

**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:

Monday, 13 February 2012

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

Local News

Free Your Mind Organisation Educates Congo Town Community / <i>Salone Times</i>	Page 3
Mr. Idiot: Fanning Political Unsteadiness / <i>Sierra Express</i>	Page 4

International News

Judges Reject Taylor's Request to Reopen Case / <i>Charlestaylortrial.org</i>	Pages 5-6
Court Rejects Taylor Appeal to Re-open Defence Case / <i>Daily Nation</i>	Pages 7-8
Charles Taylor Court Denies Request to Reopen Defence Case / <i>Deutsche Presse-Agentur</i>	Page 9
International Justice for Africa? / <i>The Mail and Guardian</i>	Pages 10-12
STL to Mull Claims of 73 other Hariri Blast Victims / <i>The Daily Star</i>	Page 13

On Charles Taylor's Trial in Hague...

Free Your Mind Organization Educates Congo Town Community

By Komba Fillie

Free Your Mind Organization (FYM) in Sierra Leone in collaboration with the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Saturday 11th February 2012 engaged a cross section youths from different clubs and community base originations, chiefs and other key stakeholders in the Congo Town community in order to know the court proceedings about the former Liberia President Charles Gangay Taylor who is presently standing before trail in the Hague for crime against humanity in the past rebel war.

Giving an overview of the one day symposium at the Congo town school Community field in Freetown, the Country Director FYM Alpha Kamara said that the FYM youth in the country are still influence by the consequences of the war. He said their mission as an organization is to be supportive to youths who have experienced the war through the expression of their memories, felling and to share experience with others. He said the reason for the forum is to discuss issues in the Charles Taylor's trial which he stressed is very important to all Sierra Leoneans.

He pointed out that the war has made a lot of people homeless and families and marriages were broken while other relative were killed. He added that in order to maintain peace, democracy, good governance and respect for human right the special court for Sierra Leone was established.

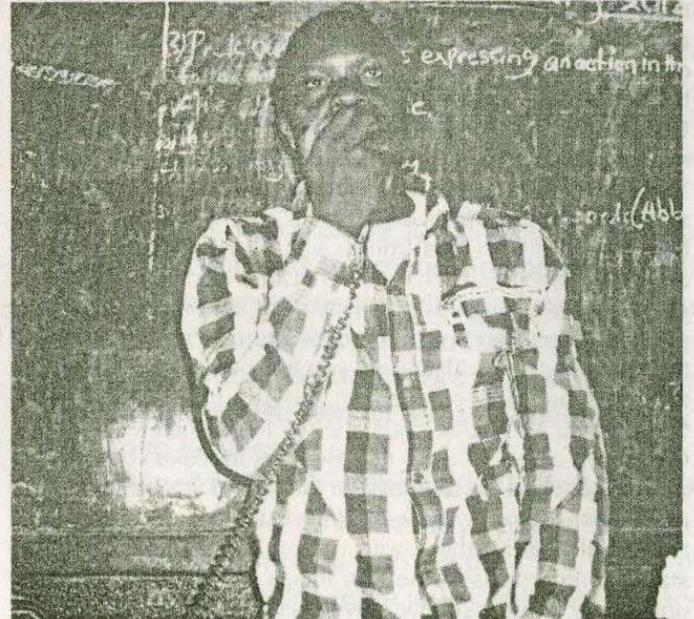
Speaking on the ongoing trail of the former Liberia leader in the Hugue and the work of the outreach section of special court for Sierra Leone Patrick J B Turker said that the war in sierra Leone happens due to malice, tribalism, hatrec, greed, selfish bad hart and above all corruption. He noted that people should live as one so that they can put an end to what happen in the past.

He said 13 people were indicted by the special court for Sierra Leone and they all follow under RUF, CDF

and AFRC. He called on all to refrain from the practice of what has past and project a good future.

Representing the Board Chairman of FYM Ibrahim Bah said that the board is committed to the day to day activities of FYM adding that they have a comprehensive management structure.

The participation of young people in the ongoing trial and the role of civil societies formed the climax of the program and the programme were chaired by one the Congo town youth Alusine Kamara.



Country Director FYM Alpha Kamara giving an overview of the symposium

Sierra Express (Online Edition)

Monday, 13 February 2012

Mr. Idiot: Fanning political unsteadiness

By: Ibrahim Samura – SEM

Just tell the Idiot who these politicians are, he will certainly tell it all to you.

-SNIP-

Before I take my exit, my warning nevertheless! Go tell it to the politicians that if they dare ignite unrest; no explanation, but straight to the Special Court.

You yeri! Yeri oh!

Friday, 10 February 2012

Judges Reject Taylor's Request to Reopen Case

By Alpha Sesay

Judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague have rejected a request by former Liberian President Charles Taylor to reopen his defense case.

