

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



The Registrar, during an outreach event in Moyamba where computers and other items were distributed to various organisations.

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:

Friday, 30 September 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

International News

Interview With Former TRC Commissioner Yasmin Souka / <i>BBC News Hour</i>	Pages 3-4
Liberia: Weah to Face Justice Ministry's Probe / <i>Heritage</i>	Page 5
Justice Eludes Children in Armed Conflict / <i>Voice of America</i>	Pages 6-8
Is There a Just God? An Interview with Archbishop Edward Tamba Charles... / <i>ACN News</i>	Pages 9-13
STL Will Accept Any Means to Fund Court / <i>The Daily Star</i>	Pages 14-15

BBC News Hour

Wednesday, 28 September 2011

Interview with Former TRC Commissioner Yasmin Souka

SOUKA: You have to place absolute importance on looking at the questions of truth and justice, and that you need to be quite clear that you're addressing impunity. If you look at South Africa, and you look at some of the issues that we're dealing with, we never really addressed the long-term legacy of the crime of apartheid, and certainly we never looked at the question of impunity properly.

I think the problem with the Ivory Coast is that President Ouattara certainly announced the establishment of the commission too quickly. I think there's a real danger that it's going to be one which is looking at victors' justice, and if the commission is to work it has to go beyond looking at the crimes committed by President Gbagbo, although those are immense.

Would you then say timing is very vital? In South Africa we waited many, many years – decades even – before we had the TRC, and in the Ivory Coast they've just come out of a civil war. The violence related to the outcome of the elections have been just a few months ago. Would you say that emotions are just too raw at this time, and is there the perfect time to the truth commission?

SOUKA: The question of the perfect time is always about what do people actually want, and has any decision to establish a truth commission been done by public consultation, and I think in the case of the Ivory Coast that didn't happen, whereas if you look at South Africa we had a period of one year of consultation with people actually expressed their views, and so even though many lawyers like myself looked at the possibility of prosecutions and trials, the people we were dealing with – our clients, actually – said they were willing to go down this other route.

But do processes such as these actually serve justice? You used the word "justice" in your answer to my first question, because in South Africa we had pardons and amnesties. For a lot of citizens of South Africa, that was not justice.

SOUKA: You know, when we talk about justice, it's much broader than just the notion of criminal justice. I mean, we are now 17 years down when the transition began, and there are still many cases which many of us are investigating – many where in fact amnesties were given, and the possibilities exist that one day we will be going to our own courts very much like the Argentinians are doing now, twenty years after their conflict they are overturning the amnesties, because at the end of the day justice must mean something beyond a criminal justice trial.

And would justice be somebody actually being prosecuted and actually held accountable for the violence?

SOUKA: Somebody being prosecuted and being held accountable, but also making sure that victims and those who have suffered have actually been unable to get reparations. And I think if you look at South Africa, even the debate around reparations, really was tarnished by the fact that the government treated victims incredibly shabbily. Right now the government in South Africa has published regulations around community reparations, but they never consulted the victims community, and so even that is something that saddens people. So I think when we look at these issues, first of all we need to be in for the long run. If you look at the examples of Latin America, the truth commissions were only the beginnings of a process which was a long-term journey. I think the notion of closure is something we have to examine.

But for the Ivory Coast, this is a new government that has come in. Economic growth is starting to be seen in the country and starting to improve. Does a new government have the muscle for any tense process such as this?

SOUKA: I think the government has enormous power. It has defeated the former president and his allies, and I think that that certainly does give them the leverage to begin to really look at issues properly. But I think another reason that they need to look it from South Africa is you cannot focus on the criminal alone, you really have to look at the socio-economic issues and you need to look at the political economy...

(Interrupting) And the ethnicity in Ivory Coast...

SOUKA: ...And the ethnicity is the biggest factor. If the truth commission is not able to look at the root causes of the conflict, is not able to explore why you have the ethnic divide, how the ethnic divide is also linked to the economic resources of the country and to the political economy question, you are never going to have peace.

Heritage (Monrovia)

Tuesday, 27 September 2011

Liberia: Weah to Face Justice Ministry's Probe

Eugene K. Myers

The Justice Ministry says it has launched background investigation into an alleged secret deal entered into by the vice standard bearer of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), Ambassador George M. Weah and Alan White, a former prosecutor of the Special War Crimes Court in Sierra Leone in June 2010.

