

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



Ambassador Stephen Rapp met on Friday with members of the Special Court Interactive Forum

**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:**

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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# Decision 2012: RUF Candidate speaks out

*Nominations for presidential and parliamentary candidates started over the weekend with the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), United Democratic Movement (UDM), the United National People's Party (UNPP) and the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF).*

*On Monday it was the turn of the main opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). Politico hopes to be able to speak to all the candidates. But today we begin with the RUF who, for the first time, convened a delegates' conference to elect their presidential candidate. He is Eldred Collins, a former spokesman of the rebel organisation. See page...for full interview.*

**POLITICO:** Mr. Collins you want to tell me why you are running for president of Sierra Leone?

**Collins:** Yes of course! I have so many reasons and also without reasons. It has been bestowed on me by God that I should take my people out of bondage. You can see the present situation in Sierra Leone - the living condition. We came from a crisis - a war. And for the past 15 years we see things are dragging feet and we the R.U.F.P. have an ideology. An ideology which says that power belongs to the people and the wealth of the country belongs to the people and should be utilized and I have seen that there is no utilization of these our blessed mineral resources that should take care of the welfare of the people. In [the areas of] education, health and other minor issues. That is the reason why in the Lome Peace agreement [it is stated that] there should be a commission of strategic mineral resources. A commission that is supposed to control the mineral wealth of the nation, which has not come true. And then we are hungry. The people of Sierra Leone are struggling without survival and struggle without survival is a crime and we feel guilty that we have to use our political will, our democratic will to make sure that the power goes back to the people and the people will control their destiny.

**POLITICO:** When you say you feel guilty, what do you mean?

**Collins:** Guilty of not defending the people.

**POLITICO:** You mean the R.U.F.P.?

**Collins:** All Sierra Leoneans! Meaningful Sierra Leoneans, intellectuals, academics, etc. It is their responsibility to make sure that they create the avenue, the scenario where the welfare of the people should be met.

**POLITICO:** Some people believe that the kind of bondage or poverty you refer to that goes on in Sierra Leone is largely due to the activities of your R.U.F when it was a rebel organisation. What would you say to those people?

**Collins:** Those people do not know the historical background of our country.

**POLITICO:** But they do know that there was a rebel war in Sierra Leone unleashed by the R.U.F which was actually represented by you, and you were yourself a key player in those rebel times?

**Collins:** If there was not a reason for the revolution, or the war the international community and the other people during the peace agreement would not have said that the R.U.F. should be transformed into a political party.



**POLITICO:** That was probably a way to bring back peace, a peace which you and your rebel movement had suffocated.

**Collins:** The people of this country until before the war were suffering without survival. Things were going from bad to worse, even the common Sierra Leonean in the street was saying that in krio "if war nor fet tin nor go bete". And that's been done.

**POLITICO:** Meaning if the country did not go to war things would not improve?

**Collins:** Yes that was the saying of Sierra Leoneans in those days.

**POLITICO:** But probably they believe now that they probably had wished for something which they ought not to have wished for because of the orgy of violence and terror unleashed by R.U.F.

**Collins:** The R.U.F. was not the only fighting force in Sierra Leone, and let me tell you, my brother, things have to change. The people said those things without even knowing the consequences of war and the have now realized what the consequences of war are.

**POLITICO:** Exactly, meaning wanton destruction. And do you feel guilty that the R.U.F. unleashed terror on the people of Sierra Leone - do you personally as Eldred Collins feel guilty?

**Collins:** Those people that caused this war that caused this country to go down the drain in the holes making Sierra Leone to become a dark country within the continent, do they feel guilty that they are the cause of the revolution or revolt of the people? Because this was a purely Sierra Leone issue.

**POLITICO:** Be that it may be, do you feel guilty for being a part of the R.U.F. rebel movement and you yourself were quite known in Sierra Leone for having declared "Operation No Living Thing" - meaning to kill everything that was living. Do you regret the role you played?

**Collins:** You are talking about "Operation No Living Thing", where were you when the Nigerians were bombing and killing people? Where were you when we were pulling out of Freetown when the Nigerians were bombing? That was the reason why we said that we would look for them. We were talking about those that were killing the people of Sierra Leone at that time. But things have changed.

**POLITICO:** Have you changed? You say things have changed, have you changed?

**Collins:** My question is has Sierra Leone changed, because I'm a Sierra Leonean. If Sierra Leone has changed then I will be

changed.