On February 9, the judges unanimously ruled that the Taylor defense "has failed to establish any justification for the re-opening of its case."

Taylor's defense team filed a motion on January 31, 2012 to reopen its case in order to seek the admission of a December 2011 report of a UN Panel of Experts on Liberia. The UN Experts report discusses the participation of Liberian mercenaries in the conflict in neighboring Ivory Coast and this, defense lawyers say, does not lay blame on the current Liberian government as being involved or complicit in the movement of fighters from its country to a neighboring country.

Defense lawyers argue this report supports their argument that during the Sierra Leonean conflict, it was possible for fighters to cross from Liberia into Sierra Leone "without being under the direction and control of Mr. Taylor and without the implicit approval of the Government of Liberia." Defense lawyers further stated in their motion that one person named in the UN report as a Liberian mercenary fighter in Ivory Coast is Joseph Zig Zag Marzah, a prosecution witness who testified that his movement into Sierra Leone to provide assistance to Sierra Leonean rebels was directed by Taylor. His movement into Ivory Coast in 2010 and 2011 shows that he easily could have moved into Sierra Leone as a mercenary solely for his own benefit and this discredits his evidence against Taylor.

On February 7, prosecution lawyers responded to the defense motion arguing, among other things, that "excerpts of the Report...have no probative value or relevance to support the defense arguments," that "admission of the proposed evidence at this advanced stage prejudices the Prosecution which will have no opportunity to address the issues before the trial judgment is delivered," and that "proceedings are at an advanced stage and admitting the proposed evidence could delay the completion of the judicial process."

In its decision issued yesterday, the judges said they considered the effect that reopening of the case would have on this stage of the proceedings as well as the fact that the crime base and time frame, which are subjects of the charges against Taylor, do not bear correlation to the subject of the Expert Panel Report that talks about the flow of Liberian fighters into Ivory Coast.

"The Trial Chamber considers that at this advanced stage of the proceedings, re-opening the trial would result in undue delay," the judges noted in their decision.

Referencing the correlation between the events in Sierra Leone and those in Ivory Coast, the judges noted that "no parallels can validly be drawn between events that took place in Cote d'Ivoire during the period 2010/2011 and events that took place in Sierra Leone during the indictment period."

"The Trial Chamber therefore finds that the Report is not relevant to the issues to be decided in this case and has no probative value," the judges concluded.

The evidence phase of the proceedings against the former Liberian president was concluded in early 2011 when both prosecution and defense lawyers made their closing submissions. The judges then commenced

deliberations on the evidence in order to deliver their trial judgment which would determine the guilt or innocence of Mr. Taylor.

Taylor is charged with 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone from November 1996 to January 2002. Taylor has denied the charges against him and has called his trial a conspiracy of Western countries, mainly the United States and the United Kingdom to get him out of Liberia. He says that his involvement in Sierra Leone was to help bring peace to the war-torn West African nation.

It is anticipated that the trial judgment in this case will be delivered in the early part of this year. Depending on the outcome of the judgment, both prosecution and defense will have the opportunity to file appeals.

Daily Nation (Kenya)

Monday, 13 February 2012

Court rejects Taylor appeal to re-open defence case



Photo/FILE Former Liberian President Charles Taylor sits in the courtroom of the International Criminal Court prior to the hearing of witnesses in his trial in The Hague January 7, 2008.

By TAMBA JEAN-MATHEW NATION Correspondent, Dakar

The United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has rejected a request by the lawyers of former Liberian president Charles Taylor to reopen his defence case.

Judges at the court unanimously ruled on Friday that the Taylor defence “has failed to establish any justification for the re-opening of its case”.

On January 31, Taylor’s defence team submitted a motion to the court requesting permission to introduce pages from a UN Experts Panel on Liberia report on the flow of Liberian mercenary groups into Cote d’Ivoire.

Taylor’s lawyers argued in their submission that the report supports their argument that during the Sierra Leonean conflict, it was possible for fighters to cross from Liberia into Sierra Leone “without being under the direction and control of Mr Taylor and without the implicit approval of the Government of Liberia”.

Among other things, the court is trying Taylor for his role in the war in neighbouring Sierra Leone where it is alleged that the former president sent mercenaries.

However, court judges counter- argued that they considered the effect that reopening of the case would have on this stage of the proceedings.

Denied all charges

They further said that “the fact that the crime base and time frame, which are subjects of the charges against Taylor, do not bear correlation to the subject of the Expert Panel Report that talks about the flow of Liberian fighters into Cote d’Ivoire”.

“The Trial Chamber considers that at this advanced stage of the proceedings, re-opening the trial would result in undue delay,” the judges concluded.

Taylor is charged with 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone from November 1996 to January 2002.