Last week, a local daily reported that Weah and White signed a Memorandum of Understanding(MOU) to ignite conflict in Liberia should the 2011 elections go against the CDC. But in reactions to the newspaper report, Weah categorically rejected the report, describing the report what he called the ruling Unity Party(UP) "dangerous game plan" in the 2011 elections to destroy and cheat the CDC in these elections.

The launch of the Unity Party campaign.

Weah, who accused pointing fingers at Lenn Eugene Nagbe, former secretary general of the CDC, now deputy campaign manager of the ruling Unity Party(UP) as paid agent of the UP to destroy the CDC, stated: "Alan White is an international investigator and lobbyist in the United States. The CDC considered Dr. Allen White through his consulting firm AWA to provide technical assistance in the area of fund raising and political strategy. I had never been a warlord and will never be one. I have always been a peaceful Liberian, never supported and or interacted with any warring factions or warlords. I have been an instrument and ambassador for peace. I worked to disarm combatants, supported all of the peace agreements and have always been on the side of peace and stability in Liberia. As a responsible opposition, we have supported all efforts by the government that has been in the interest of the Liberian People. I attended conferences that have brought peace and debt relief to Liberia."

According to him, the MOU was terminated due to the CDC's failure to raise the needed amount to pay the firm for lobby abroad.

But addressing the Ministration of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICAT) press conference in Monrovia last weekend, Justice Minister Christina Tah said a background investigation to authentic the report has been launched.

She said the ministry is investigating the report to determine whether or not the deal was intended to create chaos in the country.

She said Weah will be called by the ministry to provide his side of the story as the background investigation progresses.

Minister Tah, who said that she has received calls from the public urging her to take action against Weah, said she will not bow to public pressure.

The Justice Minister pointed out that the ministry will not act on speculations from the media.

Among other things, she added that no action will be taken against the CDC vice standard bearer unless it is necessary and warranted under the law.

Voice of America

Thursday, 29 September 2011

Justice Eludes Children in Armed Conflict

Lisa Schlein | Geneva



Photo: AP

A young boy leads the hard-line Islamist al-Shabab fighters as they conduct military exercise in northern Mogadishu's Suqaholaha neighborhood, Somalia (File Photo)

Millions of children are victims of armed conflict. Many are killed, maimed, raped and psychologically traumatized for their whole lives. Many children are recruited to fight for governments and rebel groups. They are forced to commit atrocities and are often prosecuted for these crimes. A United Nations Study, called *Children and Justice During and in the Aftermath of Armed Conflict*, examines how children caught in wars can seek justice for the violations they have suffered and examines the extent to which children should be held accountable for crimes they have committed. A panel of experts met at U.N. offices in Geneva to discuss these issues.

Fear

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina broke out in 1992. The siege of the capital, Sarajevo, lasted nearly four years. Almost 10,000 people were killed, including 1,500 children.

The U.N. Ambassador from Bosnia, Emina Keco-Isakovic, is haunted by these memories. She relives the anguish experienced by her son during this period.

"When the cannon firing was starting over the city, it was really every evening," she said. "My 10-year-old son asked me whether he would have died that night. And,

every night I answered 'no, no, you shall not die,' I said and touched him and held him while he was falling asleep. All children from besieged Sarajevo, still suffer from trauma in the form of waiting to die."

Justice

While the study says children should be permitted to seek reparations for violation of their rights, Keco-Isakovic says the children of Sarajevo have never received justice commensurate with the crimes committed against them.

"When you kill a European in a car accident, you get 10 years in prison," said Keco-Isakovic. "When you kill thousands of people in Balkans, Asia, Africa - you are in prison five, six years. The explanation-good behavior, the age and you are out."

Messeh Kamara was a child during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war.

"What I am here to do is to represent the voices of the millions of children whose voice go unheard, who we cannot see in this small room," said Kamara. "But, they are out there suffering from conflict."

Children unheard

Kamara lost his parents. He learned to survive and eventually became a child-activist for children's rights. He is now 24 years old and studying to become an international human rights lawyer.

He says it was most important for him and other children who lived through this brutal war to see those who created this havoc brought to justice.

"I was 11," said Kamara. "I was thrown into a conflict I did not cause to happen, but I suffered the most. So for justice and accountability to us is very important. But, it is also mostly important when our rights are given back to us. Remember, what they did was they stole our rights from us and when they stole something from someone, it is most important that you return what they stole."

