

**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 October 2011

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

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

War wounded amputees condition deteriorates

By Solomon Rogers

The welfare of war wounded amputees continue to deteriorate as they are yet to fully benefit from the Trust Fund that was launched by President Ernest Bai Koroma in 2008.

In an attempt to determine the current status of amputees in the country 10 years on I caught up with a 36 year-old amputee named James Kpongbu who narrated how they are given little attention by the authorities that are supposed to do so.

"I was amputated in January 1999 by AFRC\RUF rebels and since I have been rendered useless to my family as I can no longer adequately care for 2 children: Glanet and Cynthia who are school goers."

"I was only given Le 300,000 by the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) under the micro-grant scheme as an interim support to start up life after the trauma of the rebel war which left us amputated and vulnerable," he said.

He said that the amount was not enough to take care of his domestic affairs let alone to set up a meaningful business, adding that he used the money to enroll his children into elementary school and used the remaining to manage the home.

He maintained that even though they have been resettled in amputee camps around the country there is still much to be done as conditions in the camps remain unfavorable.

He also said that they lack medical facilities and other amenities, saying that even though most of them are better qualified to be gainfully employed, some employers still continue to discriminate against them as such they are virtually reduced to street beggars as a source of survival.

He confirmed that NaCSA promised to set up a Trust Fund to support them and their families through the provision of monthly incentive to them and to support their children's educational pursuits but such support has not been forthcoming.

Redress

August-September 2011

REDRESS advocates for survivors at the ICC

REDRESS continues to advocate for victims at the International Criminal Court (ICC), including their ability to take part in proceedings, and their right to protection and reparation.

On 25 August, the ICC began hearing closing arguments against Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga, the first case to reach this stage at the ICC.

REDRESS, which has been monitoring the case since 2006, put together a timeline that traces the history of victims' engagement in this landmark trial. Five years ago an ICC arrest warrant was issued for Lubanga, after two years of investigations by the Court's Prosecutor into the conflict in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In recent months, REDRESS also brought attention to the fact that at least 470 victims hadn't been allowed to participate in the confirmation of charges hearing of Callixte Mbarushimana before the ICC. The hearing took place from September 16 to 21 in The Hague.

The Registrar explained that victims' requests had not been examined because of lack of means, and before the hearing, REDRESS urged the Court to take the necessary steps to resolve this issue. Unfortunately, the issue was not resolved.

For more information about victims' issues and the ICC visit www.vrwg.org

Photo: Thomas Lubanga is on trial at The Hague. He is accused of recruiting child soldiers in DR Congo.

Credit: Ekenitr.

Africa Review (Kenya)

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

Rwanda offers to host trial of former Chadian leader Habre



Rwanda has joined the list of countries ready to host trial of former Chadian leader Hissene Habré.

According to diplomatic sources at the Foreign Affairs ministry in Dakar, the African Union is considering an application by Rwanda to host the trial of the Dakar-based former Chadian dictator.

In August this year, the government of Sierra Leone offered to use of the facilities of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to try former Chadian leader Hissene Habre.

But President Ernest Koroma's administration said it could only host the trial if the international community including the African Union and ECOWAS came to an agreement.

Uncertainty

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is a UN facility in Freetown purpose-built to try cases of war crimes committed during the Sierra Leonean civil war.

Early this year, frantic efforts by the international community to repatriate Mr. Habré back to Chad and face the trial there lead to a fiasco.

The former dictator was to be flown to Belgium that has also offered a transparent and just trial for the wanted former dictator.

The efforts to speed up the trial of Mr. Habré who has been residing in Senegal since 1990 have been buttressed by the international rights groups as well as the association of victims and lawyers of the victims.

For nearly a year now, the efforts have also been held due to the uncertainty of the Senegalese government to hold the trial of the former dictator.

Fair trial

Earlier this year, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade rescinded a decision he made nearly a year ago to hold a speedy trial for the dictator or deport him back to Chad.

President Wade argued that his decision not to send Habré home was due to the fact that he faces a death penalty there and this was backed by human rights groups who felt the former dictator would not get a fair trial in Chad.

Habre is accused of crimes against humanity including the assassination and torture of over 40,000 people during his regime between 1983 to 1990.

[Note: Editor has agreed to delete misinformation about the Special Court.]