**POLITICO:** What is your answer to that - has Sierra Leone changed?

**Collins:** It is my duty to contribute towards the total changing of the system in Sierra Leone and that is why I am going for the presidency to make sure that we have serenity. We have welfare and the welfare of people of this country should be met by those who represent them. They are not masters of the people - they are servants of the people. I am a servant of the people. I have given up my life in making sure that what belongs to the people gets back to the people.

**POLITICO:** I ask you this again: with the benefit of hindsight, do you regret joining the R.U.F rebel movement and taking part in the orgy that was unleashed on this country and its people. Do you regret that at all?

**Collins:** There are so many revolutions in the world, there are so many wars in the world. I do think that most of these leaders in Iraq, name them so many countries that were destroyed by war, and I'm asking if they have regretted or not? As I told you before, my mission is to make sure that serenity [and] the welfare of the people of this country [are] met and I have taken the onus. You are talking about regret, the government of the day at that particular time, was it a violent government or a peaceful one? Even you the press, there was no press freedom, there was so many things under the one party system you know and now we have made sure that the awareness is now in the minds of the people of this country.

**POLITICO:** You are talking about the government of the 1980s to 1990s that you say led you to take up arms and that was a government led by the APC party. There has been a rumor that you have associated yourself with the APC party which is in government. Is that true?

**Collins:** The APC of the 1980s to 1992 was a one party government that was a composition of all political parties that came together under Siaka Stevens to be a one party system. So there was nothing like multi parties.

**POLITICO:** Are you saying the APC of the day is different in the sense therefore you are comfortable associating with them?

**Collins:** My association is with all political parties because we are preaching political tolerance. It doesn't mean we are allies to any political party. Let me tell you, the RUF is an independent political party and we have ideology behind our cause.

**POLITICO:** So it is not true that you have an affinity with the APC party - the government right now?

**Collins:** They are a party on their own and the RUF is a party on our own.

**POLITICO:** Is it true that the government now is bankrolling your party in any way?

**Collins:** That is not correct! That is wrong! It is misleading. It is done by those who are against the system to make sure that we pursue political tolerance in the country. We are not an ally to any political party and we are warning those people who are spreading those ugly messages of the RUF aligning itself with the APC or any other political party that they have to be very careful with the security of our country. It is not yet time to be pointing fingers at political parties. We do believe that it is time for us to share ideas because at the end of the day this is our country. After election we will all have to come together and build this nation irrespective of party. When election comes we go to our various parties. But the RUF has no alliance with any political party. We are going for the race, we are going for the presidency, we are going for parliament and councils in the coming election. Don't forget we are now completely transformed into a political party. We have just held our national delegates' conference in Kenema, where for the first time we brought the whole of the RUF family together and we will make sure that we are not part and parcel of any

violence in this country. We are now a political party. Anyone who thinks the RUF is going towards violence is making a big mistake. A mistake that he or she would never forget, because we will shun you, we will not talk to you, we will keep out of your way. The idea is let us have a peaceful democratic system in our country where issues would be debated. You give your views your ideas. Sierra Leoneans are now aware. I don't believe that Sierra Leoneans at this time are going for colours. Their minds have changed, therefore let's give them a chance. Whomsoever presents their manifesto let the people hold them to it.

**POLITICO:** Finally when you go around the country particularly those areas hardest hit by the country's civil war - I mean especially like places like Kailahun district where the war started - when you visit those areas and then you see the scars or remains of the civil war, do you say to people you are sorry or the RUF is sorry or do you just ignore those things?

**Collins:** After the Second World War mass infrastructural development started, we believe that it is now time that those areas that were destroyed during the war [be rebuilt]. In fact what type of infrastructure was there before?

**POLITICO:** Whatever there was...

**Collins:** Excuse me, with the wealth we have in this country we do believe that after the war or now we have stability, we have peace, we have political process that is democratic. We will make sure that all areas that were destroyed during the war, and I will be hasty to tell you that it was not only the RUF that fired guns in those areas: You had the ECOMOG that were...bombing those areas. They were not taken to the special court, destroying villages with bombs, you understand? Most of the destruction up there was done by those things. The truth has not come out, the truth will come out about how those areas were destroyed. But now ... [it] is our housing policy that it is the right for a government to have a housing project or housing policy laid out so that at least they will have some estate where you can get people to live and to improve the infrastructure of our colonial towns up country.

**POLITICO:** It is amazing Mr. Collins, if I could ask you again, you don't sound regretful. You have not used the 'R' word to say you are remorseful or regretful for what the RUF did to Sierra Leoneans?

