

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



Yesterday's outreach event in Makeni.

**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, 16 June 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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## Sierra Leonean Retains Special Court Presidency

New York, United States - Justice Jon M. Kamanda of Sierra Leone has been re-elected unanimously to a third term as Presiding Judge of the Appeals Chamber of the UN-backed war crimes tribunal set up to deal with crimes committed during the civil war in that country. A UN statement made available to PANA in New York on Friday, stated that Kamanda was re-elected in a plenary session of judges, which was held in The Hague, late last month. It also said Justice Emmanuel Ayoola of Nigeria has also been re-elected as Vice-President

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by Sierra Leone's government and the UN in

2002.

It is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

The trials of three former leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council

(AFRC), two members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) and three former leaders of the Revolutionary United Front have been completed, including appeals.

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, which is taking place in The Hague, is currently in the defence phase. (Pana 12/06/2011)

## 'TRC vision part of Salone's global contribution to peace'

### - Acting HRC Chairman

By Ibrahim  
Tarawallie

Acting chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRC-SL) has said that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's

(TRC) National Vision is part of the country's global contribution to peace.

Speaking at the re-launching and exhibition of the TRC National Vision, Commissioner Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff

said: "All of us have a responsibility to preserve, protect and disseminate the vision countrywide. Sierra Leone's TRC is the first to come up with a National Vision."

She maintained that

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## 'TRC vision part of Salone's global contribution to peace'

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the vision must be considered part of the memorial and symbolic reparation to the people of Sierra Leone, pointing out that the TRC envisioned the contributions made as "a road map" for rebuilding the country.

"With funds from the Irish Aid, the commission has been able to digitize all articles in its possession and undertake a school tour of the vision to various schools in Freetown and the regions, which is still ongoing," she noted.

As inheritor and custodian of the 250 contributions made to the National Vision, Commissioner Jusu-Sheriff said they were committed to upholding the founding principles and objectives of the vision. She said the vision was put together by Sierra Leoneans of all ages and from all walks of life, and not by a con-

sultant or experts at a consultative conference.

"The vision represents hopes, dreams and aspirations for a better Sierra Leone. Eight years on, the messages are still very much apt and relevant to the country's situation, even as we celebrate a 'New Sierra Leone-50 years forward'," she said.

Former chairperson of the TRC, Joseph C. Humper said the occasion brings to mind the responsibility given to them after the rebel war.

He explained that the TRC National Vision was meant to give opportunity to people to make their own contributions, adding that "95% of the country's custodians have not seen the exhibits".

"The vision of Sierra Leone is bright, but there is much more to be done in building it. The future of the country is in the

hands of our children, that is why they should be focused and asking questions about the exhibits," he said.

Representative from Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Monica Timbo, noted that the vision should serve as a reference from which everyone can promote culture and peace.

"The relevance of the vision is integral to national development. It should also provide a platform for dialogue in political and social issues. There is need for proper enlightenment to the vision," she said.

Statements were also made by a representative from Lemon Aid Fund, Dr. Nancy Peddle; Africell's Corporate Affairs Officer, Joe Abass Bangura; and Charles Hughes from the Monuments and Relics Commission.

The Telegraph  
Thursday, 16 June 2011

## 'Blood diamond' trial: the case against Charles Taylor



By Aislinn Laing, Johannesburg

Charles Taylor has spent the last three years on trial before the war crimes tribunal in The Hague over accusations that as Liberian president he funded years of atrocities in neighbouring Sierra Leone in return for "blood diamonds".



*Charles Taylor stands accused of accepting 'mayonnaise jars' stuffed with diamonds dug by anti-government rebels Photo: AFP*

He was the first ever African head of state to face an international tribunal. Aside from distracting details about his flirtation with supermodel Naomi Campbell, uncut jewels and dining with Nelson Mandela, the aim of the Special Court for Sierra Leone could not be more serious: to seek justice for the hundreds of thousands of victims of a vicious civil war.

Taylor stands accused of accepting "mayonnaise jars" stuffed with diamonds dug by anti-government rebels – and the civilians they forced to work at gunpoint – from Sierra Leone's rust-coloured earth which were then smuggled across the jungle border to Monrovia.

In return, US-educated and Libya-trained Taylor sent back weapons largely purchased on the black market because of a UN arms embargo placed on Liberia. Among those he is alleged to have traded with was Russian Viktor Bout, on whom the Nicholas Cage film *Lord of War* is partly based.

The Sierra Leone civil war claimed some 120,000 lives in the 10 years to 2001, with Revolutionary United Front rebels mutilating thousands of civilians who had their hands and arms severed.

According to Brenda Hollis, the chief prosecutor, Taylor was directly responsible for the terrorising of civilians, recruitment of child soldiers and even cannibalism – the court heard from a former aide who said he saw him eat a human liver.