Punishment



AP

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor is seen at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone in Leidschendam, Netherlands (File Photo - August 5, 2010).

Kamara regards the trials of suspected war criminals at the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the war crimes trial of former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, at the International Criminal Court at The Hague as very important. He says they are giving the children and young adults in Sierra Leone a sense of hope that justice will be done.

While children undeniably are victims of war, the U.N. study notes some children also are involved in committing crimes.

Radhika Coomaraswamy is Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and lead author of the study. She says children who are abducted and forced to commit atrocities by their military commanders should not be prosecuted and judged in the same manner as adults. She notes under international law, the recruitment and use of children under the age of 15 in hostilities is a war crime.

"We would prefer a process of, what we call, diversion, which is that children are diverted away from the judicial and prosecutorial system into some alternative mechanism, which can be either a truth and reconciliation commission, truth-telling, restorative justice or some kind of rehabilitation process," she said. "And, what we are saying is if they have to be prosecuted, then it must be the absolutely last resort."

The study notes countries increasingly are arresting and detaining children associated with armed groups on the grounds they are a threat to national security or because they have participated in hostility.

It contends children held in administrative detention during armed conflict are particularly vulnerable. It says few are granted access to lawyers or are given reasons why they are being detained.

The study argues states should not use administrative detention for children under 15 and detention conditions should comply with international standards and judicial guarantees. It says the United Nations should be allowed to monitor child detention centers.

ACN News

Friday, 23 September 2011

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1316762128.html>

Sierra Leone – Is there a just God? An interview with Archbishop Edward Tamba Charles from Freetown and Bo, Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is small country on the western coast of Africa. The name means Lion Mountains. The



population is about 5 million and the country is rich in diamonds, gold, bauxite and iron ore. The country has recently emerged from a decade long civil war and still today struggles with the challenges of reconciliation and construction.

(Archbishop Edward Tamba Charles)

Q) Your Excellency, upon your appointment you faced the daunting task of reconstruction and reconciliation after a decade long civil war which ended in 2002. Where do you begin?

A) I agree with you that it is a daunting task and in the beginning we didn't know where to begin. My predecessor had already started and so I continue by way of rehabilitation of the structures, of lives by way of trauma healing and counselling as well as through peace education programs in schools.

Q) Can you briefly tell us the root cause of the war?

A) I will say here, first of all, what it was not. It was not a religious war; rather it was the usual African tribal war. It was greed for power. Some groups wanted to take over power and have access to the wealth of the country; the huge mineral resources we have. Injustice also played into that because some of the people who were treated badly joined one or the other of the fighting groups to avenge what was done to them. For example in some areas entire villages were wiped out. Later on, we were told, that was done by some people who felt that their own party was cheated during the election of chiefs. They thought everybody should lose so they went and burned villages.

Q) The war is uniquely recognized internationally as particularly brutal; the hacking off of legs and arms but the population is peace loving. Can one say that the devil had his day? How can you explain this spiritually?

A) This is one of the manifestations of the mystery of evil. Sometimes people who are good, peaceful and loving act in a manner that is difficult to explain and ours was such situation. Young people were forced to go out and commit atrocities against other people - in most cases innocent people. Victims were shot, arms were amputated and pregnant women had their stomachs opened to know the sex of the child. It became a game among the young people because they were drugged by adults. And yet as you say, the majority of the Sierra Leoneans are peace loving. They hate violence in normal circumstances. So it is one of those manifestations of the mystery of evil that is difficult to explain.

Q) Where were you during this war?

A) I was in Sierra Leone when the war started in March 1991. And then I had to leave in the following June to come to Rome for my studies. I did five years in Rome. When I returned in September 1996 the war was ongoing, on account of which I couldn't go to my own region because the rebels captured the area and they were mining the diamonds. I couldn't go home for a long time. I saw part of the war and I was there until it ended.

Q) Was your family affected?

A) Oh yes. Our entire village was burned down. My grandmother was killed. In talking about innocent people, she was one of those. She had nothing to do with power, or fighting, and yet she was gunned down. She was killed in her own room. The rest of the family fled to neighboring Guinea and they were in a refugee camp for many years until the war ended in 2002.

Q) How do you not cry out for justice? How do you not risk losing your faith when confronted with such senseless violence and evil? Do you not ask: Where is God?

