

**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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Peace Museum Memorial design contest launches today

A competition to design the Memorial for Sierra Leone's new Peace Museum will be launched Monday, 1 August 2011 at the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The Memorial will depict the suffering of the victims of Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war, and will promote the ideals of peace, justice and human rights.

The ceremony will take place at 2:00 p.m. in the Special Court security building, the future home of the Museum.

The competition is

sponsored by the Peace Museum Project Management Team, comprising government ministries, national institutions, civil society groups, UNIPSIL and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The Memorial is a component of the Peace Museum, which will serve as a place for reflection on the war and progress in consolidating the peace. The Museum will also host archives, consisting of texts and materials relating to the war and

peace. The exhibition will narrate through artifacts the history of the war and the story of the struggle for peace.

The Peace Museum will be the primary institution in Sierra Leone dedicated to preserving the history of the conflict and serving as a permanent memorial to the sufferings of the victims. In addition, it will demonstrate the country's resolve to consolidating the peace.

Credit:

StarAfrica.com

IRIN

Friday, 29 July 2011

Uganda: War Crimes Trial May Affect LRA Defections - Analysts

Gulu — The trial of Thomas Kwoyelo, a former rebel in Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the first such case before the Ugandan High Court's International Crime Division (ICD), is eliciting mixed reactions. Analysts say that while it may satisfy northerners' desire for justice, there are concerns over its impact on future LRA defections.

Kwoyelo was charged with war crimes, including murder and kidnapping in various northern Uganda locations, on 11 July in Gulu. He denied the charges.

"The Kwoyelo trial sends mixed messages to current LRA fighters and commanders," Ashley Benner, a policy analyst with the Enough Project, told IRIN in an email.

"On the one hand, the Amnesty Act guarantees amnesty for the LRA, and leafleting and radio programmes provide assurances that they can defect without fear of prosecution. On the other hand, the Amnesty Commission has been inconsistent in granting amnesties, and the Ugandan High Court has begun prosecuting a mid-level LRA commander who has been refused amnesty."

Kwoyelo's amnesty application was referred to Uganda's Constitutional Court for interpretation on 25 July.

The Amnesty Act provides that people who meet the amnesty requirements, including renouncing and abandoning involvement in the war or armed rebellion, cannot be prosecuted or punished for crimes covered by the act in Uganda.



File photo: Some of LRA soldiers.

Benner added: "In order to make real progress toward diminishing the size and strength of the LRA, Kampala should fully resume granting amnesties, publicly clarify the application of the Amnesty Act and reinstate formal channels for joining the Ugandan army."

Echoing this, Ned Dalby, analyst at International Crisis Group (ICG), said: "Unfortunately, the trial does little to reassure LRA fighters still in the bush in the DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo] and the

CAR [Central African Republic] that if they surrender they will be offered amnesty and be able to return home.

"LRA combatants need to see escape and return as a viable option to fight and flee."

According to a new Oxfam survey, LRA attacks continue in the DRC, resulting in 26 deaths and 23 kidnappings in June alone.

The head of Oxfam in DRC, Pauline Ballaman, said: "Small mobile groups of hungry LRA fighters continue to viciously target the most isolated and forgotten people in northeastern DRC. Despite past military operations and increased international attention, the LRA is still able to wreak havoc in neglected communities and is responsible for widespread killings, abductions and displacement."

Selective justice?

There have also been concerns about whether the ICD court, set up in 2007 after the incorporation of the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute, lacks the required international procedures to provide Kwoyelo a fair trial and sufficiently protect witnesses.

However, ICD presiding Judge Dan Akiiki-Kiiza said: "We are going to ensure justice is delivered; the court is competent to handle cases of such magnitude."

According to Stephen Oola, head of research and advocacy at the Refugee Law Project, Kwoyelo's trial is important as it brings about a "semblance of justice".

"The challenge is [what] about [the] other senior LRA commanders who have been let off the hook? What we need is to achieve our goal of accountability and reconciliation and this should mean justice should not be selective," said Oola.

