

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



Flashback to 2003: Construction of the SCSL courthouse

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:

Thursday, 2 February 2012

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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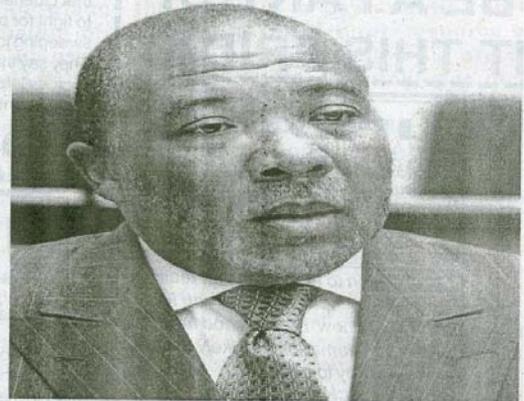
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20 Pages UN Panel Report



Clears Charles Taylor

LAWYERS SEEK TO REOPEN CASE

*By Mike Corder Associated
Press / February 1, 2012*

AMSTERDAM—Lawyers for former Liberian president Charles Taylor have asked a U.N.-backed war crimes court for permission to reopen their defense case, saying a recently published Security Council report could help clear him of charges he sent fighters to commit atrocities in Sierra Leone's civil war.

In the written request filed Tuesday and released Wednesday by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Taylor's lawyers seek to introduce into evidence about 20 pages of a U.N. panel of experts report on Liberia that discusses the activities of mercenaries.

Taylor's lawyers argued the report supports their claim that Liberian fighters crossed into neighboring countries to fight for personal gain "rather than in furtherance of a sweeping joint criminal enterprise" led by Taylor.

They say the report shows that Liberian fighters were able to cross into Sierra Leone "without being under the direction or control of Mr. Taylor and without the implicit ap-

proval of the government of Liberia."

The written filing said that admitting the pages of the report into evidence would not unduly delay the case.

Taylor's three-year trial ended early last year and judges are expected to deliver their verdicts in coming weeks.

He pleaded innocent to 11 charges including murder, torture and using child soldiers. Prosecutors allege he armed and supported rebels notorious for hacking off the limbs of their enemies in Sierra Leone's brutal 1991-2002 civil war.

Prosecutors say from his seat of power in the Liberian capital, Monrovia, Taylor backed Sierra Leone's Revolutionary Front in return for "blood diamonds" illegally mined using slave labor.

His trial marked the first time a former African head of state had appeared before an international war crimes tribunal.

The court did not react to the filing. Judges last month rejected a similar application by Taylor's lawyers to admit into evidence two cables published by anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks.

Charles Taylor Appeals to reopen defense case

1st February 2012

Attorneys for Charles Taylor have appealed to the war crimes court for permission to reopen their defense case, saying a recently published Security Council report could help clear him of charges he sent fighters to commit atrocities in Sierra Leone's civil war.

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Sierra Express (Online)

Friday, 3 February 2012

Mr. Idiot: Ahead of Elections 2012

By: Ibrahim Samura - SEM.

Forgetfulness, as preached to the Idiot, amounts to reckless stupidity.

It is so because he who forgets has no memory.

Just as political parties overindulge into brutal activities, so has the Idiot intensified his stance on exposing wrongs of violators.

Down to memory lane anyway! All throughout 2011, elections held came out with violence. Not one was reported peaceful.

And it is as a result of this that the Idiot has resolved to launch a campaign for the 'closing down of political violence' at elections once and for all.

He will surely not give blind eye to it at all.

Just when it was told that there was reported violence during the bi-elections in ward 369, the Idiot was left without option but say to himself: 'Sierra Leone is heading for doom.'

His message is that all must come together and think peace not violence.

For he (Mr. Idiot) was thought how to warn first, and act later.

'No to violence' he says. But the stubborn ones will squarely be dealt with.

Tell it to all that the Idiot has set the stage for peace; and if anyone dare go against his avowed venture, he will surely not let him/her walk free street of this country.

He has resolved to caning violators/ perpetrators of political violence.

But for the politicians, he has asked the Special Court to prosecute all found overindulging into inhuman conducts.

His thoughts are that the politicians must be the true arbiters of peace.

The time is near, and all must come together for the goodness of all.

It sounds too strange hearing that the politicians have had the habits of paying youths to attack opponent party supporters.

Those days are gone; 2012 is singularly a different case.

And to all in ward 369, you have been warned; avoid violence.



Tell your boys however that the 2012 election has no room for violence as usually the case.

Was not it reported that a whole member of parliament was accused of inflicting injury on the left hand of an opponent political party member?

Wrong though! This is why the Idiot respectfully asks all relay messages of peace to the politicians, and caution them refrain from violence, or will not be voted for by the Idiots.

Fellow countrymen, it is with regret that the Idiot of a type declares that he will not sit by and see a repeat of Kenya in Sierra Leone.

Thank God the Special Court is here- in Sierra Leone.

