

**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, 22 August 2012

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Daily Observer (Liberia)

Tuesday, 21 August 2012

Trial Judge Slated to Testify for Taylor

Written by Observer Staff



Former President Taylor is appealing against the 50-year sentence Former President

The case of former president Charles Taylor, convicted of war crimes, appears to have taken a new turn with one of the trial justices who disagreed with his conviction expected to testify.

According to a statement posted on the website* of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Judge El Hadji Malik Sow, a Senegalese jurist who served as alternate judge for Trial Chamber II, has agreed to testify in the wake of the defense appeal.

A guilty verdict was handed down against Taylor last May for his role in the Sierra Leonean conflict.

It can be recalled that following the end of Presiding Judge Richard Lussick's reading of the final verdict in Taylor's trial in May, Judge Sow started to speak and people seated in the public gallery heard a few words before the microphones went off.

According to the statement, alternate Judge Sow began to present his dissenting position but as he did, the three presiding judges stood up and left the courtroom in an apparent protest of Judge Sow's action.

"I disagree with the findings and conclusions of the other Judges, because for me, under any mode of liability, under any accepted standard of proof, the guilt of the accused from the evidence provided in this trial is not proved beyond reasonable doubt by the Prosecution.

"My only worry is that the whole system is not consistent with all the principles we know and love, and the system is not consistent with all the values of international criminal justice," Judge Sow declared.

It is based on statements originating from Justice Sow that Taylor's defense team has decided to include the alternative judge in their appeal proceeding.

The defense counsel has until November 9, 2012 to complete their appeal to the trial chambers.

In their appeal document dated August 17, 2012, Taylor's defense council said that there was a need to proffer other evidence in their appeal motion.

"The defense intends to call as witness on appeal, former Special Court Justice El Hadji Malik Sow. He is expected to testify on his statement that there were "no deliberations" as is alleged in Ground of Appeal 36 of the notice of Appeal, including his presence (or lack thereof) at any purported deliberations amongst the justices of Trial Chamber II.

"The defense inquiry through justice Sow will be limited to establishing the fact of their being no deliberations as alleged in Ground of Appeal, and will not extend to the substance or any discussion between Justices which might arguably be viewed as part of a purported deliberative process," the appeal document revealed.

In furtherance, Justice Sow will also testify and expand upon his statement, in respect of Ground of Appeal 37, "that the whole system is not consistent with all the values of international criminal justice," according to the appeal.

Taylor and his team also want the Justice to further explain on an email of 11 May 2012 that he wrote to all justices of the Special Court (except Justice Julia Sebutinde), copying lead defense intends to prosecution counsel.

According to the document, the defense intends to present evidence relating to the physical presence of the Trial Chamber II within the courthouse premises between the date of the conclusion of the last hearing before Trial Chamber II in March 2011 and the date on which the judgment was orally rendered in April 2012.

Accordingly, the Trial Chamber has not responded to the defense appeal.

[*The document is not posted on the Special Court's website. It was emailed to the newspaper by the Defence.]

The New Dawn (Liberia)

Wednesday, 22 August 2012

Court Gives Taylor Deadline

Othello B. Garblah



The UN backed special court for Sierra Leone has given ex-President Charles Taylor October 1, 2012 as the deadline to file his submission months after his lawyers filed a notice of appeal. Similar deadline has been awarded the prosecution to file its returns.

Mr. Taylor was sentenced to 50 years in prison early this year for aiding and abetting the Sierra Leone's civil war. His lawyers have since filed a notice of appeal and have twice requested an extension of time to complete preparation. Prosecution has also requested additional but not in the same number as the defense has requested.

The Court on Monday August 21 granted both the defense and prosecution an additional 21-day extension to file their submissions after an earlier request for 41 days were granted. Both parties have been granted extensions in the amount of 108 days, thereby allowing them 162 days for the filing of all appeal submissions.

In its ruling, the Special Court Appeal Judges indicated that they considered the defense request for additional time to that already granted as "necessary to prevent injustice," suggesting it (defense) will not be able to complete preparation of its Appellant's Submission by September 10, 2012.

The court agrees that the defense admission that the earlier extensions granted were not enough to complete preparations to file its submission "goes to the fair trial rights of the Appellant, who is entitled to competent assistance of counsel in the preparation of his appeal."

The requests the court said were in line with its rules but stressed that the deadline for filing of the submissions are adjusted to reflect the 21 day extension.