

**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, 5 September 2012

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

Tuesday, 4 September 2012

White House Appoints 2012-2013 Class Of White House Fellows

Washington, DC - Today, the President's Commission on White House Fellowships announced the appointment of the 2012-2013 Class of White House Fellows. The Fellows come from diverse backgrounds, varied professions, and have all shown a strong commitment to public service and leadership. The 2012-2013 Class of Fellows and their biographies are included:

The White House Fellows Program was created in 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson to give promising American leaders "first hand, high-level experience with the workings of the Federal government, and to increase their sense of participation in national affairs." This unique opportunity to work within our nation's government is designed to encourage active citizenship and a lifelong commitment to service. The Fellows also take part in an education program designed to broaden their knowledge of leadership, policy formulation, and current affairs. Community service is another essential element of the program, and Fellows participate in service projects throughout the year in the Washington, DC area.

Selection as a White House Fellow is highly competitive and based on a record of professional achievement, evidence of leadership potential, and a proven commitment to public service. Each Fellow must possess the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute meaningfully at senior levels in the Federal government. Throughout its history, the program has fostered leaders in many fields, including leaders in government, business, media, medicine, education, diplomacy and the military. Additional information about the White House Fellows program is available at www.whitehouse.gov/fellows.

-SNIP-

Mark Hanis, Plantation, FL, is the co-founder and board member of United to End Genocide which empowers all sectors (public, private, citizen) to prevent and stop mass atrocities. As the founding President for over six years, Mark transitioned UEG from a student group into a multimillion dollar non-profit whose impact included establishing over one thousand student chapters, playing key roles in passing state and federal legislation, and acquiring and merging other organizations in the same sector. He is currently co-founding an organization to address the unnecessary deaths due to a shortage of transplantable organs. Mark graduated from Swarthmore College with a degree in Political Science and a minor in Public Policy. **In 2003, Mark worked for the Office of the Prosecutor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.** He is the grandchild of four Holocaust survivors and was raised in Quito, Ecuador. Mark has been awarded several fellowships for social entrepreneurship, including Ashoka, Echoing Green, Draper Richards Kaplan, and Hunt Alternatives Prime Movers. Mark was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum. Mark serves on the Board of Stakeholders of the University of Pacific's Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship, and is an advisory board member of Generation Citizen.

The New Dawn (Liberia)

Tuesday, 4 September 2012

There is Still More to Do in Support of Liberia's Peace"- UN Envoy

“Much has been accomplished, but there is still more for the UN and its partners to do in support of Liberia's peace, security and development.

Building and consolidating peace has never been the responsibility of one group alone; together with the Liberian people and the Government of Liberia, we have helped bring peace and stability.”

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Ms Karin Landgren, made these remarks on Friday August 31, 2012 when she awarded 58 military observers and staff officers for their contribution to UNMIL and Liberia's peace.

“UNMIL has embarked on its transition process, a process that will include the handing over of security responsibilities to Liberian authorities. This is a gradual process that requires time and preparation and as it continues, we need to redouble our support to building the capacity of Liberian security agencies.

he U.N. remains fully committed to Liberia's peace, stability and development. We will continue to protect Liberia's security with our Liberian counterparts, until the country stands on its own,” said the SRSG during the medal award ceremony held at UNMIL Headquarters in Monrovia.

“Deployed in various offices at the Force Headquarters and Star Base, you assist the Force Commander in formulating concepts of operation, and playing a major role in their successful execution. You are the link that binds the different branches and sections at Force Headquarters together”, said SRSG Landgren, commending the Staff Officers of UNMIL.

Turning to the Military Observers, the UN Envoy described them as the eyes and ears of the Mission, providing regular assessments that enable the Mission to keep a pulse on security, public order, community disputes and cross-border movements, including in remote and difficult terrain.

“I would especially like to thank our Military Observers for actively participating in joint border meetings with neighboring Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. These have fostered important collaboration and information-sharing with national security agencies.”

The UN Envoy told the peacekeepers, representing 29 different nations, “As unarmed military personnel traveling a land that is not your own, you have demonstrated to the people of Liberia that peaceful dialogue is the way of the future. As some of you prepare to return to your home countries, you are also now Liberia's ambassadors.”

During the ceremony, the SRSG commended the Force Commander, Major General Muhammad Khalid, the Deputy Force Commander, Brigadier General John Kwasi, and the Military Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Hugh Van Roosen, for their leadership of UNMIL's military component.