The Ugandan government appeared to be using the Kwoyelo trial to show it is taking on board the need for justice and accountability in the aftermath of the northern Uganda conflict, said ICG's Dalby.

"It [the case] is high profile and very visible both at home and abroad.

"It may well satisfy some northerners' desire for justice at the national level but is unlikely to speed up the slow process of reconciliation between aggressors and victims within and between communities. This is the real challenge facing the government and people of Uganda," he said.

Kwoyelo is accused of attacking an internally displaced persons camp in Pagak where several civilians were killed between 1992 and 2005, laying ambushes along the Gulu-Juba road, destroying civilian property and abducting children in the Awer, Bira, Oputure and Pogo villages.

In August 2010, he was charged with wilful killings, hostage taking and extensive destruction of property in Amuru and Gulu districts.

However, a former LRA major, John Ogil, said Kwoyelo's LRA duties mainly involved manning the sick bay in Kilak with limited field operations.

Under orders

Former LRA high-ranking commanders, such as Brig Kenneth Banya and Otto, have all received amnesty under the act over the last several years, according to Human Rights Watch.

Kwoyelo's mother, Roselina Oyella, told IRIN her son was acting on the orders of his superiors. "My son was abducted when he was barely 15 years [old]; he committed the crimes on [the] orders of commanders like Vincent Otti, [Kenneth] Banya and others."

At least 60 witnesses, most of them war-crime survivors in the north, are expected to give evidence at the trial, which according to the defence lawyer, Caleb Alaka, will help in healing the affected communities, albeit with "an impact on amnesty".

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation

Friday, 29 July 2011

ICC gives second blow to govt. on Ocampo six

Written By:Glena Nyamwaya,



The International Criminal Court (ICC)'s Appeals Chamber Thursday unanimously rejected Kenya's latest effort to present new information on national investigations into the Ocampo Six.

The government had submitted an "Updated Investigation Report" to the Appeals Chamber on 4th July contending that this it showed ongoing national investigations into the six ICC suspects in Kenya.

But the Appeals Chamber rejected the report on the grounds that it would not consider a report concerning facts which took place after the relevant pre-trial proceedings.

The ICC's Appeals Chamber rejected Kenya's efforts to have the Ocampo Six tried in the country for the second time

The Chamber also reminded Kenya of its prior holding that "events which fall outside the scope of the relevant pre-trial or trial proceedings fall outside the scope of the appeal concerning those proceedings."

Admissibility case

In the end of March this year, the Kenyan government filed a challenge under Article 19 of the Rome Statute to the admissibility of the Prosecution's two cases against Eldoret north legislator William Ruto, Tinderet MP Henry Kosgey, radio journalist Joshua arap Sang, head of public service Amb. Francis Muthaura, Finance Minister Uhuru Kenyatta and former police boss Major Gen. Hussein Ali.

The Pre-Trial Chamber II issued a decision on May 30th, finding both cases admissible.

The government in turn appealed this decision on 6th of June, and on 20th June, the Kenya indicated its intention to file updated reports during the appeals process.

No Basis on report

The Appeals Chamber pointed to its jurisprudence in the Katanga case, which established that "the admissibility of a case must be determined on the basis of the facts as they exist at the time of the proceedings concerning the admissibility challenge".

The Appeals Chamber underscored that the expression "time of the proceedings" as used in that judgment clearly referred to the time of the proceedings of the admissibility challenge before the *Pre-Trial Chamber* and *not* to the subsequent proceedings on appeal.

Scope of Appeals

The Appeals Chamber reminded the parties that proceedings on appeal do not constitute a mere continuation of proceedings before the Pre-Trial Chamber, but are a separate process with the purpose of reviewing the proceedings that took place before the Pre-Trial Chamber.

Africa Legal Aid wants ICC to legitimize its operations in Africa



Africa's political leaders have been hostile to the ICC and its Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo.

The Executive Director of Africa Legal Aid (AFLA), Mrs Evelyn A. Ankumah, has urged the international community to enhance the legitimacy of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Africa.