But he has denied all the charges against him and has described the trial a conspiracy of Western countries, mainly the United States and the United Kingdom to get him out of Liberia.

“My involvement in Sierra Leone was to help bring peace to that country,” he argued. The final judgment of his trial is expected to be handed down before June this year.

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Friday, 10 February 2012

Charles Taylor court denies request to reopen defense case

Dakar - A UN-backed war crimes court in The Hague on Friday denied a request to reopen the defence case of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor.

Taylor is awaiting a verdict in a trial for war crimes allegedly committed in Sierra Leone.

His lawyers had asked the Special Court for Sierra Leone to reopen the case in order to admit parts of a 2011 UN report on Liberia.

The report focuses on the activities of Liberian mercenaries who crossed into Ivory Coast during the 2011 Ivorian conflict.

Taylor's defence team had argued that the report proves that Liberian fighters can participate in the wars of neighbouring countries without heeding higher commands.

Taylor is accused of planning, instigating and ordering war crimes committed in Sierra Leone during his time as president of Liberia.

A verdict in the trial is expected by April.

The Mail and Guardian

Friday, 10 February 2012

International justice for Africa?

JUSTICE RICHARD GOLDSTONE: INTERNATIONAL LAW

The field of international criminal justice is a relatively new one. It has grown rapidly. International criminal law really developed as a result of catastrophes: without the Holocaust and the other crimes of the Nazi leaders there would have been no Nuremberg trials, and similarly with the Japanese leaders and the Tokyo trials. But international criminal law really came into being as a result of the catastrophic wars in the former Yugoslavia in the first half of the 1990s.

The international community had ignored, from a legal point of view, other catastrophes, such as the murder of two million people in Cambodia and the genocide committed by Saddam Hussein against the Kurds in Iraq. Those didn't result in international tribunals but the war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia did. Those events took place in Europe, and the European powers felt that something had to be done.

The United Nations Security Council, to the surprise of international lawyers, decided that it had the power to set up an International Criminal Court (ICC) for the former Yugoslavia, using its powers under the UN Charter.

A few months later, there was a terrible genocide in Rwanda. Rwanda requested an international court to look into this. Had the Rwanda genocide happened before Yugoslavia, there would not have been a criminal tribunal for Rwanda. The European situation gave rise to the precedent and Rwanda came on its back, as it were.

Nuremberg was not an international court. It was a multinational court set up by the victorious powers. But the Nuremberg legacy affected the way international criminal law has developed from the 1990s until the present. Nuremberg resulted in important developments in 1949 Geneva Conventions, which recognised universal jurisdiction -- the idea that some crimes are so terrible that they can be brought before the courts of any country that has jurisdiction to hear universal cases. It resulted in the Genocide Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Conventions of the 1960s and the international convention that declared apartheid a crime against humanity -- though, unfortunately, not a single country used that convention to launch such an investigation. The Torture Convention of 1984 led to General Augusto Pinochet being arrested in London.

Following Yugoslavia and Rwanda, tribunals were set up for East Timor, Sierra Leone, Lebanon and, though it was 20 years later, for Cambodia. These courts got huge attention in the media.

This is something new. There wasn't a law school in the world before the mid-1990s with a course in international criminal justice. Today, most law schools have such courses.

UN tribunals paved way for the ICC

The successes of the UN tribunals led to a movement to set up a permanent ICC. Kofi Annan, then UN secretary general, called a diplomatic conference in The Hague in 1998 and a statute was agreed to setting

up a permanent ICC. The parties in The Hague set a high threshold before the court could begin its work - 60 nations had to ratify what was called the Rome Statute. Optimists thought this would take at least a decade. It took less than four years. In 2002, the 60th ratification was made and today 120 nations have ratified the statute -- nearly two-thirds of the members of the UN General Assembly.

South Africa played a key role in getting the support of the first 60. I know from personal experience that the Nelson Mandela government felt very strongly that the ICC was important. Nine or 10 Southern African countries ratified the statute. South African lawyers and South Africans generally can be proud of the role our government played here.

The difficult country, of course, is the United States. It, like other powerful countries, does not like international courts second-guessing its leaders' decisions. But without the US there would have been no Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Cambodia or Lebanon tribunals. Serbian leader Slobodan Milosovic would not have gone to The Hague without the US threatening to withdraw aid from Serbia.

But the US got cold feet when it came to the ICC. The Pentagon told the Clinton administration and later the Bush administration that if its generals were to be investigated they must be investigated at home. So the US's attitude, and I don't think I'm being unfair, was to say to the rest of the world: "We think this ICC is a great idea -- for you. But leave us out."

The George W Bush administration made it a criminal offence for any US official to assist the court. It passed ridiculous legislation authorising the US Army to rescue any American brought before the court in The Hague -- and you can imagine how popular that was in Europe.

