

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



Lumley Beach

**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, 20 July 2012

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

Friday, 20 July 2012

# Liberia debates war crimes court



idea taking a cue from former warlord and now lawmaker, Prince Yormie Johnson.

Jewel Howard Taylor says Liberia is

not prepared for such a court because the country was coming out of a war and Liberians were

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There is a fevered debate in Liberia over whether or not the country should set up a war crimes court to try those involved in the civil war that lasted over 15 years. There are two separate bills before the House of Representatives backing the call with

the country's human rights coalition and a former minister and Solicitor General Taiwon Gongloe among those at the forefront.

However, Bong County Senator and wife of Charles Taylor, has waded in the debate totally kicking against the

## Liberia debates war crimes court

### From front page

gathering hopes and aspirations to move on with their life.

The wife of the war criminal said that any attempt to establish a war crimes court in the country might derail the peace that many had spent millions of dollars to bring about.

She said the best thing that Liberians needed was job creation to be able to improve their livelihood.

"My position is clear, I am not supporting the culture of impunity, but a war crimes court at this time is not healthy for [our] democracy. We

may start the process in the next 20 years by [which time], we will have a stronger economy, mature democracy and mature society," she said in an interview.

Senator Taylor is the second member of the Liberian Senate to oppose calls for the establishment of war crimes court.

Nimba County Senator Prince Johnson recently opposed the call vehemently.

Charles Taylor was convicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Sierra Leone.

# 3, 721 Cholera Cases, 62 dead' in four Districts

## *...Health Ministry worried*

BY ABU BAKARR KARGBO

Officials in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation are currently thinking about possible strategies that will bring to halt the frequent deaths of Sierra Leoneans in four districts, namely Kambia, Port Loko, Pujehun and the Western Area.

A cholera epidemic in the four Districts has claimed the lives of 62 people as at Tuesday 17th July 2012. Kambia District records the highest number of deaths at 26 whilst Port Loko, Pujehun and the Western Area have 21, 9 and 6 respectively.

The epidemic has now spread to the city Freetown with two hundred and seventy four reported cases since the outbreak. Port Loko district is reported to have recorded the highest number of cases with a total of one thousand nine hundred nineteen people affected by the recent outbreak. This is followed by Kambia district with nine hundred twenty four reported cases.

Report reaching this press states that the latest outbreak has become a course for concern for especially the Health Ministry, which is fighting tooth and nail to map up prevention education and strategies to prevent further cases.

Figures released by the Ministry also shows that a total of one thousand nine hundred sixty children under the ages of five have been affected superseding adult cases recorded at one thousand seven hundred sixty one cases in all districts.

More cases of under-fives have been reported from Port Loko making the

situation worrisome. Chlorine according to the Ministry of health has been dispatched to provincial districts with increased surveillance along the area. Centers referred to as blue flag have been created to treat cases of Cholera in all affected areas as part of urgent measures put in place to treat the disease.

However, a medical team with support from the World Health Organization has also been dispatched to the area to collect samples especially water samples, as most of the areas affected depend on streams and water wells for domestic purposes except for the city Freetown that enjoys pipe born water.

Water sources in all affected areas are now undergoing treatment so as to curtail the disease.



It can be recalled in March this year a total of 34 people were reported dead as a result of cholera disease, with over 2,000 cases reported in three districts around the country.

Officials say the districts affected are Kambia, Port Loko and Pujehun and that measures were put in place to contain the spread of the epidemic.

Cholera outbreak was first discovered in Yele Boy'a, a small Island in Kambia district on Sierra Leone's border with Guinea, while more outbreaks were later reported in two other districts.

Cholera is said to be a severe disease which primarily affects the intestinal tract and it is caused by the pathogenic bacteria.

It causes weakness, fatigue, rapid pulse, excessive thirst, glassy and or sunken eyes, lack of tears, low urine output, vomiting, and diarrhea. Basically, because of the excessive amount of vomiting and diarrhea, the body becomes extremely dehydrated which leads to the other symptoms mentioned and, if not treated soon, also leads to death.

These pathogenic bacterial strains are usually ingested by drinking contaminated water or eating fish not cooked properly, specifically shell fish. The symptoms of cholera include dehydration, vomiting, nausea, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. The treatment of cholera involves antibiotics and re-hydration methods. Although, in most severe cases of cholera, this can lead to death.

To cause the disease in a normal healthy adult, nearly 1 million *Vibrio cholerae* bacterial strains must invade the body by ingestion. But susceptibility to cholera can increase in those who are malnourished, those with decreased gastric acidity (occurs due to heavy antacids usage) or those with poor immune system.

