

**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:

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

Thursday, 21 November 2013

Justice Dingake for Residual Special Court

The Administration of Justice has the honour to inform the nation that on the 16th of October, 2013, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, appointed the Hon. Justice Dr. O.B.K. Dingake to the roster of judges of the Residual Special Court of Sierra Leone.

The Residual Special Court of Sierra Leone continues the mandate of the Special Court of Sierra Leone, a judicial body that was set up by the UN and the government of Sierra Leone to preside over the prosecution of persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law, committed in Sierra Leone after the 30th November, 1996

AOJ Press Release:

Appointment of Hon. Justice O. B. K. Dingake to Position of Judge of Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone

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This assignment is an affirmative of the highest confidence the international community have in Botswana's judicial system and the Government of Botswana.

Hon. Justice Dr. Dingake was a jurist and scholar of international repute. His career path straddles academia, corporate world and the judiciary.

We have all the confidence that Justice Dingake will execute his assignment

with fairness and integrity and make us all proud. This appointment was not a full-time assignment and judge Dingake will sit from time to time as may be required by the President of the Court.

The Chief Justice takes this opportunity on behalf of the entire judiciary and people of Botswana to wish Hon. Justice Dr. Dingake all the best in his new international assignment.

Frontpage Africa (Liberia)

Wednesday, 20 November 2013

Opinion

Chief Cyril Allen Experiencing First Hand Pain

Written by Maxwell Moore, maximumpleasure@gmail.com

The Editor,

The threat made by the Chairman of the notorious National Patriotic Party(NPP) gangster group comes at it a time when Liberia is gradually trying to portray an image of a civilized society where 12-year-olds are not going around beheading people and freedom of movement and expression is gradually gaining momentum. It is a shame for Cyril Allen to make such remark in defense of a man convicted of war crime against innocent West Africans.

What I can tell Cyril Allen is that if he lifts one finger at any foreign national in Liberia in retaliation for Taylor, He and his family will meet the full weight of the "Anonymous" group now in Monrovia to defend the British. He will get to know pain at first hand. We are warning him and his colleagues to immediately keep away from having contact with Taylor, otherwise someone will pay a prize so dear. It is time now that we build our nation and should not let sycophants like Cyril create an atmosphere of chaos. I can tell all British citizens in Liberia and its environs that they should feel very free to work and support Liberia.

With this threat from Cyril Allen, if any British property is damage or looted in Monrovia, we will make Cyril Allen pay back dearly and costly. I guess he has just reached his limit. We are watching you and will make you feel pain soon if you make any mistake to contact Taylor or harm any British Citizen in Liberia.

<p>When Mr. Allen is not in a back room with a teenager, he is on his farm tending to his marihuana plants. it is just a matter time until DEA finds him transporting his load of grass in the back of his truck. Stop referring to him as "Chief." This man is nothing but a hardcore criminal and drug dealer/user. Have you seen him lately? what a shame for his family, and mostly his very smart and hardworking son.</p> <p>John N. Lewis</p>	<p>the fact that this Nigerian warlord is still walking the streets and still havethe audacity to open his Nigerian mouth shows how weak Liberians are. they should give him his Ghana must go bag, put him at the border and place a kick in his ample behind. Old windbag blowing hot air through all body cracks. An old forgotten story trying to be relevant. let him try and put his Nigerian hand on somebody and see what happens.</p>
<p>Maxwell Moore are you aware that Britain is not a member of the International Criminal Court?Why is it harboring an African prisoner from a court that it is not a member of?International politics.</p> <p>Taylor is the worst leader we have had because he lead a war but what about the co-conspirators like President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf?So is she a ganster too? And what about your threat against Cyril Allen? That makes you sound like a ganster.</p> <p>Africans need to learn more about international politics and stop looking at the surface.</p>	<p>The governmet of Liberia should take this mad man's treat seriously and arrest him for making terrorist treats against British citizens living in Liberia. These people will do more for the development of Liberia than this nasty ass Nigerian masquerading as Liberian. With all the hurt and distruction that they put on our country, I do not see any reason why he is still living in Liberia.</p>

