

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



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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

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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New Democrat (Monrovia)

Tuesday, 19 February 2013

Liberia: Taylor's Investigator Sentenced

Prince Taylor, an investigator for the Charles Taylor defense team in the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) was Thursday sentenced to two years on each of four counts of interfering with witnesses who had testified in the Charles Taylor trial, and 30 months for interfering with Eric Senessie, who himself was convicted for interfering with witnesses.

The terms are set to run concurrently, and Prince Taylor will serve a total of 30 months from October 2012, when he was arrested on charges of contempt.

Prince Taylor was convicted on January 25 on five of nine counts of contempt of court for witness tampering.

The SCSL was created in a joint endeavor by the government of Sierra Leone and the UN to provide a forum to try those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law, committed in Sierra Leone.

With the recent conviction of Charles Taylor, the SCSL has largely fulfilled its mission and will take steps to shut down.

Steps have already been taken to facilitate this process. In November 2009, the SCSL handed over its detention facility to the Sierra Leone Prison Service in a monumental step towards the court's resolution.

The month before, eight men judged guilty of war crimes by the court were transferred to Rwanda to serve out their terms.

Although the court is winding down, it is still active. In early October, the SCSL sentenced four men to prison terms ranging from 18 months to 2 years on contempt charges stemming from allegations of witness tampering.

The month before, the court found three members of Sierra Leone's former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) guilty of contempt.

BBC

Tuesday, 19 February 2013

Ex Ivory Coast President Gbagbo appears at ICC

Ivorian ex-President Laurent Gbagbo has appeared at the International Criminal Court to hear whether he could be tried on charges of crimes against humanity.

The hearing at the court in The Hague is expected to last until 28 February.

He faces four charges, including murder and rape, in the wake of Ivory Coast's disputed presidential poll in 2010.

Some 3,000 people were killed in violence after Mr Gbagbo refused to accept defeat in the polls. The 67-year-old insists he is innocent.

'Inadmissible' case

Presiding Judge Silvia Fernandez de Gurmendi on Tuesday opened the confirmation of charges hearing which would decide whether there was enough evidence to try Mr Gbagbo.

The judge stressed that the hearing would not be ruling whether the former president was guilty or innocent.

Mr Gbagbo's defence lawyers argued that he was already under investigation in his own country and that the authorities there must be the ones to try him - not The Hague court.

They urged the judges to "declare this case inadmissible".

The prosecution is expected to begin presenting its arguments shortly.

Mr Gbagbo, a former history professor, sat silently in the courtroom listening to the proceedings. He made no comments.

Outside the court, some 300 supporters of Mr Gbagbo held a rally, demanding his immediate release.

The court earlier decided to hold shorter than usual sessions because of Mr Gbagbo's poor health. The hearings are scheduled to last until 28 February.

The charges against him relate to the violence after the 2010 election when he refused to accept defeat by current Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara.

Mr Gbagbo - who was arrested in Ivory Coast in April 2011 and later extradited to The Hague - accuses former colonial power France of plotting to topple him from power in the world's biggest cocoa producer.

The ICC began operating in 2002 to bring to justice those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in countries that accept its jurisdiction, or when the UN Security Council refers a case to it.

Mr Gbagbo is the first former head of state to go on trial there, although Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia and Liberia's Charles Taylor were tried by special courts in The Hague.

The Independent

Tuesday, 19 February 2013

The war Bangladesh can never forget

The guns fell silent more than 40 years ago, but the scars of Bangladesh's short, bloody struggle for independence still burn to this day

Bangladesh's capital Dhaka is a noisy, exciting city, full of energy and argument. The massive chaos of its constantly stationary traffic is often riven by protests, strikes, marches. These can be on any number of grievances. But this is a country driven by a national agony at its creation which has never been fully addressed. The protest now happening outside the national museum is of an unprecedented nature, and on an unprecedented scale.

Since 5 February, Bangladesh has been transfixed by this ongoing, immense protest. Hundreds of thousands have occupied Shahbagh Square in protest at a verdict passed by the International Crimes Tribunal on war crimes committed during the genocide which preceded the founding of the country in 1971. One of those found guilty, Abdul Kalam Azad, was sentenced to death. Another, however, Abdul Quader Mollah, the assistant secretary general of a Muslim party which collaborated with the genocidaires, the Jamaat-e-Islami, was given life imprisonment. The protests which followed, and are still continuing, are led by intelligent and liberal people; they are, however, calling with great urgency for the death penalty to be passed on Mollah and other convicted war criminals.

The genocide is still too little known about in the West. It is, moreover, the subject of shocking degrees of denial among partisan polemicists and manipulative historians. Before 1971, Bangladesh was East Pakistan, detached from the main body of the country. The founders had believed that the unity of religion would bind it together. Over time, however, the incompatibility of secular cultures had grown overwhelming. Parts of the Pakistani rulers regarded the Bengalis with open racist contempt.

In his 1967 memoirs, General Ayub Khan wrote that "East Bengalis...have all the inhibitions of downtrodden races ... their popular complexes, exclusiveness and ... defensive aggressiveness ... emerge from this historical background." This common hostility towards an immensely rich secular culture reached a tipping point when the leader of the nationalist Awami League, Sheikh Mujib, won a national election. He was imprisoned, and the Pakistani forces began a genocide which lasted from March to December 1971.

Pakistan has never accepted responsibility for what happened. Moreover, historians and journalists have come perilously close to genocide denial, or have seemed motivated by a desire to minimise the numbers involved. The official Pakistani estimates were originally only 26,000 dead and 2 million refugees. A recent Oxford historian whose methodology was savagely criticised declared that there were no more than 50,000 to 100,000 dead from all sides in the war.

If this were true, the Pakistani forces would have fallen short of their ambitions. At a meeting on 22 February 1971, the Pakistani President General Yahya Khan is recorded as saying in fury: "Kill three million of them, and the rest will eat out of our hands." Ten million fled to India; 30 million left the cities and went to the villages.

In the first phase of the war, young men and Hindus, Awami League members, intellectuals, students and academics were targeted for murder. In the second phase of the war, women were singled out. It is thought that at least 200,000 women were raped by the Pakistani forces and their collaborators – 25,000 victims found themselves pregnant, so that is not implausible. There are eyewitness accounts of "rape camps" set up by the Pakistani forces. The numbers, and the names of rape victims, remain disputed.

Sheikh Mujib, the first leader of Bangladesh, ordered the destruction of lists so that the shame would not follow the victims all their lives.

In the last week of the war, when Pakistani defeat was inevitable and a new nation was clearly about to be born, a concerted effort was made to kill as many intellectual leaders as possible, many between 12 and 14 December. The names of potential leaders of the future nation to be murdered were found in the diary of at least one Pakistani officer.

Bengali collaborators in the form of armed vigilante groups, Al-Shams and Al Badr, took the lead in these murders, only two days before the war came to an inevitable end.

It is impossible to know the real death toll. The historian R J Rummel, who has looked as deeply into it as anyone, concludes that the “final estimate of Pakistan’s democide to be 300,000 to 3,000,000, or a prudent 1,500,000.” The numbers became politically important in the decades following. As the scholar Bina D’Costa points out, for the Bangladesh government, an upper figure gave the new country greater legitimacy; for the Pakistanis, to scoff and diminish allowed them to demonstrate an ongoing distrust. Whatever the final figure, tens of thousands of those killed died as cruel and appalling deaths as anyone has ever devised. Out of thousands of episodes, one should read the evidence to this trial given by an extraordinarily brave woman, the single survivor of her family. She told how she saw her parents, her two sisters and two-year-old brother killed in front of her before she was raped by 12 soldiers. She was 13 years old.

That was 40 years ago. The Pakistani perpetrators of the war crimes have never been brought to trial – after independence, Pakistan said that if a single one of its soldiers were tried in the new country, no Bengali then living in the Western half would be given permission to leave. Nor, until very recently, have the Bengalis who collaborated with the genocidaires. The current trials have operated under constant threats of violence from a still active Jamaat-e-Islami. Some war criminals fled abroad. As long ago as 1995, the British authorities had their attention brought to alleged war criminals living in London by a Channel 4 documentary directed by the Dhaka journalist David Bergman. One, Chowdhury Mueen-Uddin, who has been working as an NHS administrator, is only now beginning to be brought to justice.

The shabby series of amnesties and diplomatic effrontery that has left some of the cruellest mass murderers of the century enjoying a peaceful retirement was often challenged by activists, without success. An attempt by the author and national heroine Jahanara Imam to promote war crimes trials in 1992 did not succeed. The International Crimes Tribunal was finally established only in 2008. Its work is slow, and everyone feels that it is achieving what it can before the government changes at the next election. There is no faith at all that Khaleda Zia, the leader of the opposition and, it is often asserted, an ally of the Jamaat-e-Islami, would allow the Tribunal’s work to continue for a day, or let its sentences stand.

The rage of the crowds at the life sentence given Mollah is that they know, as so often before, that Sheikh Hasina’s government has not achieved what it could, and a change of government will almost certainly lead to a pardon of imprisoned war criminals. It has done so often in the past. Hence the call for the death penalty, as the one punishment that no politician can reverse.

The calls for the death penalty are the counsel of despair. These are people who believe passionately in the rule of law, and justice. They have seen too many times that justice is only done at the bidding of politicians, and may be undone. But the chaos of the Mollah trial has stirred great concern from observers, and from thoughtful Bengalis. The pressure of the Shahbagh protests has encouraged Sheikh Hasina’s government to intervene, proposing the possibility of prosecution appeals, in the interests of securing the death penalty. More intervention in justice by politicians; more judicial murder; more martyrs. It is important, above all, that democratic states reveal themselves to be better than the brutes who murdered and raped, and did their utmost to extinguish a people. And yet the probability that some of the worst war

criminals in history will never face justice, and the worst of their collaborators will only have to face a year or two in prison, drives the protesters to despair.

What is the solution? Serious doubts have been raised about aspects of the trials, and the death penalty cannot be the right solution. But life imprisonment in Bangladesh for the mass murderers commands no respect.

There is one further possibility: the Liberian war criminal Charles Taylor was not imprisoned in Liberia, but under the provisions of the ICC in The Hague. The intervention of international law-makers ought to be desirable, and to take murderers out of the control of national politicians. That might permit, too, the trial of the main war criminals, and not just their Bangladeshi collaborators.

The Bangladesh atrocities are too important to go on being manipulated when a government changes. It seems as if this convulsive national exorcism, if it is to achieve justice, must take place in the eyes of the world, and with the world's input. For the rest of us, we have averted our eyes for too long. We have a duty to learn about this forgotten genocide, and face our own responsibilities squarely – not to shelter murderers, not to ignore, not to forget.

'Butcher of Mirpur'

Abdul Quader Mollah, the assistant secretary-general of Bangladesh's Jamaat-e-Islami party, sparked protests when he emerged from Bangladesh's Supreme Court on 4 February having been handed a life sentence for his role in the atrocities committed during the 1971 war for independence. He was clearly happy with the ruling - giving a victory sign to supporters outside the court. But critics of the so-called "Butcher of Mirpur" - who was convicted of of beheading a poet, raping an 11-year-old girl and shooting 344 people – have been left fuming over the sentence, and are calling for him to face the death sentence, like fellow accused Abul Kalam Azad.

Hirondelle News agency

Friday, 22 February 2013

Rwanda: Gbagbo Before the ICC, Rwanda Tribunal 'Concerned' About Cases in France

Arusha — The International Criminal Court started confirmation of charges hearings in the case of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo. Meanwhile, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda said two cases transferred to France in 2007 remain "of concern".

ICC

Gbagbo before pretrial court: Former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo has been appearing before an ICC pretrial court since Tuesday for confirmation of charges hearings. International and Ivorian human rights organizations meanwhile reminded the Prosecutor that Gbagbo is not the only suspect in crimes committed in his country. They say supporters of current president Alassane Ouattara are also suspected of involvement in crimes linked to the violence that followed presidential elections in December 2010.

UNITED STATES

Wife of ICTR convict loses American citizenship: A woman of Rwandan origin has had her American citizenship taken away after she was found to have been lying about her role in the 1994 genocide. Béatrice Munyenyezi is the wife of Arsène Shalom Ntahobali, who was convicted by the ICTR and sentenced to life in prison. He is awaiting his appeal hearing.

ICTR/FRANCE

ICTR concerned about cases in France: The ICTR said on Friday that two cases transferred to France remain "of concern". The cases of Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka and former prefect Laurent Bucyibaruta were transferred at the end of 2007 but have not yet been brought to trial. ICTR Registrar Bongani Majola added, however, that France had promised to speed up the proceedings and had informed the Tribunal that one of these cases was almost trial ready.

NEXT WEEK

ICC

- Confirmation of charges hearings continue in the case of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo
- Trial resumes of former Congolese vice-president Jean-Pierre Bemba, accused of crimes in neighbouring Central African Republic.

RWANDA

- Trial continues of linguist and former politician Léon Mugesera, extradited from Canada a year ago.
- Possible start of trial of Pastor Jean Uwinkindi, the first ICTR detainee to be transferred to Rwanda.

Public Service Europe

Friday, 22 February 2013

Norway jails Rwandan for role in genocide

By Morvary Samaré

A Norwegian court last week sentenced a Rwandan man, Sadi Bugingo, to 21 years in prison for his participation in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, demonstrating again that suspects are subject to the law regardless of national boundaries

Forty-seven-year-old Sadi Bugingo has been living in Norway since 2002 and was tracked down by Rwandan prosecutors then arrested in May 2011. The trial began in 2012 and came to completion last week when the Oslo District Court found the man guilty of having participated in the killing of up to 2,000 people in and around his hometown Kibungu in Eastern Rwanda. This was the first genocide trial ever in Norway.

More specifically the court connected the man with three attacks which took place in a municipal building, a Catholic centre and a hospital, where thousands were hiding to escape the killing spree. During the 19 week trial, the court was scheduled to hear 106 witnesses, 80 of which were called by the prosecution. Many were flown in from Rwanda to take the witness stand in Oslo.

One such witness had been hiding in a municipal building with his seven children during one of the attacks Bugingo has now been convicted of participating in. In his testimony the witness, who lost three of his children on that day, recalled: "I could see people being killed with machetes outside. I could also see Bugingo standing outside with a few others." Another witness, a young woman who was 12 at the time, explained in her testimony that the attack in question took around two hours, during which an estimated thousand people were killed.

The killing of President Juvenal Habyarimana in April 1994 triggered a three month long systematic massacre of close to one million people, primarily Tutsis and moderate Hutus, across this small East African nation. In Rwanda, thousands have since been charged and convicted of participating in the genocide, primarily in the traditional community courts known as the 'gacaca'. However, the ring leaders and those in charge of masterminding the genocide have been and are tried in the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania.

Although unusual, European courts have also at times been forced to initiate judicial proceedings against genocide suspects, the Bugingo case in Norway being one such case. Similar cases are being processed in neighboring Sweden, Finland and Denmark as well as in other parts of Europe. Norway did not have a genocide paragraph until 2008 and – as the crimes Bugingo was charged with, and is now convicted of, took place before that time – he was charged with crimes under national law including murder and extermination but not genocide.

In a final statement, Judge Jonas Petter Madsoe concluded: "It is clear that the purpose of the attack was to rid the premises of those who sought refuge there, primarily Tutsis. Refugees of all ages were killed, that includes children. Many were killed in a beastly manner and there was also abuse of the corpses." Bugingo denied all charges against his, maintains that he is innocent has now appealed the sentence.

Morvary Samaré is a writer and film maker, and the co-founder of Ramz Media, a documentary production company that focuses on global human rights issues

Read more: <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/3119/norway-jails-rwandan-for-role-in-genocide#ixzz2LuOLUc7y>

Atlanta Black Star

Monday, 25 February 2013

Rwandan Woman Stripped of US Citizenship for Role in Genocide

Posted by Kevin Webb



Beatrice Munyenyezi A Rwandan woman found guilty of making false statements about her role in the country's 1994 genocide has been stripped of her U.S. citizenship, and now faces deportation.

Beatrice Munyenyezi, 43, was granted political asylum in 1998, moving to New Hampshire with her three daughters. Years later, American authorities began to question her role in the genocide after reviewing familial ties that gave her a "front row seat" to the killings in the region.

Munyenyezi's mother-in-law, Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, was the minister of family and women's affairs during the time of the genocide, and was responsible for bringing in the presidential guard to begin killing Tutsis in the city of Butare.

Prosecutors claim that Munyenyezi worked at a roadblock in the city, checking the identification of travellers as they entered, separating Tutsis who would later be killed.

"If I'm checking IDs at roadblocks, knowing that person is going to be clubbed to death, I'm as responsible as if I wielded the machete myself," said Assistant U.S. Attorney John Capin.

During a 2006 hearing for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Munyenyezi testified that there was no such roadblock, and that she had never seen dead bodies during her time in the Butare.

However, witnesses placed Munyenyezi at the roadblock, and a satellite photo from the U.S. Defense Department confirmed its existence. Though it is not believed that Munyenyezi had an active role in the killings, prosecutors believe that she should be held responsible for her actions.

Munyenyezi's lawyers believe that deportation is the equivalent of a death sentence for her, as the Rwandan government will kill her upon her return. She is currently serving a 21 month sentence in a Connecticut federal prison.

Agence France Presse

Sunday, 24 February 2013

Serb radicals protest leader's 10-year detention

Several thousand ultra-nationalists protested Sunday against the 10-year long detention of their leader, Vojislav Seselj, by a UN war crimes court, awaiting a verdict for his role in the 1990s Balkans wars.

At the gathering of some 3,000 people, Seselj's Serbian Radical Party officials called for his release, while Seselj's legal adviser Zoran Krasic said the hardline leader was "denied all human rights" in The Hague.

Seselj voluntarily surrendered to the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) on February 24, 2003.

At the end of his trial last March, the prosecutors asked for a 28-year prison sentence. The judges are yet to announce a verdict.

The extremist leader faces nine counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for the persecution of Croats, Muslims and other non-Serbs and their expulsion from areas of Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia between 1991 and 1993.