## Agence France-Presse

Thursday, 19 July 2012

### **Liberia's Taylor appeals war crimes conviction**

THE HAGUE — Liberian ex-president Charles Taylor has appealed his conviction and 50-year jail sentence for war crimes in Sierra Leone, the international court handling the case said Thursday.

"Charles Taylor appeals against the judgement and the sentencing judgement... and respectfully requests that (the) appeals chamber reverse all the convictions entered against him," said the defence request made public by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Taylor was found guilty in April of war crimes and crimes against humanity over the 1991-2001 civil war in Sierra Leone, for aiding and abetting "some of the most heinous crimes in human history".

He was the first former head of state to be convicted by an international court since the Nuremberg Nazi trials in 1946.

The former warlord was sentenced in May to 50 years in jail after his conviction on 11 counts for arming Sierra Leone's rebels in return for "blood diamonds" during the war which claimed 120,000 lives.

In the appeal document, his defence said the court had made "systematic errors" in evaluating evidence, and relied on "uncorroborated hearsay evidence as the sole basis for specific incriminating findings of fact".

The prosecution, which had sought an 80-year jail term for Taylor, has also appealed, according to the court which is based outside The Hague.

The court had found that Taylor was paid in diamonds mined in areas under the control of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels, who murdered, raped and mutilated their victims while forcing children to fight and keeping sex slaves.

Taylor, 64, maintained his innocence during the trial which saw a number of high-profile witnesses testify including British supermodel Naomi Campbell.

Liberia's president from 1997 to 2003, Taylor was arrested in March 2006 as he tried to flee from exile in Nigeria, after being forced to quit Liberia three years earlier under international pressure to end a civil war in his own country.

He was transferred to The Hague in 2006 amid fears that trying him in Freetown would pose a security threat. He was due to serve his sentence in a British jail.

Huffington Post  
Thursday, 19 July 2012

### Charles Taylor, Former Liberia President, Appeals War Crimes Conviction



Former Liberian President Charles Taylor looks up to the public gallery as he waits for the start of his sentencing hearing in Leidschendam, near The Hague, Netherlands, Wednesday May 16, 2012. (AP Photo/Evert-Jan Daniels, Pool)

LEIDSCHENDAM, Netherlands -- Former Liberian President Charles Taylor has appealed his war crimes and crimes against humanity convictions and his 50-year sentence, calling them a miscarriage of justice.

Prosecutors on Thursday also appealed the Special Court for Sierra Leone's decision to acquit Taylor on more serious charges and urged judges to increase his sentence to 80 years.

Taylor, 64, became the first former head of state since World War II to be convicted by an international war crimes court when he was found guilty in April of aiding and abetting murderous rebels during Sierra Leone's bloody civil war.

He was cleared of directly ordering atrocities such as massacres and mutilations carried out by the rebels.

## Associated Press

Thursday, 19 July 2012

### **Taylor Appeal Conviction**

LEIDSCHENDAM, Netherlands -- Former Liberian President Charles Taylor has appealed his war crimes and crimes against humanity convictions and his 50-year sentence, calling them a miscarriage of justice.

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## Deutsche Welle

Thursday, 19 July 2012

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor is to fight against his previous conviction as a war criminal in April. At the same time, prosecutors are calling for a tougher sentence against the "blood diamonds" strongman.

The former Liberian president Charles Taylor is appealing his conviction for carrying out war crimes during Sierra Leone's civil war, and is to contest a 50-year jail sentence that was subsequently handed down to him, it emerged on Thursday.

"Charles Taylor respectfully requests that the appeals chamber reverse all the findings of guilt and conviction entered against him and vacate the judgment," stated a request by the defense, released by the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Thursday.

The defense also pointed to "systematic errors" in the analysis of evidence and claimed that the case against Taylor relied on "uncorroborated hearsay evidence as the sole basis for specific incriminating findings of fact."

Prosecutors call for tougher sentence

The development coincided with the prosecution's announcement on Thursday that it would appeal the Special Court's decision to acquit Taylor for more serious charges. They also called on the judiciary to extend his sentence to 80 years in prison.

Taylor was convicted of war crimes as well as crimes against humanity in April for his role in the 1991-2001 civil war that rocked Sierra Leone. The ruling secured Taylor's ignominious insertion in the history books as the first former head of state since World War II to be convicted by an international court.

Taylor was found guilty on 11 counts of arming rebels during the war in exchange for "blood diamonds." But charges that the former strongman had directly ordered massacres failed to stick during his trial.