Things began to change when genocide and other war crimes occurred in the Darfur region of Sudan. Colin Powell, then the US secretary of state, said what was happening in Darfur was genocide. Two weeks later the US Congress passed a unanimous resolution agreeing with him.

The UN set up a commission of inquiry, presided over by a former president of the Yugoslavia tribunal, Antonio Cassese. He reported that serious war crimes were being committed -- perhaps not genocide but certainly crimes against humanity. He suggested the Security Council refer the case to the ICC under the Rome Statute. The Bush administration threatened to veto this in the Security Council but it ended up abstaining. A year later, the US agreed to assist the ICC.

I am teaching a course this coming March at Yale, a course I will call "The Political Dimensions of International Criminal Justice". It is all about politics. If you don't understand the politics of international justice, you don't understand international justice.

Politicians are responsible for seeing the ICC succeed. Arrests need to be made but the ICC has no police force or army. It has to rely on governments. And that is a problem.

Cassese said international courts were like a body with no limbs. They had a head and a brain but no arms or legs. The limbs had to come from governments.

The first three cases to come before the ICC were referred by African governments. Cases can only come to the ICC from governments, the Security Council, or by the ICC prosecutor using his or her own powers of investigation.

The first case came from Uganda. President Yoweri Museveni referred to the ICC the so-called Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and its terrible war crimes -- limbs being cut off and children being forced into armies. The second case came from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the third from the Central African Republic. The fourth case, Darfur, came from the Security Council. The fifth was referred by the Côte d'Ivoire government and the sixth, Libya, by the Security Council. In the Libya case, remarkably,

support was unanimous -- the US, Russia, China, all of them, 15 to nothing. The seventh and last case before the court, to do with crimes allegedly committed in Kenya during the recent elections, comes from the ICC prosecutor using his own powers.

What has happened since then? When the LRA people were indicted and arrest warrants issued, African governments found that acceptable. But they got irritated and fearful when a head of state was indicted. The ICC issued a warrant of arrest against President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan and the African Union (AU) became apoplectic.

The AU and some African leaders accuse the ICC of being anti-African. I understand the perception. The ICC is nearly 11 years old and all seven cases before it come from Africa.

It is unfortunate but it is hardly the fault of the court. Only one case (Kenya) was not referred by an African government or the Security Council.

As a strong supporter of the ICC, I will sleep easier when there are cases before it that come from continents other than Africa. And it will happen.

The ICC has demonstrated that international courts can work. Generally speaking, there is acceptance in the international community that the trials before the ICC have been fair.

Compare international criminal law in 1994 to international criminal law in 2012. It is a different animal. Laws have been advanced, interpreted, applied. That has made a huge difference to the whole body of international law.

Most importantly, these courts have withdrawn impunity for war criminals. Before the ICC, war criminals felt they were beyond the law. War criminals are often seen as heroes in their own countries and, if there was no ICC, they would have impunity. It can put a brake on war crimes only if leaders are aware that what they do could end up with them in the dock at the ICC.

That is the challenge, particularly for the reasons I've mentioned, for African countries. Fortunately, South Africa has been a firm supporter of the ICC.

The court's work has been slow. It started its work in 2002 and the first judgment in the first trial is about to be given. It has taken a long time.

From the middle of this year, the chief prosecutor of the ICC will be an African -- and a woman. This is important. Fatou Bensouda, a former minister of justice in the Gambia, will take office in June. Hopefully her leadership will make a difference as far as our continent is concerned.

This is an edited version of a lecture given by Justice Goldstone at the University of the Free State on February 2, where he received an honorary degree. Goldstone served in the Constitutional Court from 1995 to 2006 and was the chief prosecutor in the UN's Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals.

The Daily Star

Saturday, 11 February 2012

STL to mull claims of 73 other Hariri blast victims

BEIRUT: The pre-trial judge of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon will begin reviewing the applications of 73 people who claim to have suffered physical, material or mental harm as a result of the 2005 attack that killed former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 others, the U.N.-backed court announced Friday.

The STL's Victims' Participation Unit forwarded the applications to Judge Daniel Fransen who will decide whether the individuals meet the necessary criteria. If their application is confirmed, victims may be party to the trial proceedings through counsel and will be entitled to the same procedural rights as the prosecution and the defense, such as allowing them to call witnesses, submit evidence, question the accused, as well as file motions and briefs. Victims may not seek compensation at the tribunal, but once the case is over they are free to pursue their claims through national courts on the basis of the court's judgment.

Read more: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2012/Feb-11/162893-stl-to-mull-claims-of-73-other-hariri-blast-victims.ashx#ixzz1mGHmwwBL>

(The Daily Star :: Lebanon News :: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb>)