

**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, February 2013

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

Tuesday, 5 February 2013

Liberia: Finance Refers Taylor's Lawyers to CSA

The Ministry of Finance has referred Lawyers seeking the annual retirement benefits of former Liberian President Charles Taylor to liaise with the Civil Service Agency (CSA) which is the institution of government responsible to handle all retirement and other associated benefits.

Finance Ministry's position is contained in a letter dated January 29, 2013, addressed to Counselor Sayma Syrenius Cephus, one of counsels for the ex-Liberian head of state.

The Ministry's statement followed an earlier letter send to the Ministry of Finance by Counselor Cephus requesting the annual retirement benefits of Mr. Taylor and his wife, Victoria Addison-Taylor in the amount of US\$250,000.00 and US\$125,000.00 respectively.

In the January 29, 2013 letter, signed by Deputy Finance Minister for Expenditure and Debt Management, Angela Cassell-Bush, Finance Ministry, urged lawyers seeking Mr. Taylor's annual retirement benefits, to liaise with the CSA which has jurisdiction on the matter.

However, based on the Finance Ministry's advice, Cllr. Cephus, on January 30, 2013, wrote the Director Generator of the CSA, Dr. William Allen, indicating that the legal team of Mr. Taylor was making a request for settlement of his retirement benefits.

Cllr. Cephus said he was confident that the CSA will treat this matter with some degree of urgency, in the same manner and form in which the Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Finance unconditionally paid and continues to say the retirement benefits of the late President Samuel Kanyon Doe to his wife, Nancy B. Doe.

In recent days, Mr. Taylor wrote members of the Senate requesting his retirement benefits from government. The former President said he had been denied of his constitutional rights by the government through the Finance Ministry.

Members of the senate are reportedly divided over the request made by the former president, now awaiting prison sentence in The Hague, The Netherlands.

Senators from the former ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP) said they will advocate for Mr. Taylor's benefit. One Senator in Particular, the late John Whitfield, had threatened to take legal action against the Liberia if it refuses to give Mr. Taylor his just benefits.

However, barely two days after he made the statement, Senator fell out at his residence and was rushed at the hospital, where he remained until he died. The unexpected death of Senator Whitfield shocked members of the senate.

The New Dawn (Monrovia)

Tuesday, 5 February 2013

Taylor Claims Over \$200,000

Lawyers representing convicted ex- Liberian President Charles Taylor and his wife Victoria B. Addison-Taylor, have filed a petition for a writ of mandamus before Liberia's Supreme Court to compel the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Administration to pay US\$231,429.99 as total annuities (benefits), covering 111 calendar months from September 1, 2003 to December 31, 2012.

In a 18-count joint petition filed before the Supreme Court of Liberia, former President Moses Z. Blah's Vice President John D. Gray, is also claiming total annuities of US\$114,583.32, representing 110 calendar months from November 1, 2003 up to December 31, 2012.

Consistent with Section 1.4 of an act enacted by Legislators on July 6, 1978, Taylor and Gray are pleading for the high court to grant them the necessary relief by compelling the sitting government to pay to them 50% of the salaries of the President and the Vice President per annum respectively, on grounds that they were honorably retired since 2003 to private life and are not in the employ of government.

Quoting Section 1.4 of the act titled "An Act to provide for retirement pension of the President, Vice President, The Speaker, The Chief Justice of the Republic of Liberia," Taylor's lawyers argued among others that a former president, who has honorably retired to private life and, who is not in any way gainfully employed by the government shall receive from the government a pension equal to fifty percent (50%) of the salary of the president's."

Besides, the act mandates the sitting government to provide personal staff and facilities for the remainder of the ex-president or vice president's life at a cost not less than US\$25,000.00 per annum for the ex-president, and an allowance not less than US\$12,500 per annum for the ex-vice president, respectively.

But both petitioners are claiming that the Sirleaf-led government has chosen to sport with their lives and rights by adopting "a pick and choose" biasness and "selective" payments of retirement benefits "as demonstrably shown in its settlement of retirements benefits of former President Samuel Kanyon Doe to his wife Nancy B. Doe.

Ex-president Taylor was convicted on April 26, 2012 for aiding and abetting RUF rebels in Sierra Leone, and subsequently sentenced for 50 years by the Special Court of Sierra Leone, sitting in The Hague.

Under pressure from various rebel factions, ex-President Charles Taylor was forced to resign the Liberian Presidency on August 11, 2003 as rebel fighters, including the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) massively lunched rockets in Monrovia, coupled with mass killings across the country.

Following the departure of Taylor to Calabar, Nigeria in 2003, then Vice President Moses Z. Blah, ascended to the Presidency; thereby bringing onboard John D. Gray, who occupied the Office of the Vice Presidency from August 11, to October 14, 2003.

Vice President Gray also retired in 2003 when the interim arrangement or National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) headed by Charles Gyude Bryant was inaugurated on October 14, 2003.