

**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:**

Tuesday, 4 September 2012

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

Tuesday, 4 September 2012

# "End Death Penalty"

## -Amnesty Urges

The Acting Director of Amnesty International in Sierra Leone, Mr. Solomon Sogbandi, says the group is working to make sure the Government of Sierra Leone abolishes the death penalty in the country. "So far, the government has put a moratorium on executions and that is a step in the right direction," Mr. Sogbandi says. "To us, the death penalty is unconstitutional and a violation to the right to life, as it says in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

However, recent news reports that executions were held in neighboring Gambia last week have raised his concerns about what that may mean for Sierra Leone. The Gambia outlawed capital punishment decades ago, but President Yahya Jammeh re-instated the death penalty in 1995.

"Today it is happening in The Gambia, tomorrow it could be Sierra Leone," Sogbandi said. "You can't tell because it was initially abolished, but reintroduced with Jammeh coming to power so we can't tell. Now we have government saying it does support the issue, or is in favour, but if we have another that may not support it, it then becomes difficult for Sierra Leoneans." Amnesty is not the only organization concerned. City of Rest is a Freetown-based mental health organization that focuses specifically on care for youth and adults.

The Project Coordinator, Mr. Joshua Duncan, estimates at least half of the prisoners in the country may be suffering from mental illness. He says providing better mental health services would be more effective at reducing crime than having capital punishment. Mr. Duncan also recommends more education for those working in the mental health field.

"And also include in training courses of nurses certain aspects well enough to cater to those suffering from mental illness, so we'll be able to attend to them," said Mr. Duncan. He acknowledges with

only one psychiatrist in the entire country, The Gambia has a long way to go in that regard. But the public can also play a role. Mr. Duncan says there is still a stigmatization towards mental health and that also needs to change.

"You might be a victim one day, so let's not neglect those who have been challenged with mental health," he added. "Let's put our resources together so as to be able to help them and help our country." The government says it is doing its part. The Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Franklyn Kargbo, says that after the country's elections on November 17, the government will abolish the death penalty.

"First of all you will notice no executions have taken place since Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma took up reins of government," Kargbo noted. "Secondly, in 2009, 2010 he [commuted] all death sentences to life imprisonment. It is now government policy that the death sentence now operates as life imprisonment... [We are taking these measures] until such time as we can amend the constitution and laws so [the] death penalty can be taken off our books." But Amnesty's Mr. Sogbandi worries that if the All People's Congress (APC) Party is not voted back in, that could change.

And so during the first week of September he is going around to all the political party leaders asking them to sign an agreement with Amnesty stating that they will abolish the death penalty if elected.

"They are going to sign what we call ballot paper, a paper that will tell us they are committed to key human rights issues," Mr. Sogbandi said. "After the elections, we are going back to say you were committed to A, B, C, and D, so the death penalty is one of those issues we want people to be committed to." Mr. Sogbandi notes several African countries have recently taken measures to abolish the death penalty, including Benin and Togo. He hopes Sierra Leone is another country that follows through.

Isleofmann.com

Monday, 3 September 2012

## Liberia sanctions updated

By: *Manx Radio*



The Treasury has released details of changes to the Island's sanctions regime against people connected to former Liberian president Charles Taylor.

Taylor, who resigned as president in 2003, was jailed for 50 years in April for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Twelve individuals have been removed from a UN watchlist – and the Treasury says their funds and resources can now be unfrozen.

They include Taylors wife and ex-wife.

You can find out more details on the government's website, [gov.im](http://gov.im)

## The Observer Today (New York)

Sunday, 2 September 2012

### **Robert H. Jackson Center announces appointment of new president and CEO**

JAMESTOWN - The Robert H. Jackson Center has announced the appointment of its new President and Chief Executive Officer, James C. Johnson.

"Since co-founding the Robert H. Jackson Center in 2001, it's been a privilege for me to watch the center evolve from its humble beginnings to its current status as a global educational resource," said founder and board member Greg Peterson. "It was important to us that the next leader of the Jackson Center shares the values and vision that helped us get to where we are today. James C. Johnson is that leader, with the experience and mindset necessary to build on our successes of the past 11 years."

Johnson, who has relocated to the area with his wife, Pam, most recently served as the Chief of Prosecutions for the Special Court of Sierra Leone. A distinguished attorney and retired U.S. military officer, he previously served as a professor at the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's School, as legal adviser to the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and in various operational assignments in the U.S. Army. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska.



*James C. Johnson*

"It's critical that we make smart strategic decisions to ensure the Jackson Center's growth and future success," said Board Chairman David M. Crane. "This is a giant step forward in our plans to institutionalize the Jackson Center. Jim Johnson is an experienced leader at all levels, with specific expertise in strategic vision, stakeholder communications, and planning."

"I could not be more honored and excited to begin this new chapter at the Robert H. Jackson Center. I have watched from a distance as the Center has matured and developed so impressively from its origins, yet there are new frontiers to explore while keeping the core focus on the center's educational mission and promoting the Jackson Legacy," Johnson said. "It's a privilege to lead the center as we explore new initiatives and partnerships that will keep moving the center's mission forward."

The Robert H. Jackson Center was established to advance the legacy of Justice Jackson through education, exhibits and pursuing the relevance of his ideas for current and future generations. For information about the center or its upcoming events, visit the website at [www.roberthjackson.org](http://www.roberthjackson.org) or phone 483-6646.