<p>I think it is time for the liberian govt to start making plans to deport this man back to his father's land Nigeria. We do not need trouble makers like him in our country.</p>	<p>There once was a man named Cyril who was really quite a fool He opened his big mouth and nothing but shi* came out Poor old man Cyril</p>
<p>Let Cyril go and take care of Allen farm and make some money. Lazy people always cause problem so they can loot.</p>	<p>Place his name back on the list of banned citizens. he needs to stay and let us deal with him. ignorant, incompetent, illiterate foreigner.</p>
<p>This man is a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Liberia as well as Liberia's image abroad. i do not understand why the president and the government not address this. Liberia needs to move beyond gangsterism and become a tourist destination. This old has-been geriatric old fart is blowing in the wind and trying to be relevant. he should be right next to his benefactor in prison, talking about using African natural medicine. he needs to use that natural medicine to make himself function . let him try nonsense and he will see if he does not run back to his native Sierra leone..</p>	<p>Cyril Allen is loosening it little by little. his son who is deputy minister at commerce should take his father to the psychariat center now, better still chief Zanzan kawor and his team of Zoes should take this man to the zoe bush quickly, he is seriously getting crazy. this was how they fooled the liberian youths in the 1990s that they had gun-proof and they could disappear, many young people got killed like that. if taylor had such power why didn't he disappear in nigeria? he allowed himself to be grabbed like a chicken. the UN IS RESPONSIBLE for this crazy man, why did they lift sanction and travelling ban on troubleshooters like this guy? United Nations security council please reconsider to place cyril Allen's name back on sanction list for threatening foreign natiopnals.</p>

Huffington Post Blog

Wednesday, 20 November 2013

Guns and Gems: The True Cost of Your Diamonds

By: Isabelle Bourgeault-Tassé

"Ian Smillie is lying through his teeth."

With these words, former warlord and Liberian President Charles Taylor denounced the man who would implicate him in Liberia and Sierra Leone's illicit diamond trade.

In Taylor's hands, Sierra Leone's sparkling baubles fuelled a litany of horrific human rights abuses ranging from rape, torture, and recruitment of child soldiers. And in the diamond mines of Sierra Leone, his violent calling card: fingers, hands, feet, and ears, even those of babies, cut off by rebel soldiers.

Found guilty in 2012, Charles Taylor's conviction was upheld by the Special Court for Sierra Leone's Appeal Chamber, again shining the media spotlight on the diamond industry.

Canadian Ian Smillie would be the first witness to testify at Charles Taylor's trial in the Hague, a trial that included other noted -- and reluctant -- witnesses such as model Naomi Campbell and actress Mia Farrow.

For the last 15 years, Smillie has worked on the frontlines of the conflict and blood diamond trade, from "the jungles of West Africa to the backstreets of Antwerp and a war crimes tribunal in the Hague." A teacher, author of seminal works on blood diamonds such as the upcoming book *Diamonds* (Polity, Cambridge), and Liberian "enemy of the state," Smillie was also one of the architects of the Kimberley Process, a certification scheme that sought to eradicate the sale and trade of conflict diamonds.

In an interview with Ramp1885, Ian Smillie talks blood and conflict diamonds -- what it takes for a diamond to make it from the mine to a ringed finger, what happened when he came face to face with Charles Taylor, what he thought of Naomi Campbell's testimony at the Hague, and how to buy "clean" diamonds.

What drew you to document and fight the illicit diamond trade?

It was kind of serendipity.

In 1967, when I graduated from university, I joined CUSO and went to Africa to teach high school. And by chance, I was posted to Sierra Leone, to Koidu Secondary School, right in the heart of the diamond area.

So I had seen the chaos and confusion of the artisanal diamond fields, the police chasing the diggers, the government trying to get a grip on things, and the Lebanese diamond dealers operating under the table, and over the table, as well.

So when the war started in Sierra Leone, a number of people like me who knew Sierra Leone and had a soft spot for it wondered why nothing was being done; Why wasn't the UN there; Why Sierra Leone didn't seem to be on anybody's radar.

And as we got into it more and more, we realized that there was a diamond connection.

For me, in a sense, it was like going back to Koidu and trying to understand what had happened after all those years.

What is a blood diamond?

There are two answers to that question -- one is the official definition of "blood diamond" as accepted by the Kimberley Process, and then there's a wider understanding of what a "blood diamond" is.