She said although the ICC is a universal court - which embodies the universal conviction that perpetrators of crimes offending humanity ought to be held accountable before competent courts - Africa's political leaders, under the auspices of the African Union (AU), have not hesitated to be hostile to the ICC and its Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo.

Mrs Ankumah was addressing the European Parliament on: "EU Support for the ICC on issues that are real and practical significance for Africa," in Brussels.

According to her, the AU had accused the ICC of selective justice that targeted Africans and had therefore condemned the arrest warrants against Presidents Al Bashir of Sudan and Muammar Ghaddafi of Libya as well as openly declaring that they will not assist the ICC in transferring the two rulers to The Hague.

"When State Parties, and in this case some 30 African States, refuse to live up to their obligations under the Rome Statute the efficacy and decisiveness of the ICC are undermined.

"One of the challenges for the international community and for the European Union is how to persuade, urge, and require African States and their political leaders to do what they are supposed to do..." she maintained.

Mrs Ankumah said the AU's stance against the ICC does not imply that Africa as a whole opposes the Court.

"Formally, the African Union spoke with one voice, but beneath the surface there were other views among the leaders. In fact, some of the cases before the Court were referred by African States who saw the ICC as a body that can help Africa to strive at criminal justice.

"The open critique on the ICC by Africa only commenced when the United Nations Security Council referred Sudan and later Libya - two countries which are not State Parties to the Rome Statute - to the Court, and when arrest warrants were issued against sitting Heads of State in those two countries.

"The views expressed by the AU Heads of State do not reflect the views of all ordinary Africans. There are numerous Africans who support the ICC and see the Court as external assistance in their own internal conflicts and struggle against suppressive regimes. As so often in politics, the voices of the critics are louder than those of the supporters," she said.

United Nations News

Friday, 29 July 2011

Lebanon: UN tribunal identifies names of four men accused of Hariri murder

The United Nations-backed tribunal set up to try those alleged responsible for the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri today released the identities of the four men accused of the crime.

Daniel Fransen, a pre-trial judge with the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), ordered the lifting of confidentiality on the full names, aliases, photographs, biographical information and charges against the men named in an indictment last month. Parts of the indictment remain confidential.

The four people named are Salim Jamil Ayyash, Mustafa Amine Badreddine, Hussein Hassan Oneissi and Assad Hassan Sabra. All Lebanese, they are charged over the massive car bombing in central Beirut on 14 February 2005 that killed Mr. Hariri and 21 others.

Mr. Ayyash, 47, and Mr. Badreddine, 50, are each charged with homicide, attempted homicide, committing a terrorist act and conspiracy to commit a terrorist act.

Mr. Oneissi, 37, and Mr. Sabra, 34, face charges of conspiracy to commit a terrorist act, and being an accomplice to homicide and to attempted homicide.

In a statement Daniel Bellemare, the STL Prosecutor, said the release of the names and biographical information “has been taken to increase the likelihood of apprehending the accused in case any of them is seen by the public.”

International arrest warrants against the four men were issued on 8 July and Lebanese authorities have to report back by 11 August on the progress made in carrying out the arrest warrants.

A spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the UN chief reiterated his strong support for the STL in its efforts to uncover the truth of what happened on 14 February 2005 and to bring those responsible for justice.

“He calls on all States to support the independent judicial process, including by cooperating with the Special Tribunal in the execution of the indictment and arrest warrants,” the spokesperson said.

“The Secretary-General also reiterates his expectation that the new Government of Lebanon will uphold all of Lebanon’s international expectations, including its obligations to support and cooperate with the Special Tribunal.”

The STL is an independent court created at the request of the Lebanese Government, with a mandate issued by the Security Council. It is based in The Hague in the Netherlands.

Reuters

Monday, 1 August 2011

Events leading to Lebanon indictments



*Map
Beirut, Lebanon*

The UN-backed Lebanon tribunal released the names, photographs and details on Friday of four men wanted for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

Here is a timeline of events leading to the indictments.