A) I agree with you that in such circumstances one is tempted to say: Is there a just God? But my deep faith as a Christian and I should add, as an African, I think that God is not responsible for this. This is one moment where we have to distinguish between the justice of God and the evil deeds of man; in this case it was not God. It was done by human beings. I blame the adults who gave hard drugs to young people to have them go out and commit atrocities so that the adults would get what they were looking for - namely access to power.

Q) The victims and the perpetrators still live in the same society. How do you build reconciliation in this kind of an environment?

A) Our sense of justice also leaves room for mercy. In fact, when the UN Special Court was proposed, many Sierra Leoneans felt it was not necessary because it would not bring back the dead, the amputees would not regain their limbs etc. It was felt that what had been done could not be undone and so what were they looking for? OK, those fellows who did it, some of them are with us but as I've said many of them did it because they were drugged by adults. Some of those adults have been brought before the special court for trial, some are still being tried. What we are looking for is their re-integration and that we move on. Life must continue. Maybe somebody will say, "Well you Sierra Leoneans have a very strange sense of justice?" So be it, but we want to move on. Some of them are back to their villages. There were traditional processes of reconciliation. They asked for forgiveness and they have been accepted by society. Some of them are being incorporated into the police and the army and they are back to normal life.

Q) Is the Church participating in this reconciliation process?

A) Yes, to ensure that it does not happen again and so we have peace education programs in our schools.

Q) What does this mean in a practical manner?

A) Teaching children to relate to each other in a peaceful manner, to respect each other's rights and if there is a wrong, to be courageous enough to ask for forgiveness. We started it as a pilot program for Catholic schools - primary, junior secondary and senior secondary. Now some of the communities are asking us to extend it to them. We are also running trauma healing programs for those who suffered terrible experiences during the war and who find it difficult to come to terms with this. So they are brought there and they are helped by way of counseling.

Q) Many of these are not necessarily Catholics or Christians? Some of these are also Muslims or other denominations as well?

A) Indeed there are people of other religions. We do not have any problems relating to other religions in Sierra Leone. In fact, recently Sierra Leone was nominated as one of the, if not the first, country of religious tolerance. Maybe we should export it to other parts of the world. Yes, we live in peace. We relate to each other well both Muslims and Christian - Muslims are the majority - because many of us are from the same family background. This common cultural background is very helpful.

Q) The church was also deeply affected: priests were killed, religious were killed. Can you tell us a little about this and how you re-construct after this period?

A) We lost one priest, Fr. McAllister - a Holy Ghost Father. We lost a Christian Brother. We lost four sisters of the Missionaries of Charity; sisters of Mother Theresa. We lost catechists and prayer leaders and thousands of church members.

Q) Was the Church a target or was it just a part the spectrum of random violence?

A) I would say it was part of the violence; wanton destruction of life and property. The Church was not targeted as such because, as I said earlier, this was not a religious war.

Q) And yet every single church in your Archdiocese was destroyed?

A) Yes, we lost many churches, schools and clinics. Those that were not destroyed completely were rendered in a manner that made them useless.

Q) Your predecessor, Archbishop Ganda, understood that there were very few financial means and he suggested starting parishes with small businesses on the side: a farm, an ice-cream parlor, anything that could create self sufficiency. Was it successful? Are you pursuing this strategy as well?

A) The idea was fascinating but not many people warmed to it especially among the priests who were not used to business or farming, but I think we have to continue because the resources from overseas are drying up. I have gone around the world and I know that this is the way, the future of the Church. We are insisting self reliance as a way for the Church in Africa. We have no other option but to promote it. That said, as I said earlier, not many people warmed to that and so the initiative now is to focus on a few of the parishes where there is enough land to farm. Some priests do this to subsidize whatever minimal subsidies they are receiving from the bishop. In the cities we have initiatives like restaurants but it is not bringing us much yet. We hope to reorganize it to make sure it is profitable.

Q) To your pastoral priorities: You are confronting a wave of challenges ranging from church reconstruction, to evangelization, to young people. Where do you weigh your priorities?

A) As you say it is a difficult choice but I would put a premium on education and also on the support of the priests who are my first collaborators; priests who are in the parishes and future priests, so that we have many more laborers in the Lord's vineyard. Once you have that then we begin to look at where to celebrate Mass. You see in Africa sometimes we celebrate our Masses beside a big tree, maybe from there we then move to a Church but only when we can afford to build one.

Q) The young people; do they see hope in the Lord or Christianity or is there disaffection?