The Kimberley Process doesn't use the term "blood diamond," they use the term "conflict diamond" and by that they mean diamonds that are used by rebel armies to purchase weapons, to try and overthrow a legitimate government.

But there has been a debate going on within the Kimberley Process for more than four years now about widening the definition to include human rights abuse. That's turned into quite an ugly fight within the Kimberley Process and it hasn't actually got anywhere.

You talked a little about the Kimberley Process -- can you explain what that is?

When the blood diamond issue started to become public, the diamond industry and a number of governments who rely on diamonds for a healthy part of their economies decided that something had to be done.

The Government of South Africa called a meeting that took place in May 2000, in the town of Kimberley in South Africa, bringing together NGOs, industry, and governments to see whether something could be done about this problem.

At the time, blood diamonds were fuelling conflicts in Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and elsewhere. Over half a million people had been killed in these conflicts.

It was agreed that there would have to be a few more meetings to hammer out the details of a certification system; this would be a process, and that's why it became known as the Kimberley Process.

You have said: "the Kimberley Process has teeth, but it won't bite." What did you mean by that?

The Kimberley Process is actually quite a remarkable agreement. There's no treaty, there's no formal document that a government has to sign. It didn't involve the United Nations, except insofar as the United Nations endorsed the general principle.

It was voluntary -- no government was forced to become a member. But if a country does want to join, it must pass legislation conforming to the standards set by the Kimberley Process. Each member country has to issue a certificate for each parcel of diamonds being exported, saying that the diamonds are clean and that the government has an auditable chain of custody tracking them back to the place where they were mined, or where they were imported.

It had all the necessary bells and whistles -- all the rules and regulations are there, they're all spelled out and it's backed by the laws of each one of the member countries, but in the case of non-compliance, the Kimberley Process hasn't got very many ways of dealing with it.

The only thing it can do with a country that is in serious non-compliance is to kick it out, so they can't trade diamonds. There have been several cases of very serious non-compliance that have never been fixed and where the Kimberley Process has more or less pretended that it isn't a problem and said, "well, we can't do anything about it."

You walked away from the Kimberley Process -- what was that decision like for you?

It was an emotional decision because I'd been involved in this for a long time. I had put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into it -- as did many others.

When 200 artisanal miners were shot and killed by Zimbabwean armed forces, and the issue was raised in the Kimberley Process, it became clear that there was going to be little, if any, action. It made no sense in a system aimed at stopping diamond-related violence, to allow a member government to get away with killing 200 people in its enforcement.

So I resigned, with a bit of noise, thinking that it might help to move them forward. It didn't. It didn't do a thing as far as I can see.

What are your thoughts on the interchangeability of "blood diamonds" and "conflict diamonds"?

The term "conflict diamonds" is a kind of a sanitized way of talking about "blood diamonds." People in the industry don't like the term "blood diamonds."

But if you have an official definition of "conflict diamonds" that leaves out major human rights abuses, including murder, then you need a bigger term or a different term. Until this problem of human rights is fixed, "blood diamond" works.

Can you explain to us the relationship between Charles Taylor and the illicit diamond trade?

Charles Taylor was a Liberian warlord in the early '90s who achieved power and became President of Liberia in 1997. During the early '90s and later, after he became president, he supported the rebel army next door in Sierra Leone -- the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

He had learned that in order to finance his rampage to power, he needed to find some way to pay for it. Liberia didn't have many diamonds of its own, but next door, in Sierra Leone, they have some of the best diamonds in the world.

So Taylor became -- as warlord and later as president -- the main benefactor of the RUF. The RUF was a very brutal gang of killers -- they claimed to be fighting for democracy and justice, but they waged their war on civilians. They would attack a town and cut the hands and feet off civilians -- men, women, children. The purpose was to clear towns and villages so that the invading army could forage with impunity, and they did it as well to clear the diamond fields. If you knew that the RUF were coming, or if you even heard a rumour that the RUF were on their way, knowing that they cut the hands and feet off babies, you wouldn't hang around very long.

And it worked -- it was very successful. It helped them clear the diamond fields, and they could dig diamonds to their heart's content.

What was it like, the first time you came face to face with Charles Taylor? And then later, in the Hague?

I was warned to be careful.

I was warned by a very senior Liberian that I shouldn't go to Liberia, that I was regarded as an enemy of the state.