Washington Times

Tuesday, 4 September 2012

Liberians reluctantly reactivate army



Liberian soldiers travel to the city of Zwedru from their base at a former school to collect supplies. The sight of men armed with AK-47 assault rifles has brought back terrifying memories for many Liberians who endured years of civil conflict. From 1989 to 2003, paramilitary troops dubbed the “Demon Forces” launched a campaign of killing and torture across the country. (Tamasin Ford/Special to The Washington Times)

By Tamasin Ford - Special to The Washington Times

Tuesday, September 4, 2012

MONROVIA, Liberia — Liberia is embarking on its first large-scale army operation since the end of its civil war almost a decade ago, with troops being deployed to the border with Ivory Coast in a mission to root out militants that officials also hope will revamp the military’s image at home.

Liberians are wary of any buildup of their armed forces because the West African country was riven by civil conflict from 1989 to 2003. Under President Charles Taylor, paramilitary troops dubbed the “Demon Forces” launched a campaign of killing and torture across the country.

A U.N.-backed tribunal at The Hague convicted Taylor this year of war crimes for his involvement in clashes in neighboring Sierra Leone.

The U.S. stepped in to help build a new Liberian army after Africa’s first female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, came to power in 2006, but unease about the fighters remains.

“People feel that most of the guys who did cause harm and atrocity in the war times are the same guys within this military,” said Cpl. George S. Greene, one of the first of Liberia’s newly trained army recruits. “All I can do now is to ensure them that this military is a new kind of military. We’ll try to [change] their minds.”

Unrest in Ivory Coast has forced the Liberian government to take military action.

A joint force made up of the army, police and immigration officials has been deployed for Operation Restore Hope, a mission to take control of dense forests that observers say are used by rebel Ivorian fighters as a base to launch attacks on the Ivorian army and civilians seen as loyal to Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara.

Violence erupted in Ivory Coast after Mr. Ouattara was elected president in November 2010. The election results were backed by the United Nations and the African Union but disputed by Mr. Ouattara’s predecessor, Laurent Gbagbo, who refused to cede power. That threw the country into civil war before Mr. Gbagbo was captured by U.N. forces in April 2011.

Mr. Gbagbo faces charges of crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, but his supporters continue to pose a violent challenge to the Ivorian government and have recruited Liberian mercenaries to their cause.

“The border area is particularly volatile because of the large number of pro-Gbagbo fighters that crossed into Liberia, the prevalence of small arms, the combination of land and political conflict, and the porous nature of the border itself,” said Matt Wells, of Human Rights Watch’s Africa division.

According to a Human Rights Watch report in June, the rebel militias have killed at least 40 Ivorian civilians from ethnic groups that largely support Mr. Ouattara during cross-border attacks since July 2011.

The report criticized Liberian authorities for failing “to investigate and prosecute dozens of Liberian and Ivorian nationals who crossed into Liberia after committing war crimes” during the Ivory Coast’s postelection crisis.

After the report was published, seven U.N. peacekeepers from Niger, 10 civilians and one Ivorian soldier were killed in an attack that the Ivorian government blamed on militias and mercenaries crossing the border from Liberia.

Also, at least 12 Ivorian soldiers and one civilian were killed in August attacks targeting the Ivory Coast’s military in the capital, Abidjan.

In response to the Human Rights Watch report, Liberia closed its 420-mile border with Ivory Coast and sent troops to the border regions.

Analysts say Operation Restore Hope is a major test for Liberia.

The sight of men with AK-47 assault rifles slung over their shoulders has, for many Liberians, brought back memories of conflict. Liberia’s security still relies heavily on the presence of nearly 8,000 U.N. peacekeepers, and the idea of Liberians fighting again is a terrifying thought for many.

“It really is the first major test for the Liberian military following the significant investment by the U.S. and others,” said Human Rights Watch’s Mr. Wells. “The [Liberian soldiers] need to put these years of training into practice to ensure the protection of civilians in the border area and to stop fighters who have sought refuge there from further destabilizing the subregion.”

Soldiers say they are determined to “kick the enemy” out of Liberia.

“We are here to make sure they do not operate on our soil,” said Capt. Cephas Gboe, commander of the operation, speaking from a makeshift base at a school close to the Ivory Coast border.

Inside, classrooms have been turned into bedrooms, and desks and chairs are piled high in the playground. Stretchers and medical kits are lined up in the medic room, formerly the school canteen, and the army is in full combat mode.

Operation Restore Hope has achieved some success. Liberian forces have arrested four people in connection with the attack that killed the Nigerien peacekeepers, as well as six gunmen who raided border checkpoints in western Ivory Coast in late August.

Still, there have been reports of low morale, lack of finances and logistical problems within the Liberian forces at the border, and some concern over whether the army is up to the task.

Soldiers say they are trying to live up to their mission.

“We are doing the best with the little we have,” said one soldier, who asked that his name be withheld because he was not authorized to speak to the press.