

**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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Awareness Times
 Tuesday, 1 November 2011

Special Court Orders APC Govt to Back-Off!

By Aruna Turay

The Special Court of Sierra Leone SCSL has ordered the government to back-off on the issue of the eight convicted prisoners charged with war crimes presently serving jail terms in Rwanda.

This was disclosed by the Minister of Information and Communications Alhaji Ibrahim Ben Kargbo in an exclusive interview with the Awareness Times yesterday Monday October 31, 2011. Minister I.B. Kargbo said the SCSL in a letter addressed to Sierra Leone's Attorney General and Minister of Justice Mr. Frank Kargbo, warned the Sierra Leone government not to interfere with the issue of the convicted prisoners.

Minister I.B. Kargbo's statement to this press came about after the families of the eight war crime prisoners called on the government and other stakeholders to help transfer the Sierra Leonean prisoners back home from Rwanda to serve their remaining jail terms here.

"The Special Court has cautioned the



Sierra Leone government that any attempt to interfere in this matter will amount to committing an offence. As a government our position on this matter is to adhere to the letter by the Special Court. We are refraining from any sort of interference until the Special Court thinks it otherwise to release them to Sierra Leone or not," Minister I.B. Kargbo noted.

He stated that his government

sympathises with both the prisoners and their relatives but has little or nothing to do on this matter. Minister I.B. Kargbo however used the forum to call on the relatives to continue to exercise patience as his government is still negotiating with the UN and the Special Court on the issue.

On their part as an opposition, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party SLPP refused to comment on the issue on

the basis that they will have to meet as a party, dilate on the matter and come out with a comprehensive point of view. However, the National Publicity Secretary of the SLPP Honourable Musa Tamba Sam used this medium to call on the aggrieved relatives of the convicts to exercise patience for now.

The National Publicity Secretary of the United Democratic Alliance UDM Editayo George Temple said UDM as a party respects the rule of law and relies on the state institutions to interpret the laws of the land in the interest of state security. Mr. Temple emphasised that the UDM will ensure that the cries for mercy and an amicable settlement to the families' demands are adhered to.

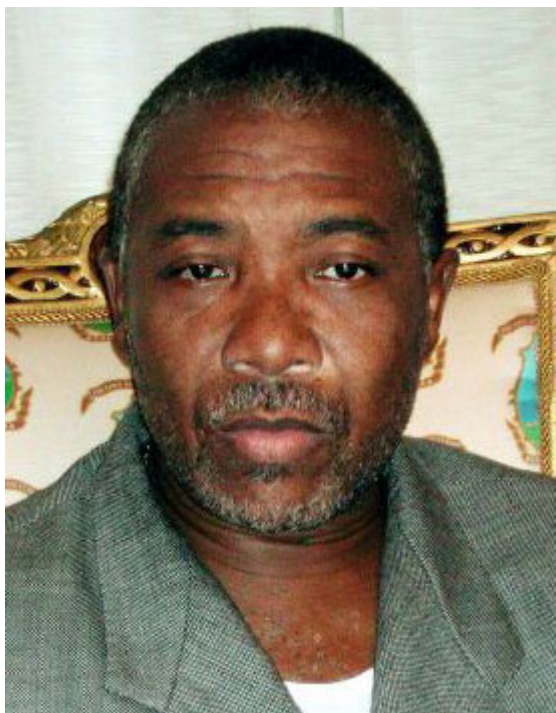
The families of the prisoners at the Mpanga Prison in the Rwandan capital Kigali have recently complained that they are not having easy access to their relatives as they found it very expensive and challenging to visit them in Rwanda where they are presently serving their jail terms.

The New Dawn (Liberia)

Tuesday, 25 October 2011

Tragedy Hits Taylor's Trial

Othello B. Garblah



At the time Liberians and the world over are awaiting the verdict in the prolonged trial of ex-President Charles Taylor, a tragedy has hit the court as one of its instrumental jurists has been reported dead, the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has announced.

Judge Antonio Cassese reportedly dies on Friday October 21, 2011, a statement issued by the Special Court's President Jon M. Kamanda said.

"We are saddened to learn of the death on Friday 21 October 2011, of Judge Antonio Cassese, an eminent international jurist and, until recently, President of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon," the statement said.

The Sierra Leone Special Court President listed among the many achievements in Judge Cassese's distinguished career as his role as an Independent Expert charged with looking at the challenges faced by the Special Court.

In his December 2006 report, Judge Cassese was said to have raised for the first time, the importance of preparing a Completion Strategy, including a consideration of the Special Court's Legacy, and the need for a Residual Mechanism, something the court is expected to transition into.

The death of Judge Cassese comes amidst a reported delay in the Taylor's verdict since the trial came to an historic end in March this year.

This was after three-and-a-half years of trial, the Prosecution and Defense both addressed Trial Chamber II for the final time in March. The parties referred to the passion, intensity, and emotions that became hallmarks of this trial, but thanked everyone involved for their hard work and dedication over the years.

The judges have received all of the evidence tendered by the parties—amounting to testimony from 115 witnesses and 1097 exhibits. Having heard all of the parties' assertions and arguments about whether this evidence indicates Taylor's guilt or innocence, the judges had since retired to deliberate and come to a final judgment on whether Charles Taylor is guilty of eleven counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international law.

Verdict was expected in months or before the end of the year, but it has been 8

months since and not a specific date has been given. Although unconfirmed reports say court officials are awaiting the end of polls here to proceed with the issuance of final verdict in the trial.