Violent politicians shall have to answer to their doings there. All found culpable shall unfailingly be prosecuted.

And surely, the Idiot will be first to take the witness box- no doubt at all.

BBC

Wednesday, 2 February 2012

Lawyers for Charles Taylor want to re-open defence case



Lawyers for the former Liberian President Charles Taylor have asked to re-open the defence case at his war crimes trial.

Mr Taylor's lawyer Courtenay Griffiths told the BBC that a recent UN report into mercenary groups "creates major difficulties for the prosecution".

The trial at the Hague ended in

March 2011, but the judges have yet to deliver their verdict.

Mr Taylor is accused of 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

His trial, at the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, relates to his alleged role in the brutal civil war in Liberia's neighbour, where he is accused of backing rebels responsible for widespread atrocities

In an interview with Focus on Africa on the BBC World Service, Mr Griffiths said that the UN Security Council report "illustrates the central defence," which is that there were many Liberians fighting on both sides for personal gain in the war and they were not under Mr Taylor's control.

Mr Griffiths said the report presented a picture of "fluid groups of unemployed former combatants" who were roaming across the area causing problems - without there being a guiding hand such as Mr Taylor behind them.



Mr Taylor's legal team have asked the court for permission to introduce pages from the report as evidence for his defence.

Courtenay Griffiths denied that Mr Taylor's legal team were stalling in an effort to delay a verdict - and said that it was important for justice that all related evidence was before the court.

There has been no response from the court.

Charles Taylor denies the charges against him.

Journalists for Human Rights Report #15 (Podcast)

Thursday, 2 February 2012

<http://rabble.ca/podcasts/shows/journalists-human-rights/2012/02/jhr-rights-report-15-international-criminal-court-af>

-SNIP-

Back to [Mo Amara] now, porting on the legal proceedings against Africa's first head of state to be tried at The Hague: Liberia's Charles Taylor.

TAYLOR: I solemnly declare...

CMS: That I will speak the truth...

TAYLOR: That I will speak the truth...

CMS: The whole truth...

TAYLOR: The whole truth...

CMS: And nothing but the truth.

TAYLOR: And nothing but the truth.

COURTENAY GRIFFITHS: Now Mr. Taylor, as you're aware, you are charged on an indictment containing 11 counts, which alleges that you are everything from a terrorist to a rapist. What do you say about that?

TAYLOR: I'm none of those, have never been, and will never be, whether they think so or not. I am a father of 14 children, grandchildren, with love for humanity, have fought all my life to do what I thought was right in the interests of justice and fair play.

VOICE: Charles Taylor is in some way, I think, you know, when you keep doing evil things, at the end of the day evil comes and haunts you. That is exactly what happened to Charles Taylor. Charles Taylor thought he was untouchable. He thought he was an island of his own, and no man is an island – you can't live by yourself and think you are going to go out and walk free and no one touches you. That's the perception Charles Taylor had in the '80s and in the '90s up to the time the civil war started in Sierra Leone. But in regards to what he is going through right now, but for the very fact that he was transferred from Africa to – the International Criminal Court decided to transfer the case from Sierra Leone – that in itself was a big blow to him, because what the European countries are doing is that they are telling those warlords in some way that they have no chance to escape, and that's exactly what's happening to Charles Taylor, that's what's happening to Lauren Gbagbo of Ivory Coast, and that's probably what's going to happen with the former son of Jomo Kenyatta, you know, and I think this is justice at it's best, because if you sacrifice the lives of hundreds of thousands of people at the expense of political power, what Charles Taylor did was a complete violation of international law. He brought civil war to Sierra Leone, and Sierra Leone had nothing to do with the conflict in Liberia. And he spearheaded conflicts in the whole West African sub-region, the ECOWAS, and at the end of the day, he used the diamonds, the natural resources from Sierra Leone and Liberia and Guinea and Ivory Coast to buy more arms to fight more rebellions. So how can you justify this to me, that you are not responsible? I was a living witness: I saw the RUF, Revolutionary United Front rebels, attacking civilians, villagers, and robbing them of the little money they had, the little food they had, the little clothing they had. So at the end of the day, you're not going to sit there in The Hague with one of the world's best defence lawyers and try to convince the world that you're going to walk out free. It's wrong – Charles Taylor is guilty. He knows what he did and he knew what he was getting in, and that is the reason why he's now paying the price, and I think he absolutely deserves to go to jail.

GRIFFITHS: Did you ever order the trademark atrocity of the Sierra Leonean conflict, amputations?

TAYLOR: It's impossible for that to have ever been ordered by me. What we heard that people were getting killed, women were getting raped, and different things, and we couldn't understand it. I could not understand it, because these were things that we did not tolerate in Liberia...There's been no evidence before these judges...

That was JHR correspondent [Mo Amara?] on former Liberian President Charles Taylor and his case at the International Criminal Court.

-SNIP-

The Associated Press
Wednesday, 1 February 2012

Charles Taylor lawyers seek to reopen defense case

By Mike Corder

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