A) Perhaps there might be one or two young men or women who are really angry about the war and want to turn their back on God but the majority are very religious. That is the one difference between us and the rest of the world - Europe and America. Our churches are full of young people; actually they constitute the vitality of the church. Since the war the churches are really full. People are coming back. In fact, in some places where the bishop started it, and I intend to continue, some of the churches have to be

extended because they were built with a small congregation in mind. Since the war the numbers have increased and for an ordinary Sunday Mass, people are sitting outside. In some places they have to introduce a second or third Mass to accommodate the congregations.

Q) To what do you attribute this growth of the Church?

A) It could be the hunger for God, which is very natural for us Africans. Christianity has helped us to build on that. We are a religious people and so we turn to God first when seeking solutions to our problems and so that may well be the reason why young people have gone to the Church after the war. Also, during the war the Church stood by the people; priests were in displacement camps and myself I spent some time in a displacement camp ministering to people and burying some of the dead. I had a rickety pickup that I used, a kind of funeral van for carrying those who died and praying for them. Some of them were not even Catholics, but it didn't matter to me. They came to me: 'Father we need your help' and so I did. That built up the credibility of the Church. One diocese even set up a Catholic mission for refugees in Guinea. They sent priests from Sierra Leone to go and minister to our refugee brothers and sisters in Guinea. The Church came out of it, I would say, with a high profile.

Q) The country is rich in mineral resources: Diamonds, gold and bauxite. Has this been a curse or blessing?

A) A curse! As you know extractors all over the world leave behind so much destruction in terms of environmental damage, poverty and the mineral resources in Sierra Leone have been no exception. The first diamonds were discovered in the 1930's in my own region, in the Kono district. Today there is no running water, there is no electricity, poor roads and those there are infested with holes left behind by both the mining companies and the rebels who, during the war, targeted that area because they wanted something they could use with which to buy weapons. They destroyed many villages, deliberately destroying the buildings because they wanted to establish an open mining field from which to be able to extract the diamonds to buy weapons. You know the film Blood Diamonds? This attempts to give you a picture of what happened: different groups were selling weapons to both the rebels and the government sides in exchange for diamonds.

Q) How do you change this curse to a blessing?

A) Well we need good laws but above all a machinery to ensure that the policies are well implemented. I think that this is where the problem is for the third world. It's one thing to make a good law but it is quite another thing implementing it because some multinational companies have ways of manipulating the system to ensure that they get what they want and, in some places if they require it, even to ferment conflicts to ensure that they get access to the mining areas.

Q) That's a big statement?

A) It is a big statement and it is happening in Eastern Congo.

Q) Your Episcopal motto is: Duc in Altum. How do you live your Episcopal motto today in Sierra Leone?

A) First of all I must say it is a statement of trust and confidence. You know the story about Peter. Peter toiled the whole night and caught nothing and the Lord told him: "Go out there and throw your net into the deep". Peter initially, in his usual manner, protested but when he did he caught a huge catch. I thought it would be a good model for me. First of all I had no intention of becoming a bishop and so when I was appointed, you know...

Q) It wasn't your choice...

A) No, so I needed something to hold on to and Pope John Paul II used that expression. Many times when I was in Rome and afterwards I thought it would be fine for me. So that is why I chose it as my Episcopal motto. It requires of me to trust in the Lord. In the final analysis it is the Lord's work. It is not a question of waiting until I have all the means available to me. I must do the little I can trusting in the Lord. Sometimes I have had experiences that convinced me that was a good choice because some days you are not so sure. You wake up and you are not sure which direction to take but then the Lord presents you an opportunity and you do something useful for the people.

Q) What would you ask of the people around the world?

A) To ask them to pray for us first of all; secondly I want to assure them of our own prayers. It saddens us in the newly established churches to see that the churches that have contributed and are still contributing to our sustenance are losing the dynamism they used to have. Some of the churches are empty. There are no vocations. Parishes are being closed and it saddens us. So we pray that the faith may not be lost. So that is my hope and prayer for them and perhaps in the future they will be courageous enough to accept missionaries from those churches they have built in Africa, Asia and around the world. That is my message to them.

This interview was conducted by Mark Riedemann for "Where God Weeps," a weekly television and radio show produced by Catholic Radio and Television Network in conjunction with the international Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need. On the Net: www.wherogodweeps.org

Editor's Notes

Directly under the Holy See, Aid to the Church in Need supports the faithful wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. ACN is a Catholic charity – helping to bring Christ to the world through prayer, information and action.

