

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



Ariel view of Aberdeen Bridge

**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.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
Martin Royston-Wright  
Ext 7217

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# Liberia's Charles Taylor 'wants presidential pension'

The letter purportedly from Taylor says the withholding of his presidential pension is a "mammoth injustice". Last May, a UN-backed court sentenced him to 50 years in prison on 11 counts of war crimes. He became the first former head of state to be convicted on such charges by an international court since the Nuremberg trials of Nazis after World War II. Taylor, who is in jail at The Hague, is appealing against the judgement by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone. It ruled that as Liberia's president, he aided and abetted Sierra Leone's rebels during the 1991-2002 civil war. Family's needs The BBC's Jonathan Paye-Layle reports from the capital, Monrovia, that the signature on the letter very much looks like that of Taylor. However, the letter contains some simple spelling errors, such as "principal" for principle, "cease" for seize and "giving" for given, he says.

"May I, with respect, request in this formal manner the intervention of this august body in bringing an end to this mammoth injustice "Charles Taylor Liberia's, ex-leader This has raised questions about whether Taylor personally wrote the letter, our correspondent adds. However, Taylor's brother-in-law Arthur Saye told our reporter that the ex-president did write the letter. The letter also calls for the government to give accommodation and diplomatic passports to Taylor's wife Victoria and his two daughters. "The fact is that I have not received my entitlement as set out under the law as a former president of Liberia since I resigned the office on August 11, 2003," the letter to the senate reads. "May I, with respect, request in this formal manner the inter-

vention of this august body in bringing an end to this mammoth injustice and cause my law annuities to be made available to me." Taylor is also quoted in the letter as saying that he is entitled to consular access and diplomatic services at The Hague, but he has been "denied that right". Our correspondent says, Liberian law states that a former president who has "honourably retired to private life and who is not in any way gainfully employed by government" would receive a pension equal to half the salary of the incumbent president.

Taylor timeline

- o 1989: Launches rebellion in Liberia
  - o 1991: RUF rebellion starts in Sierra Leone
  - o 1997: Elected president after a 1995 peace deal
  - o 1999: Liberia's Lurd rebels start an insurrection to oust Taylor
  - o June 2003: Arrest warrant issued; two months later he steps down and goes into exile to Nigeria
  - o March 2006: Arrested after a failed escape bid and sent to Sierra Leone
  - o June 2007: His trial opens - hosted in The Hague for security reasons
  - o April 2012: Convicted of aiding and abetting the commission of war crimes
  - o May 2012: Sentenced to 50 years in jail
  - o June 2012: His lawyers say he will appeal against his conviction
- Taylor was forced into exile in Nigeria in 2003 after the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (Lurd) rebel



discussed by MPs next week

REUTERS

movement laid siege to Monrovia. His private villa on the outskirts of the city is in a poor state and his once prestigious mansion in his hometown of Arthington, some 40km (25 miles) west of Monrovia, is in ruins and covered by overgrown vegetation, our correspondent says.

The letter also told legislators of the "sacred and overriding" principle that "justice must not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done", our reporter adds. The letter was read out during a plenary session of the upper house on Tuesday, and would be discussed by

MPs next week, Mr Singben said.

Senator Lahai Lansanah, who is a member of the governing United Party (UP), said: "Taylor's request about retirement benefits should be given due consideration because he served this country as president." Taylor was arrested in 2006, while trying to flee Nigeria.

He apparently feared that the Nigerian government would bow to pressure from the US to hand him over to the UN-backed court to stand trial.

The court was set up in 2002 to try those who bore the greatest responsibility for the war in Sierra Leone in which some 50,000 people were killed.

During the appeals process, Taylor will remain in The Hague.

## The New Dawn (Liberia)

Friday, 18 January 2013

### **Liberian Institutions Are Weak - Special Court**

The United Nations backed-Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has said the capacities of Liberian institutions are weak and unable to meet the needs of its citizenry.

The court made this known in its findings dubbed: "Making Justice Count, Assessing the Impact and Legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and Liberia." The study was conducted in league with Liberian NGOs Network (LINNK) in June and July, 2012.

The exercise followed immediately after the sentencing of former President Charles Taylor, with the aim of getting an overall picture of the impact and legacy of the Court in the two countries.

The hybrid-tribunal noted that while having improved since 2003, there remains an insidious problem that obstructs the country's growth and the government's ability to govern effectively.

"The capacities of Liberian state institutions still remains weak and unable to meet the needs of Liberians despite having improved since 2003," the court said in its research results.

It said the 2012 UNSC report on Liberia states that the development of the army is "constrained by limited opportunities and resources to conduct practice operations as needed to sustain training and build skills."

The report furthered that the over 4, 200-strong national police force probably needs to be expanded to 8, 000, but improving the very poor conditions of service for the force is even more urgent.

Speaking of the judiciary here, the survey indicated that it is faced with significant inadequacies, including lack of qualified personnel, insufficient funding and corruption.

The tribunal said since the end of the war, there has been significant reform of the police, army and judiciary in Sierra Leone and Liberia, including training, restructuring and the promotion of discipline.

But, on the contrast, Sierra Leone is ahead of Liberia, noting that Sierra Leone's activities have focused on governance reforms, such as judicial reform, parliamentary assistance and decentralization.

"Since the Sierra Leone TRC report was issued in October 2004, there has been significant reform of the judiciary. Court buildings were erected to cope with demand, a code of conduct for judicial officers was adopted and legislation dealing with legal aid was enacted," the research added.

It said the Liberia's Governance Reform Commission, mandated to establish national framework for legal and political reform, continues to seek greater decentralization of power, regional participation and balancing national and regional interests.

The SCSL indicated that once this process is complete, many Liberians, particularly those in the rural areas, would be able to elect representatives that are more accountable to rural needs, acquire greater access and control over local resources and act as a counterbalance toward political and economic policies mandated from Monrovia.

In 2010, Liberia established the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCRH), as mandated in the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Accra, Ghana.

The INCHR is responsible for implementing recommendations contained in the 2009 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, despite reported inadequacies of that report and the government's response to it; writes T.K.S.

## Human Rights Watch

Friday, 18 January 2013

Press Release

### **Ghana: Ensure Justice for Key Ivorian Suspect**

Provide Full Due Process Rights for Militia Leader Blé Goudé

(Nairobi, January 18, 2013) – Ghanaian authorities should ensure fair, credible justice for an Ivorian militia leader arrested on January 17, 2013, Human Rights Watch said today. The former leader of the Young Patriots militia, Charles Blé Goudé, is accused of serious crimes allegedly committed under his command during Côte d'Ivoire's 2010-2011 violent post-election crisis.

Former President Laurent Gbagbo appointed Blé Goudé as his youth minister in December 2010, formalizing a longstanding relationship between the Young Patriots and Gbagbo's security forces. Blé Goudé fled Côte d'Ivoire to Ghana in April 2011, and has been rumored to move among several West African countries since then. Ivorian authorities issued an arrest warrant against Blé Goudé in mid-2011 for violent crimes and economic crimes during the post-election crisis.

“For almost a decade, militiamen from Blé Goudé's Young Patriots terrorized northern Ivorians and West African immigrants in violence perpetrated on political and ethnic lines, with many victims beaten to death, shot, or burned alive at illicit checkpoints,” said Corinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. “Blé Goudé's arrest is a significant opportunity to continue the process of accountability for victims from one side of the crisis.”

A key issue for Blé Goudé to answer is whether he incited crimes during the post-election period. On February 25, 2011, in a speech broadcast widely on national television and radio, Blé Goudé called on his followers to set up neighborhood roadblocks and “denounce” foreigners – a term the Gbagbo camp often used to signify northern Ivorians and West African immigrants. Human Rights Watch documented a sharp increase in violence by pro-Gbagbo militias, generally along ethnic or religious lines, in the days following Blé Goudé's speech.

It is unclear whether Ghana will seek to prosecute Blé Goudé domestically or extradite him. Before considering extradition proceedings to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghanaian authorities would have to satisfy their responsibilities under the Convention against Torture, and ensure that Blé Goudé would not be subject to torture or inhuman, cruel, or degrading treatment, Human Rights Watch said.

In a report published in November 2012, Human Rights Watch documented widespread inhuman treatment and some cases of torture in military detention sites in Abidjan, following security threats against Côte d'Ivoire in August and September. The UN assistant secretary-general for human rights and the Human Rights Council-appointed independent expert on human rights in Côte d'Ivoire have likewise reported in recent weeks on inhuman treatment and torture in Ivorian detention sites.

“Blé Goudé's arrest shows that Ghanaian authorities are taking steps to ensure the country will not be used as a safe haven from justice,” Dufka said. “They now need to accord Blé Goudé his full due process rights, including ensuring that there is no credible risk of inhuman treatment or torture if they extradite him to Côte d'Ivoire.”

The International Criminal Court (ICC) opened an investigation in October 2011 into serious crimes committed in Côte d'Ivoire. In November 2011, the Ivorian government surrendered Gbagbo to The Hague, where he faces four counts of crimes against humanity. In October 2012, the court unsealed an arrest warrant against the former first lady, Simone Gbagbo, for crimes against humanity, alleging that she

acted as Laurent Gbagbo's "alter ego" in overseeing atrocities in Côte d'Ivoire. She remains in custody in Côte d'Ivoire, where she is being tried for genocide, among other crimes, for acts committed during the post-election crisis. The ICC has yet to publicly issue any other arrest warrants for crimes committed in Côte d'Ivoire, including against anyone from the Ouattara camp.

Since the end of the post-election crisis in May 2011, the Ivorian government has repeatedly promised impartial justice for the grave crimes committed by both pro-Gbagbo forces and pro-Ouattara forces. Civilian and military prosecutors have collectively charged more than 150 individuals with post-election crimes. However, none of those arrested, much less charged, with violent crimes (crimes de sang, in French) come from the pro-Ouattara forces.

"While the arrest of Blé Goudé continues the important steps toward justice for the grave crimes committed by pro-Gbagbo forces, victims on the other side remain without recourse to justice in Côte d'Ivoire or at the ICC," Dufka said. "The one-sided justice for Côte d'Ivoire's post-election violence needs to swiftly change if the Ouattara government is to break from Côte d'Ivoire's dangerous legacy of impunity."

## Daily Monitor (Uganda)

Wednesday, 16 January 2013

### Obama signs law to hunt down Kony

President Obama has signed a law that will see his government offer monetary rewards for information that can lead to arrest of people indicted by international tribunals.

The statement issued by the White House on Tuesday mentions Lord's Resistance Army, Congolese rebels and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), who are accused of committing crimes against humanity.

“We have made it unmistakably clear that the United States is committed to seeing war criminals and other perpetrators of atrocities held accountable for their crimes, and today's legislation can help us achieve that goal,” Mr Obama said.

Previously, the War Crimes Rewards Programme applied to individuals wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and **the Special Court for Sierra Leone.**

The promise of rewards could provide an inducement to LRA commanders and fighters, as well as herders and others who transit within the border areas of the Central African Republic, Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan, to share any information about LRA whereabouts.

The Enough Project researcher, Mr Kasper Agger, said the fight against LRA should be holistic, including offering monetary rewards.

The US government is authorised to spend up to \$25 million and the figure might increase since the programme has been increased.

rkasasira@ug.nationmedia.com