Feb. 14, 2005 - Hariri is killed, along with 22 others, by a huge truck bomb in Beirut, triggering international pressure on neighbouring Syria to end a 29-year military presence in Lebanon.

April 26 - Last Syrian soldiers leave Lebanon.

June 16 - An international investigation into Hariri's killing begins.

June 19 - Lebanese parliamentary elections end in victory for anti-Syrian alliance led by Hariri's son Saad al-Hariri.

Oct. 20 - In a report to the UN Security Council, the preliminary findings of the international investigation implicate high-ranking Syrian and Lebanese officials in the Hariri killing. Syria denies any role.

July 12, 2006 - Lebanese Shi'ite group Hezbollah, backed by Iran and Syria, captures two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, setting off a 34-day war which is eventually halted by a UN Security Council resolution.

Nov. 11 - After the collapse of talks on giving Hezbollah and its allies more say in government, five pro-Syrian ministers loyal to Hezbollah and the Amal movement resign, stripping the cabinet of all Shi'ite representation.

Nov. 21 - Industry Minister Pierre Gemayel, a member of the anti-Syrian coalition, is killed by gunmen.

June - Sept 2007 - Two anti-Syrian parliamentarians are killed by car bombs in Beirut.

Nov. 23 - Pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud's term ends.

Dec. 5 - Army chief General Michel Suleiman emerges as a consensus candidate for president, but his election is held up.

Dec. 12 - A car bomb east of Beirut kills Brigadier General Francois al-Hajj, the army's head of operations.

May 6, 2008 - Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's cabinet accuses Hezbollah of operating a private telecommunications network and installing spy cameras at Beirut airport. The cabinet removes the airport security chief.

May 7 - In response, Hezbollah and its allies paralyse Beirut with roadblocks. Two days later Hezbollah takes control of mainly Muslim west Beirut.

May 21 - After mediation, rival leaders sign a deal in Qatar to end 18 months of political conflict. It paves the way for parliament to elect Suleiman as president and for the formation of a new cabinet. Suleiman is sworn in as president on May 25.

July 11 - Leaders agree on a unity government that gives effective veto power to Hezbollah and its allies.

Aug. 13 - On his first visit to Syria as president, Suleiman agrees with President Bashar al-Assad that their countries will establish diplomatic ties for the first time since independence.

March 1, 2009 - The Special Tribunal for Lebanon, established to try suspects in Hariri's killing, begins operations in The Hague.

April 29 - Tribunal orders release of four pro-Syrian security generals held since 2005 in connection with the killing, citing lack of sufficient evidence.

June 7 - An anti-Syrian coalition, led by Hariri, defeats Hezbollah and its Christian ally Michel Aoun in parliamentary elections. Hariri is later appointed prime minister-designate.

Nov. 9 - Hariri forms a new unity government that includes two ministers from Syrian- and Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

Aug. 25, 2010 - A UN prosecutor investigating the Hariri assassination urges Hezbollah to hand over information that Hezbollah says implicates Israel.

Oct. 28 - Hezbollah urges all Lebanese to boycott the UN-backed inquiry and accuses investigators of sending information to Israel.

Jan. 12, 2011 - Ministers from Hezbollah and its political allies resign, bringing down Hariri's government.

Jan. 17 - Tribunal prosecutor issues draft indictments over Hariri killing. The still secret indictments are later revised in March and May.

June 13 - Telecoms tycoon Najib Mikati forms a new government dominated by Hezbollah's political allies.

June 30 - Tribunal hands over indictments and four arrest warrants to Lebanon, the state prosecutor says. Saad al-Hariri urges Mikati's government to cooperate with the court.

July 10 - Interpol circulates arrest warrants for the four suspects, the UN-backed tribunal says.

July 29 - The tribunal releases the names of four men wanted for the Hariri killing -- Salim Jamil Ayyash, Mustafa Amine Badreddine, Hussein Hassan Oneissi, and Assad Hassan Sabra.

Source: Reuters