The charity undertakes thousands of projects every year including providing transport for clergy and lay Church workers, construction of church buildings, funding for priests and nuns and help to train seminarians. Since the initiative's launch in 1979, Aid to the Church in Need's Child's Bible – God Speaks to his Children has been translated into 162 languages and 48 million copies have been distributed all over the world.

While ACN gives full permission for the media to freely make use of the charity's press releases, please acknowledge ACN as the source of stories when using the material.

The Daily Star
Friday, 30 September 2011

STL will accept any means to fund court

By Patrick Galey



BEIRUT: The United Nations-backed court investigating the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri cleared the way Thursday for the government to provide its share of tribunal funding via a presidential decree, allowing Lebanon to sidestep the Cabinet debate currently holding up its 2011 contributions to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

STL spokesperson Marten Youssef, speaking after weeks of conjecture over Lebanon's financial contributions to the court, told The Daily Star that the tribunal would welcome governmental funding from Beirut in whatever form it came.

"The way or method the Lebanese government contributes 49 percent is a decision for them alone," he said. "As far as the court is concerned, it is up to the Lebanese government to make its own arrangements on how to fund the tribunal and fulfill its obligations."

As per a cooperation agreement signed with the court and mandated by U.N. Security Council 1757, Lebanon is obliged to cover 49 percent of the STL's running costs, something it has so far failed to do in 2011.

Since the fall of former Prime Minister Saad Hariri's Cabinet in January, debate has raged among the political elite over whether or not Lebanon will stump up the cash. Prime Minister Najib Mikati's Cabinet has promised to honor Lebanon's international commitments, but its policy statement stopped short of a specific pledge to fulfill its obligation to the STL.

The protracted disagreement has led to Lebanon failing to provide any financial assistance at all this year. Mikati and President Michel Sleiman, during trips this week to New York and Washington, issued the strongest hints yet that Lebanon was preparing to provide its share of the funding, which would total more than \$30 million for 2011.

Mikati left for the U.N. Security Council in New York over the weekend without Cabinet's agreement on funding. It has been suggested by several lawmakers that Lebanon could use a presidential decree – in which an agreement among prime minister, president and the justice and finance ministers could bypass a divided Cabinet – as a way of

freeing up the funds.

Political sources told The Daily Star that a presidential decree would be favorable as Hezbollah, the court's biggest detractor, would be left out of the equation.

Although there is no official deadline for Lebanon to provide STL funding, Youssef urged the government to make good on its financial support promise.

"The U.N. Secretary-General [Ban Ki-moon] communicated with the Lebanese government earlier in the year informing them of the financial obligation," he said. "The STL reminds the Lebanese government of its international legal obligation to pay 49 percent of the STL budgetary expenditure."

Youssef added that the court's operational capability had not been hit by Lebanon's failure to provide funding, as other donor states had taken up the slack. "We have been relying on the voluntary contributions of other countries. As a matter of policy we leave it to the contributing country to disclose its contribution," he said.

The STL was high on the agenda this week during meetings between Sleiman and Mikati and U.N., U.S. and world leaders.

Mikati, in remarks published Thursday by pan-Arab daily Al-Hayat, said that the cooperation agreement between Beirut and The Hague remained "in effect."

"[STL] funding and implementing U.N. resolutions are in Lebanon's interest and no one is against Lebanon's interest," the prime minister told the paper.

The court's mandate, under Resolution 1757, runs until March 1, 2012.

Given that Security Council mandates are regularly updated and renewed in New York – such as the yearly renewal of Resolution 1701, which monitors the cessation of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel following the 2006 war – it is likely that the organization will seek to continue the STL's mandate.

Several politicians, including former Justice Minister Ibrahim Najjar, have suggested that Lebanon may seek to change the parameters of 1757 when discussions on its renewal commence next year. Some speculate that Hezbollah will try and torpedo Lebanon's cooperation with the court.

Youssef said that the STL "didn't anticipate any changes to the resolution."

The STL was established to find and try the assassins of Hariri, who was killed along with 22 others when a huge car bomb struck his motorcade in Downtown Beirut on Feb. 14, 2005.

The STL, which has been subject to accusations of politicization since its inception, issued its first indictment in June against four Hezbollah members and ordered Lebanese authorities to apprehend the suspects.

The four are still at large and Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah vowed they would not be handed over to the STL, "even in 300 years."