"Charles Ghankay Taylor was in charge of, put in place, directed, nurtured and supported the campaign of terror," said Hollis, all "to forcibly control the people and territory of Sierra Leone ... its resources, in particular its diamonds." She said Campbell's evidence – which she had to be compelled to give after citing fears about her family's safety – was crucial because it could tie Taylor directly to the trade in diamonds for arms.

It also backs a claim by prosecutors that he travelled to South Africa with an assortment of diamonds in 1997, at the time of the dinner, returning via Burkina Faso and Libya, from whence a large arms shipment originated shortly afterwards.

When he met Naomi Campbell in September 1997 at the now famous dinner hosted by the then South African president Nelson Mandela, he had only been in power for a month.

But he was already a controversial figure, having campaigned under the slogan "he killed by Ma, he killed my Pa, but I will vote for him," a reference to the First Liberian Civil War that saw the death of incumbent Samuel Doe. The atrocities committed in his name meant that Graca Machel, Mr Mandela's soon-to-be wife, was furious with him for letting Taylor stay for dinner.

According to Miss Campbell's agent, Carole White, the Streatham-born supermodel sat next to Mr Taylor and flirted with him during dinner.

Afterwards, Miss Campbell said two men knocked on her door and handed her a pouch of "small, dirty-looking stones", which she gave the following morning to Jeremy Ractliffe, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund head, who locked them away in a safe until Campbell's evidence at The Hague exposed his role after so many years.

Taylor was indicted after he fled to Nigeria, having been ousted from the presidency in Liberia. While his crimes do not apply to his actions in Liberia, for those he is said to have committed in Sierra Leone he faces a life behind bars in Britain, which has agreed to be his jailer if he is found guilty.

For his part, the lay preacher who once compared himself to Jesus said the accusations he was facing were "diabolic lies" and he had sought to be a "broker of peace" in the region.

"I am a father of 14 children, grandchildren, with love for humanity, have fought all my life to do what I thought was right in the interests of justice and fair play," he said when he took to the witness box in the case.

"I resent that characterisation of me. It is false, it is malicious."

Whether Miss Campbell's evidence aided the prosecution's case is yet to be seen. The judges retired in March this year to deliberate on the 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity faced by Taylor. Their verdict is expected by the end of the year.

# The Associated Press

Wednesday, 15 June 2011

## South Africa: Mandela charity's ex-chief innocent in diamond case linked to Charles Taylor



*Jeremy Ractcliffe leaves the court in Johannesburg after being found not guilty of dealing in "blood diamonds" Wednesday, June 15, 2011. Ractcliffe, the former chief executive of the Nelson Mandela Children's fund, had been charged with violating laws against possessing uncut diamonds after super model Naomi Campbell testified that she gave Ractcliffe the gems.*

(AP Photo/Moeletsi Mabe)  
Ed Brown, The Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG - A prominent South African businessman to whom supermodel Naomi Campbell testified she gave gems was found not guilty Wednesday in a "blood diamonds" case.

Jeremy Ractcliffe, former chief executive of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, had been charged with violating laws against possessing uncut diamonds. It is illegal in South Africa to possess a rough diamond because of its possible links to funding fighters in African civil wars, money laundering and other crimes.

"Mr. Ractcliffe, you are not guilty and discharged," Magistrate Renier Boshoff said after hearing just a half day of testimony. Ractcliffe had been accompanied to court Wednesday by his wife and five daughters, who embraced after hearing the verdict.

Ractcliffe has said he kept the stones and did not report them to authorities in a bid to protect the reputations of Mandela, Campbell and the charity, of which he was a founder.

"I did what I did for what I felt were totally valid reasons," Ractcliffe told reporters outside the courtroom after the verdict was read. "I have always thought I was innocent and it was very nice to have this proven."

Ractcliffe was chief executive in 1997 of the Mandela charity when Campbell said she received uncut diamonds after a fundraiser also attended by Liberia's then President Charles Taylor. Taylor was believed to be the source of the diamonds. He is being tried in The Hague for trading in illegal diamonds.

Campbell testified during Taylor's war crimes trial at the Hague she received the diamonds from three men who came to her hotel room after the fundraising dinner. Campbell said that she did not know the source of the diamonds, but other witnesses said she bragged about getting them from Taylor.

Campbell said she gave Ractcliffe the diamonds the morning after she received them, as a donation to Mandela's charity. Ractcliffe said he didn't tell the foundation about the diamonds, and kept the stones in a safe for 13 years until he handed them over to police after Campbell's August 2010 testimony.

Ractcliffe had already stepped down as chief executive by last August. He resigned as a trustee after the diamond scandal broke.