**Collins:** Is it the RUF that fought the war in Sierra Leone?

**POLITICO:** There may have been other groups, [but] do you feel sorry for what you did?

**Collins:** Have you asked them whether they are sorry for coming and shelling their bombs and destroying those villages?

**POLITICO:** Be that as it may, do you as RUF regret at all what you did - your own part of the destruction of Sierra Leone. Do you regret that as Eldred Collins, presidential candidate of the RUF?

**Collins:** The war, no one knows the consequences of war. Those that caused the war did not regret it and the RUF was not the only faction that fought in the country.

**POLITICO:** And you have not regretted it?

**Collins:** Regretting what? Regretting when the people were living in dark days! You are talking about regretting, now the awareness has come into the minds of the people of the country they are aware. Everyone in this country took part in the war including you because you are a Sierra Leonean either for the good or for the worse. So the issue of regretting leads towards the new Sierra Leone that we are about to build as a nation.

**POLITICO:** Mr Collins, thank you very much for your time.

**Collins:** Thank you too.

**NOTE:** This interview was conducted before Eldred Collins appointed a woman as his running-mate.

## Reuters

Monday, 9 October 2012

### **Detective arrested over bribery charge in Charles Taylor trial**

FREETOWN (Reuters) - Police in Sierra Leone have arrested an investigator employed by former Liberian President Charles Taylor's defense team on charges he attempted to bribe prosecution witnesses to recant their testimony during Taylor's war crimes trial.

A United Nations-backed court in April convicted Taylor of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role supporting rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war, a conflict that killed more than 50,000 people. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison but is appealing his conviction.

Prince Taylor, who is not related to the former president, was arrested in the town of Bo on Saturday on an arrest warrant issued by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"Four counts ... allege that Prince Taylor offered a bribe to a witness to recant testimony given before the court and four counts ... allege that he otherwise interfered with a witness to recant testimony," a statement issued by the court on Saturday read.

Prince Taylor's initial arraignment was due to take place in the capital Freetown on Monday. His lawyer declined to comment on the charges.

Charles Taylor's conviction was the first time a head of state has been found guilty by an international tribunal since the Nazi trials at Nuremberg following the end of World War Two.

The court ruled that Taylor had received "blood diamonds" - as the stones from Sierra Leone's conflict zones were known - in exchange for providing arms and ammunition to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels.

The rebels often used drugged up child soldiers they had abducted from their families to commit atrocities including rape, enslavement, beheading, disembowelment and maiming.

The U.N.-backed court was established to try those deemed to bear "greatest responsibility" for crimes committed in the West African state's civil war, which ended in 2002.

(Reporting by Simon Akam; Editing by Joe Bavier and Andrew Osborn)

## Capital FM (Kenya)

Sunday, 6 October 2012

### **International Criminal Court Faces Funding Crisis**

By Judie Kaberia

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has admitted that the court is facing serious funding challenges which have politically affected the operations of the court.

During a four day International Justice Conference that started on Tuesday in Nuremberg, Germany, ICC President Judge Sang-Hyung Song complained that the under funding challenges have also affected the court's independence, which should solely be controlled by the Rome Statute.

Citing Sudan's referral by the UN Security Council, Song said it was also important for the court to redefine its boundaries with such partners to ensure the court doesn't raise any questions especially when dealing with countries that are not members of the court.

The President also expressed concerns over non cooperation by member states especially in making arrests where warrants have been issued and also freezing assets as requested by the court.

He used the opportunity to urge the United States, India, China, Russia and Indonesia to become members of the court to strengthen its work of looking for justice where member countries have failed to do so.

He further pointed that the court was also grappling with managing high expectations especially to the victims of situations before the ICC.

Judge Hans Peter Kaul commonly identified as the dissenting judge in the Kenyan cases was recognised for his committed role in international justice especially during the 1990s when the ICC was established.

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The conference organised by Wayamo Communication Foundation and Academy of Nuremberg Principles hosted the conference under the theme through the Lens of Nuremberg to discuss the progress of the court in its tenth anniversary.

Kenya's Attorney General Githu Muigai was among the speakers, who included among others ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

Kenya became a subject of the ICC when the court moved to investigate the 2008 post election violence. Four Kenyans - William Ruto, Joshua arap Sang, Amb. Francis Muthaura and Uhuru Kenyatta are expected to begin their trials at the Hague based court in April next year.

They are accused of crimes against humanity following the deaths of over 1,000 people and displacement of about 650,000 others.