Taylor was president of Liberia for six years between 1997 and 2003. He went into exile in Nigeria in 2003, after caving into international pressure. He was arrested in March 2006 when he later tried to flee Nigeria and was transferred to the Hague.

## The New Dawn (Liberia)

Friday, 20 July 2012

### Taylor Formally Files appeals

Former President Charles Taylor has formally filed an appeal against his conviction and 50-year jail sentence for war crimes committed in Sierra Leone, the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone said Thursday.

"Charles Taylor appeals against the judgment and the sentencing judgment... and respectfully requests that (the) appeals chamber reverse all the convictions entered against him by the Trial Chamber," the defense request copies of which were forwarded to this paper by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone said.

Taylor was found guilty in April and sentenced to 50-year jail on May 30 for "aiding and abetting" the brutal Sierra Leone civil war from 1991-2001.

He was the first former head of state to be convicted by an international court since the Nuremberg trials in 1946.

Taylor's lawyers cited "systematic errors" made by the court in evaluating evidence, adding that it relied on "uncorroborated hearsay evidence as the sole basis for specific incriminating findings of fact".

"Each error of law alleged in this Notice of Appeal invalidates the decision of the Trial Chamber," the defense Appeal document said, adding "Likewise, each error of fact alleged herein, individually and cumulatively gives rise to a miscarriage of justice."

The defense said in "respect to each error of fact, it is maintained that no reasonable Trier of fact would have render the particular finding of fact beyond reasonable doubt." The defense further noted that each procedural error alleged which affects the fairness of the trail, occasions a miscarriage of justice.

"Unless otherwise specified, the defense argued, "the relief sought in relation to each error of law fact or procedure ...is a reversal of the relevant findings of the Trial Chamber, the quashing of any resulting convictions and where appropriate, vacatur of judgment."

The prosecution, which had sought an 80-year jail term for Taylor, has also appealed, according to the court. The court had found that Taylor was paid in diamonds mined in areas under the control of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels, who murdered, raped and mutilated their victims while forcing children to fight and keeping sex slaves.

Taylor, 64, maintained his innocence during the trial which saw a number of high-profile witnesses testify including British supermodel Naomi Campbell.

## FrontPage Africa (Liberia)

Ongoing: 27 April 2012 – 20 July 2012

### What is Your Impressions About the Guilty Verdict Against Former Liberian President Charles Taylor

The Verdict Was Fair, Transparent and Taylor Got What He Deserves

**735** 59.1% 

The Verdict was pre-ordained from the start, He Really Stood No  
Chance

**310** 24.9% 

This Was Not A Fair Trial At All

**154** 12.4% 

Trial Sets a Bad Precedence for Future African Leaders

**43** 3.5% 

Number of Voters : 1243

First Vote : Friday, 27 April 2012 21:05

Last Vote : Friday, 20 July 2012 06:34

# The New Dawn (Liberia)

Thursday, 19 July 2012

## Sen. Taylor - Rejects War Crimes Court

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor, 19 July 2012

Despite the introduction of two separate bills currently at the House of Representatives, seeking for the establishment of War Crimes Court here, Bong County Senior Senator, Jewel Howard-Taylor, has totally kicked against such call.

Speaking to the New Dawn in her office at the Capitol Building in Monrovia, the ex-wife of war crimes convict former President Charles Taylor said Liberia is not prepared for such exercise on the basis that the country is coming out war, and Liberians are gathering hopes and aspirations to move their lives.

She noted that any attempt to establish a war crimes court here might derail the peace that many have spent millions of dollars for.

She said the best thing that Liberians need is job creation to be able to improve their livelihood.

"Given the level of sufferings our people faced during the terrible days of the wars and even now, I think the best option is not establishing war crimes court, but the creation of employment opportunities where Liberians can fan for themselves; let government provide the basic social needs of its citizens; children should be off the streets and reconciliation among the citizens", she said.

She pointed out that though former President Taylor was found guilty by the Special Court of Sierra Leone for aiding and abetting, the issue of war crimes court will have negative impact for Liberia.

"Though, my husband faced the war crimes court and today he's sentenced; but I think he should be the sacrificial lamb for the entire country", the Bong County Senator noted.

"My position is clear; I am not supporting the culture of impunity, but war crimes court at this time is not healthy for your democracy. We may start the process in the next 20 years by then, we will have stronger economy, mature democracy and mature society," she added.

Senator Taylor is the second member of the Liberian Senate to oppose calls for the establishment of war crimes court. Senator Prince Johnson of Nimba County recently opposed the call vehemently, warning that it could return the country war. Senator Johnson, an ex-warlord, has vowed to do everything to kill the bill.