Charles Taylor, when our UN investigative team met with him, was charm incarnate. He was very disarming, he answered all the questions that we had -- but I wouldn't say that he answered them truthfully, or in full by any means.

Charles Taylor has said: "Ian Smillie is lying through his teeth," -- how did that make you feel?

I would occasionally dip into the (court) transcripts and see what was going on, and to see your name pulled out of a hat by somebody like Charles Taylor a couple of years after you've testified, in that way, is a bit unnerving.

But in a way it's kind of nice to be remembered by him -- it means that, in some way, I struck a nerve.

What did you think of Naomi Campbell's testimony at the Taylor trial?

The Naomi Campbell testimony was a bit odd.

It came late in the trial. It wasn't very deep or meaningful, but I think it was important in the sense that it reminded people that this trial was still going on. She clearly was so terrified of Charles Taylor, even with Taylor in jail, that she was very skittish about saying what happened, what she remembered, what he did, what she did, and all the rest of it.

But she reminded the court and the judges that when she met Charles Taylor in South Africa at Nelson Mandela's house, and he offered her a gift of some diamonds -- it told the judges that Taylor's own testimony about that trip to South Africa was somewhat misleading. He said he didn't take any diamonds to South Africa, that he didn't have any diamonds, that diamonds really weren't part of his way of doing business...

How can consumers make be sure their diamonds are clean?

The Kimberly Process guarantees under their certificate that their diamonds aren't fuelling wars, but it doesn't guarantee an absence of human rights abuse or even on some of the more fundamental development issues that exist around diamonds in Africa.

There are 1.5-million artisanal diamond diggers in Africa -- they produce about 16 per cent of the world's diamonds. And they're earning about a dollar a day. They live in absolute poverty and they're vulnerable to just about every kind of predator -- military, economic -- you name it.

The Kimberley Process has nothing to say about that, so there's a good chance that 16 per cent of the diamonds in any store are part of that problem.

At the Diamond Development Initiative, we're working on a number of projects with African governments and industry to try and change the lot of artisanal diamond miners -- to get them better prices, to get them better working conditions, to get them into the formal side of the diamond industry so they don't have to run away every time somebody shows up with a gun.

UN News Centre

Wednesday, 20 November 2013

Ban calls for universal ratification of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court



20 November 2013 – Despite collective efforts, much remains to be done towards universal ratification of the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the International Criminal Court (ICC), United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today said encouraging Member States to ratify or accede to it.

“I am convinced that the solution of broadening the reach of the Court is not disengagement, but universality,” Mr. Ban told the 12th session of the Assembly of States Parties of the ICC in a message delivered by Miguel de Serpa Soares, UN Legal Counsel and Under-Secretary-General.

Of the 139 States that signed the ICC’s founding treaty, 31 have yet to ratify it and 43 States have neither signed nor acceded to it.

“Only once the Rome Statute has been universally accepted can the Court be as effective as we would wish it to be, with a truly global reach,” he said in the message.

Beyond the lack of universality, the ICC also faces other challenges, including a struggle for necessary resources and staffing shortages.

The Court also has difficulties bringing the accused to judgment and delivering justice to the victims without undue delay, the UN chief noted in his message.

“It faces the fundamental challenge of upholding the core principles of justice, equality and the rule of law: that the law applies equally to all,” Mr. Ban’s said, adding that the law must also be delivered independently, impartially and in conformity with international human rights law and standards.

Just as importantly, the law must be seen as being so delivered, Mr. Ban highlighted.

He also noted the importance of building effective national justice institutions and dispute mechanisms.

“Our commitment to international criminal justice is not only a commitment to strengthened international cooperation and dialogue, but also to strengthened domestic human rights and rule of law systems,” he added.

“At this difficult moment, we must remain steadfast and ensure that we are on the right side of history,” the Secretary-General said, stressing that as uncomfortable as it might be, “we must address our challenges head on” by encouraging dialogue and remaining true to the principles of the statute. “This Assembly is the best forum for this dialogue.”

Established by the Rome Statute of 1998, the ICC can try cases involving individuals charged with war crimes committed since July 2002. The Security Council, the ICC Prosecutor or a State Party to the court can initiate any proceedings, and the ICC only acts when countries themselves are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute.