said: "The arrest of Ratko Mladic is a historic moment for a region that was torn apart by the appalling wars of the 1990s.

Ratko Mladic stands accused of terrible crimes committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and it is right that he will now be brought to face international justice.

"Today our thoughts are with the relatives of those killed during the siege of Sarajevo and genocide in Srebrenica.

"We congratulate the Serbian authorities on this arrest, which is evidence of the Serbian government's commitment to co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

"We now look forward to the rapid transfer of Ratko Mladic to The Hague so that the charges against him can be heard in an international court of law. Our sympathies are with all those who lost loved ones during those conflicts.

"Today should mark the beginning of a new chapter for the countries of Western Balkans."

The Srebrenica genocide was the horrific culmination of a three-and-a-half-year conflict in which the general pounded the city of Sarajevo daily with the artillery of his Bosnian Serb army, killing 10,000 people.

The alleged goal was "ethnic cleansing" - the forcible expulsion of Bosnian Muslims, Croats and other non-Serbs to clear Bosnian lands for a Greater Serbia.

The Star

Friday, 27 May 2011

Liberian informant receives order to leave Canada

The man who helped build the case against former Liberian warlord Charles Taylor said his “spirit is broken” after receiving a removal order from the Canada Border Services Agency.

Cindor Reeves, Taylor’s brother-in-law, was at the centre of Sierra Leone’s blood diamond trade for four years. He was appalled at the conditions and gathered copies of documents for weapon purchases and diamond smuggling for the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Reeves fled Liberia and landed in Canada in 2006, making a refugee claim.

In January, his wife and children’s refugee claims were accepted, but Reeves was turned down because he “aided and abetted” Taylor. Reeves said if he is deported to Liberia he’ll be killed within hours

Reeves’ appeal to the Federal Court of Canada was rejected. On Thursday, he received a removal order from the Canada Border Services Agency.

“I’m done fighting,” he said from his wife’s hair salon on Thursday. “If the opportunity came again I would do it again. Taylor is out of the way, there is relative peace. My fate in Liberia, I’m not concerned. One of the greatest things Canada did was let my wife and children stay.”

The removal order states that Reeves must appear at an office near the airport on June 7 for an interview, bringing his expired passport, birth certificate, passport photos, OHIP card and other documentation.

Attendance at the meeting is mandatory and failure to show up could result in a Canada-wide warrant.

Reeves doesn’t know if he will be deported on June 7. He said he might be detained until they can process his documents for his departure

“They don’t have to worry. If they want me tomorrow, I will show up,” he said.

Reeves said he was used to gather the documents against his brother-in-law. He does not regret being used, and is not angry about it.

“I’m not afraid,” he said. “I will not hide. I can’t belittle myself like this, I will leave from here with dignity. Whatever happens there, fine.”

With files from Raveena Aulakh

Aljazeera

Thursday, 26 May 2011

The Mladic arrest: Justice finally arrives

Capturing the former commander of the Bosnian Serb Army is a positive step towards ending impunity for genocide.



Mladic's forces killed an estimated 8,000 men and boys during the Srebrenica massacre in 1995

Today's arrest of General Ratko Mladic, the former commander of the Bosnian Serb Army, marks the beginning of the end of a sixteen year-long effort to bring to justice the mastermind of the Srebrenica genocide.

The fact that his arrest was announced by Serbian President Boris Tadic, sitting in a presidential office once occupied by Slobodan Milosevic, demonstrates just how far the world – and Serbia - has progressed since the "Death of Yugoslavia" in the 1990's.

That's because sixteen years ago this summer, while Slobodan Milosevic, Tadic's predecessor in Belgrade, oversaw the "Death of Yugoslavia," thousands of Bosnian Muslim men and boys were being slaughtered in Europe at the hands of the Bosnian Serb Army. Some were killed opportunistically, but most were killed in a full-scale military operation: hands tied and blindfolded, they were lined up before freshly dug mass graves and shot in the back.

In other cases, rather than bussing them to mass grave locations, their captors chose to murder them where they were detained - slaughtering them by the hundreds at a warehouse and theater, by volleys of gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades. Later, earth-moving equipment would be used to remove the dead - and perhaps some living - and deposit them into other mass graves.

Genocide

It is estimated that over 8,000 men and boys were executed after the July 11, 1995, fall of Srebrenica, Bosnia, to the Bosnian Serbs. Like many of recent history's slaughters, the international community was already present. A battalion of Dutch UN peacekeepers was responsible for protecting the first UN-declared "safe area" in Srebrenica. As the Bosnian Serb Army advanced on the city, UN officials declined to allow NATO warplanes to intervene until it was too late. The Serbs took Srebrenica without a fight and thousands of Bosnian Muslims fled to what they thought was the protection of the UN base in Potocari.

Rather than offering a safe haven, the United Nations expelled fearful Muslims from their base and watched as another European genocide unfolded. In a scene evocative of Schindler's List-- a case of life imitating art, imitating life-- families were torn apart under the watchful eyes of the international community. Men and boys were separated from women and small children, never to be seen again.

I was one of the UN officials involved in the world's belated response to that massacre. For almost three years, I worked as a prosecution attorney at the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague, where I helped investigate and prosecute the Srebrenica genocide. There, I met with survivors who had two hopes. The first was to be reunited with their loved ones – and the second – was to see criminal prosecutions of those responsible – including the prosecution of General Ratko Mladic.

Every year, members of the international community pause to remember the world's most recent genocides. And today, with Mladic's arrest, we are reminded of the biggest slaughter in Europe since World War II. Yet despite the memorials, memories and reminders, mass crimes are a reality in many parts of our world, including those on-going in Libya, Syria, Sudan, and Democratic Republic of Congo. And while dignitaries repeat their promises to "never forget," much of the world stands-by and watches as mass crimes continue to be perpetrated.

It was never supposed to be like that. In the wake of World War II, after six million Jews were slaughtered in the Holocaust, the world united to form the United Nations, an international institution that would serve to protect against the darkest sides of humanity. Raphael Lemkin, the Polish lawyer who coined the term "genocide," worked within this new institution to expose this kind of mass murder as the most heinous crime of crimes. In 1948, his efforts were rewarded when the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Within a generation, however, after the self-congratulatory applause of international diplomats died down, much of the United Nations stood by and watched as the history of the Holocaust repeated itself--not just once, but twice--first in Rwanda and then, in Srebrenica.

New massacres

Sadly, the passage of time only seems to bring new slaughters in different corners of the world. The crimes in the Darfur region of Sudan have prompted world-wide outrage, and even an International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir for genocide, but it has not prompted a halt to the suffering in Sudan. And while the ICC has announced an investigation into mass crimes in Libya, it has not ended bloodshed led by Tripoli, or the corrupt rule of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

Indeed, justice is slow – and is often slower to stem on-going slaughters. But today we must pause to acknowledge that justice – while slow – does come.

The fact that the international community united to create a UN war crimes tribunal over a decade ago, set into motion a series of actions that have helped bring about the arrest of one of the most powerful generals in modern European history. In a pre-Nuremberg world, this would have been unthinkable. But in a world that's now seen the arrest of Slobodan Milosevic, Charles Taylor, Saddam Hussein and others,

the arrest of former strong men and mass murders are not just thinkable, but a reality. And with this reality comes a possible end to the impunity that has been, for far too long, associated with mass slaughters.

Like many historic actions, General Mladic's arrest is due to the efforts of a handful of people who have not rested until justice was done. This extends from the prosecutors and investigators in The Hague that have built the criminal case against him, to the witnesses that have already risked their lives to testify to the Srebrenica genocide, to the intelligence agencies and governments who have been tracking him, to the American and European officials that have kept the pressure on – and of course – to those wise individuals that chose link possible Serbian accession into the European Union to Mladic's arrest. But the list does not stop there.

Just as it takes personal leadership to lead people to kill un-armed civilians – as Mladic did – it also take personal leadership and courage to lead people to capture the perpetrators of such crimes – and for people to testify to those crimes. And here lies the interesting twist. Just as the network that protected Mladic for all these years were likely Serbs, it is also likely that a small collection of couragous leaders that chose to give him up, were also Serbs.

We may never know just who was involved, but as we look south of the European continent, to Libya and Sudan – we can only hope that it will be fellow Libyans and Sudaneese who will have the personal leadership and courage to give up their mass murders. Justice may be slow, but it does come – and mass murders should take notice.

Mark V. Vlastic, an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University and senior fellow at Georgetown's Institute for Law, Science & Global Security, served on the Slobodan Milosevic and Srebrenica genocide prosecution trial teams at the UN war crimes tribunal, helped train the judges that tried Saddam Hussein, and worked with the President's Special Envoy to Sudan while serving as a White House Fellow and special assistant to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. He is a partner at Ward & Ward PLLC, where he leads the firm's international practice and serves on the Charles Taylor/Liberia asset recovery team.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial policy.

The Christian Science Monitor

Thursday, 26 May 2011

Who gets Qaddafi's cash? African nations crushed by wars he funded want some.

By Paige McClanahan, Correspondent

Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi trained and funded men - like Charles Taylor - whose reigns of terror in Liberia and Sierra Leone led to the death of hundreds of thousands of West Africans.



In this April 11 file photo, Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qaddafi cheers from his car after meeting with a delegation from the African Union, who were in Libya to try to negotiate a truce between his forces and rebels seeking to oust him.

Western governments have seized more than \$30 billion of Col. Muammar Qaddafi's assets since the Libyan leader launched the first attacks against his own citizens in February.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said earlier this month that those funds should be used "to help the Libyan people," and Sen. John Kerry (D) of Massachusetts says he is already at work on the legislation that will make that happen.

But here in West Africa – where rebels who were trained, funded, and armed by Colonel Qaddafi terrorized citizens for much of the 1990s – some people are saying that a chunk of that money should be set aside for them.

Think you know Africa? Take our geography quiz.

"Over a million Sierra Leoneans and Liberians were killed as a result of the Qaddafi-induced war," wrote Kofi Akosah-Sarpong, an editor at the London-based Newstime Africa daily's website earlier this week. "Now is the time for them to get their compensations direct from Qaddafi's looted billions."

Qaddafi's role in Liberia and Sierra Leone

Qaddafi's ties to the region date back to the 1980s, when he was looking to spread his influence across Africa and break off the continent's ties to the West. He was rumored to have been incensed by Liberia's cozy relationship with the Reagan administration under Samuel Doe, and by the Western-friendly stance of Sierra Leone's then-president Joseph Momoh.

So the Libyan leader invited some young, radical-thinking West Africans to visit his "World Revolutionary Center," a training camp outside the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi that the historian Stephen Ellis has called the "Harvard and Yale of a whole generation of African revolutionaries." There they learned how to deploy weapons and gather intelligence, and they were immersed in anti-Western ideology.

The Los Angeles Times

Thursday, 26 May 2011

The U.S. and the International Criminal Court: An unfinished debate

By Butch Bracknell

The United States must revisit its lack of membership in the International Criminal Court. The failure to join is inconsistent with current U.S. national policy.

I recently returned from a week in Iraq, where I trained an elite security force unit on human rights and the law of combat operations. Discussions regarding the responsibility of commanders for the acts of their forces migrated to the issue of the United Nations' International Criminal Court. One Iraqi officer asked me, "If the United States believes in accountability over impunity, why are you not a party to the International Criminal Court?" I did not have a satisfactory answer.

The answer for public consumption is that U.S. accession to the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court, is not an imminent issue because U.S. processes for achieving accountability function well: The military and civilian courts are open, the government already is bringing cases to court where the evidence warrants, and convictions are occurring on a sufficiently regular basis. The subtext is that the Obama administration has to prioritize where to spend political capital and carefully select its fights. Nonetheless, as a nation, we need to revive the debate over joining the ICC.

The National Security Strategy and other key U.S. foreign affairs and security policy documents stress the merits of multilateralism, international partnership and working through institutions to achieve desirable foreign policy outcomes. American failure to join the ICC is a holdover from unilateralist ideologues in the George W. Bush administration. This failure is inconsistent with current U.S. national policy, which touts the ICC as a viable and appropriate forum for filing charges against Sudan's Omar Hassan Ahmed Bashir and his Darfur co-conspirators; Kenyan Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta; Lord's Resistance Army chairman Joseph Kony in Uganda; Libyan regime leaders, including Moammar Kadafi, his son Saif Islam and his intelligence chief; and other corrupt strongmen who misuse governmental power for personal and political advantage.

Signing and ratifying the statute before the 2012 election would permit the Obama administration to act on its stated intentions to use multilateralism and international institutions as proxies for costly and treacherous U.S. unilateralism. Acceding to the Rome Statute would demonstrate leadership to our allies and set a strategic tone of multilateralism at low political cost and risk.

Though the U.S. signed the treaty in 2000 to preserve the ability to shape the statute's evolution, both the Clinton and Bush administrations publicly opposed ratifying the ICC on the grounds that the Rome Statute compromises national sovereignty. Its critics contend the court could subject U.S. troops and officials to the jurisdiction of a politically motivated prosecutor, who would use the court's jurisdiction over an American service member or public official to make a political point against the United States.

The Bush administration and, later, Congress conditioned certain military cooperation and aid on the execution of agreements that bound the partner states not to surrender U.S. personnel to the jurisdiction of the ICC. Strong-arming allies desperate for U.S. cooperation placed narrow and shallow U.S. interests over real partnership, which is more valuable to long-term American interests. That stance against the court's jurisdiction was really a proxy statement for U.S. unilateralism — strategic messaging that the U.S. would not yield even a small amount of U.S. sovereignty to multilateral institutions or processes, even where the tradeoff could be substantially positive.

The ICC poses extraordinarily low risk to U.S. sovereignty, service members and public officials abroad. Under the Rome Statute's "complementarity" principle, before the court asserts jurisdiction over a citizen, the ICC prosecutor must determine and substantiate that the citizen's country is operating with impunity or that its judicial processes are broken or powerless. To avoid ICC jurisdiction over American service members and public officials, the United States would not have to charge, indict and bring cases to court. All that is required is for the U.S. to undertake a good-faith investigative effort of offenses under the statute and domestic law, and meaningfully assert national jurisdiction over alleged offenses.

The Rome Statute merely confirms our national social and legal instincts: to address unlawful activity appropriately and within an evenhanded, legitimate legal framework. As long as U.S. processes continue to operate and set the world standard for impartial investigations and just exercise of prosecutorial discretion, the U.S. has little to fear from the ICC.

With or without the United States, the ICC will continue to hold accountable rogue world leaders and public officials whose conduct violates the legal standards established by the Rome Statute. For certain world leaders accustomed to acting with impunity, it is the court of last resort. Acceding to and ratifying the Rome Statute would enable the U.S. to participate in future deliberations on the evolution of the statute. It also would reinforce Obama administration statements about participating fully in multilateral institutions and lend credence to administration positions on the utility of the ICC in thwarting impunity by treacherous leaders, such as Kenyan ethnic warlords and the Libyan inner circle.

Absent accession to the Rome Statute, the message America sends to the world is unprincipled: The U.S. is committed to the concept of multilateralism — except when it is not.

Butch Bracknell is a Marine lieutenant colonel and a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council.

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