The opposition Congress for Democratic Change or CDC Winston Tubman told Congress for Democratic Change or CDC Standard Bearer Cllr. Winston Tubman told the British Independent Newspaper recently that under his Presidency, he would allow ex-President Charles Taylor back to Liberia, if not convicted by the UN-backed Special Court of Sierra Leone, a comment which have received sharp criticisms from two influential US Congressmen, who have warned that a return of Taylor to Liberia would have far-reaching consequences, including cutting support and seriously undermine relations between the United States and Liberia.

Reuters

Sunday, 30 October 2011

Al Qathafi son Seif says he is innocent of war crimes

(France 24/Reuters) - Seif Al -Islam Al Qathafi, the fugitive son of Libya's toppled late leader, told the International Criminal Court he is innocent of alleged crimes against humanity, the court prosecutor said on Saturday in the Chinese capital.

The court, based in The Hague, has said it made informal contact with Seif Al -Islam, the son of former Libyan leader Muammar Al Qathafi, and is seeking to arrest him and bring him to trial on the charges stemming from Libya's civil war.

The International Criminal Court Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo told Reuters the contacts were through intermediaries, and Seif Al -Islam maintained he is innocent and wants to understand what could happen to him if cleared of charges.

"There are some people connected with him that are in touch with people connected with us, so we have no direct relation; it's through intermediaries," Moreno-Ocampo said in a brief interview after arriving in Beijing, where he is attending a law conference.

"But we trust very much the person who is in touch for our side. He says he is innocent, he will prove he is innocent, and then he is interested in the consequence after that."

The ICC charged Muammar Al Qathafi, his son Seif Al -Islam and Libya's former intelligence chief Abdullah Al -Senoussi with crimes against humanity for the bombing and shooting of civilian protesters in February.

Seif Al -Islam fled Libya after forces loyal to Libya's new rulers captured and apparently killed his father outside his hometown of Sirte. Seif Al -Islam is believed to have escaped across Libya's southern border into Niger.

A senior military official of Libya's National Transitional Council, told Reuters this week that Seif Al -Islam and Senoussi wanted to surrender to the ICC in The Hague because they felt unsafe in Libya, Algeria or Niger.

Under a deal, Seif Al -Islam would be taken to **The Hague where the ICC shares a detention unit with the UN Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying the former Liberian president Charles Taylor.**

But Seif Al -Islam was also concerned about what would happen even if he were found innocent, said Moreno-Ocampo.

"He said he is innocent and he will prove to the judges he is innocent, and then he is more concerned about what will happen after, if he is considered innocent by the court," said Moreno-Ocampo.

"So we explain to him the legal system, so we are making no deal, though we have a case against him," he added. "But we are explaining the legal system and his right to defend himself."

The prosecutor confirmed that the court was worried that Seif Al -Islam could escape its reach by fleeing to another country through mercenaries. Intelligence reports suggested that the mercenaries could include South Africans, he said.

"We have some information that there is a mercenary group trying to help him to move to a different country, so we are trying to prevent this activity," said Moreno-Ocampo, adding that "we are also working with some states to see if we can disrupt this attempt.

He did not give details of those efforts.

"We know he has explored different options, and then for us we would like to help him surrender," he said of Seif Al -Islam.

UN News Centre
Monday, 24 October 2011

Late UN tribunal judge Antonio Cassese mourned by fellow jurists



International Criminal Court President Sang-Hyun Song

Tributes continued to flow in today for Judge Antonio Cassese, first president of both the United Nations war crimes tribunal for the Balkan wars of the 1990s and the UN-backed special court created to try the suspects in the murder of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

Judge Cassese, who died on Friday, “has always been at the forefront of international criminal justice,” International Criminal Court (ICC) President Sang-Hyun Song said in a statement. “All of us who work in the field of international criminal law shall remain greatly indebted to him.”

The president of UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), Jon M. Kamanda, recalled Judge Cassese’s work as an independent expert looking at the challenges faced by that court, including the need to prepare a completion strategy. “Other tribunals will also build on Judge Cassese’s legacy as they too complete their work,” he said.

On Saturday Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon praised the judge as “a giant of international law” and a loyal friend to the UN.

Appeals hearings for two genocide convicts in mid-December

The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) will hear the appeals of Rwandan former businessman Gaspard Kanyarukiga and military commander Ildephonse Hategekimana on December 14 and 15 respectively. Both men are appealing long prison sentences for involvement in the 1994 genocide.

Lieutenant Hategekimana commanded the Ngoma military camp in Butare prefecture, southern Rwanda, in 1994. He is appealing a life sentence imposed on him by the lower court on December 6, 2010, for genocide and crimes against humanity (murder and rape).

Hategekimana was found responsible for ordering the massacres of Tutsis who had sought refuge at the Ngoma church in Butare prefecture.

Regarding Kanyarukiga, the lower court convicted him of genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity on November 1, 2010. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison for his role in massacres of Tutsis at Nyange Parish in Kivumu commune, Kibuye prefecture (western Rwanda), on April 16, 1994.

Judges found him responsible for planning, with others, the demolition of the parish church, while knowing that about 2,000 Tutsis had taken refuge in it to escape widespread massacres.

Kanyarukiga was not an educated businessman but nevertheless influential in Rwanda and money is what made him known in the society. He had business not only in his native commune but also in the capital Kigali, where he had a second wife.

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