Recently, the Chairman of the National Traditional Council of Liberia, Chief Zanzan Karwor also expressed opposition to calls for the formation of war crimes court in Liberia.

It can be recalled that Grand Bassa County Representative Byron Brown and Human Rights Activist, Dempster Brown recently presented separate bills to the House of Representatives, seeking for the establishment of a War Crimes Court to prosecute those key actors in the 14-year civil conflict.

**BBC**

Friday, 20 July 2012

## **Hissene Habre: ICJ to rule on Belgium trial for ex-Chad leader**



Chad's ex-dictator Hissene Habre leaves Dakar's courthouse escorted by prison guards 25 November 2005. Hissene Habre has lived in exile in Senegal for more than 20 years

The International Court of Justice is due to rule on whether Senegal should extradite Chad's former President Hissene Habre to face trial in Belgium.

Mr Habre, 69, denies charges of killing and torturing tens of thousands of his opponents from 1982 until he was ousted from power in 1990.

He has been under house arrest since 2005 in Senegal, where he fled after being deposed.

The Hague court could also rule that he should be tried in Senegal instead.

Senegal has previously refused four extradition requests from Belgium.

The ruling of the UN's highest court will be legally binding.  
Friday prayers

Dubbed "Africa's Pinochet", Mr Habre was first indicted in Senegal in 2000 - but the country's courts ruled at the time that he could not be tried there.

His alleged victims then filed complaints under Belgium's universal jurisdiction law, which allows the country's judges to prosecute human rights offences committed anywhere in the world.

Continue reading the main story

In 2005, he was charged by Belgium with crimes against humanity and torture.

There have been years of wrangling in Senegal over what to do about Mr Habre.

The government of former President Abdoulaye Wade changed its position on whether to try him several times, at one stage demanding international funding for a trial.

Last year it unexpectedly announced that it would repatriate Mr Habre to Chad, where a court in 2008 sentenced him to death in absentia for planning to overthrow the government.

This plan was stopped following a plea from the UN, which feared he could be tortured on his return.

The BBC's Mamadou Ba in the Senegalese capital, Dakar, says unlike its predecessor, the government of newly elected President Macky Sall has made it clear it wants Mr Habre to be tried in Senegal.

Legal experts from the African Union are currently in Senegal to discuss how the trial could take place, he says.

Our reporter says Mr Habre and his wife keep a low profile in Dakar and he lives in relative freedom - guarded by two security agents - and is occasionally seen at a mosque for Friday prayers.

A 1992 Truth Commission in Chad accused Mr Habre of being responsible for widespread torture and the death of 40,000 people during his eight-year rule.

He was accused of carrying out a deliberate policy of terror to discourage any opposition.

Survivors of torture say that, among other things, they were subjected to electric shocks, near-asphyxia and "supplice des baguettes", when their head was squeezed between sticks.

Associated Press  
Wednesday, 18 July 2012

### **Mali seeks International Criminal Court investigation into crimes committed during unrest**

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Mali's justice minister on Wednesday asked prosecutors at the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into "grave and massive" crimes committed in the African nation that was plunged into turmoil by a coup this year.

Court's Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said in a statement that Justice Minister Malick Coulibaly had handed her a letter seeking "to determine whether one or more persons should be charged" in violence committed since the beginning of the year.

Mali has been mired in turbulence since a March coup overthrew the democratically elected president.

Bensouda says alleged crimes including killings and rapes, and the conscription of child soldiers have been reported "by several sources."

In his letter to the court seeking an investigation, Coulibaly said the crimes include "grave and massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed particularly in the north of the country."

Mali's government said it is appealing to the Hague-based tribunal to investigate because the country's own courts cannot prosecute the crimes.

After the coup that ousted Mali's democratic government, ethnic Tuareg rebels seeking secession took control of the country's north — an area larger than France — but were driven out in June by Islamists vowing to introduce an ultra-strict interpretation of Islamic law, the Sharia. They are estimated to number about 700 fighters, but exact figures are not available.

The prosecutor said earlier this month that destruction by Islamists of Muslim shrines in the northern town of Timbuktu could be a war crime.

Islamist groups claim the sites violate Islamic law by encouraging people to direct their prayers toward the deceased and not toward God.

Bensouda said she has called on her staff to quickly launch a preliminary investigation to establish whether the court can take on the case.

Mali is the fourth country in Africa to call on the 10-year-old ICC to launch an investigation into atrocities, after Uganda, Congo and Central African Republic.

So far, every one of the court's investigation has involved Africa.

Earlier this month, the court sentenced its first convicted war criminal, Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga, to 14 years imprisonment for conscripting, recruiting and using child soldiers in fighting.