

**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

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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OPINION

How healthy is the status quo of Sierra Leone criminal justice system?



Author: Thankla Bangura

Some of the depraved cultures of business as usual which are eating the fabric of ethical behaviour in Sierra Leone have to be disowned if we are serious about tangible development. Rape, with utter impunity is one of these cultures. Raping a woman or man is not force majeure it is an irresponsible act which severely inflicts insupportable pains on the fragile victim and equally causing a life term fear and trauma in the mind-set of that person.

Inter alia, the essence of this article is to reignite the contemporary debates about the perpetual rape perpetrated against vulnerable women across the country, the recent shootings of unarmed civilians and students by some immoral police officers and the blatant failure and the ratio decidendi by the quango Anti-Corruption Commission to attain plausible justice of high profile prima facie cases brought to generic courts is simply a National disgrace and inattentive legal error hard to gulp.

The purpose of the Criminal Justice System is to deliver justice for all, by convicting and punishing the guilty and discouraging them from re-offending, while protecting the innocents. Selective justice protecting the rich and most powerful whilst persecuting the plebs should not be prevalent in our society because it undermines the integrity and impartiality of our Judicial System and hence propagate animosity across the board.

Frankly, some of these legal anomalies that we are too bashful to confront are testing the well-being of our judicial system which is a pivotal pillar that underpins our democratic credentials on the face of it. Further, it is conspicuous that the world is watching Sierra Leone progress very

closely, our success and democratisation strength are measured on some of these issues that we are too shy from time to time to challenge. We should never flutter in our quest but fiercely and vigorously determine to pursue our mission to develop an emerging economy by confronting these challenges testing our integrity.

Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom in pursuant to sections (2-3) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, forceful sexual penetration even with your legally married wife without her consent is tantamount to RAPE and the consequence is your precious time or liberties are bitterly spent behind BARS! This is no sheer hyperbole it is a fact that underpins a legal framework encompass with draconian laws that sting like a stingray. What have we recently, as Sierra Leone apart from the media, but corpus Juris i.e. Bar Council, Judges, politicians, religious leaders and communities done to confront and exterminate this pernicious act of sexual vandalism against our sisters, children and mothers that we are obliged to protect in society? An inactive law that does not sting the culprit is classed as a sleeping law full stop.

Freedom of Speech enshrined into our domestic constitutional pot is a vital tool to combat rape perpetrators. Notwithstanding, the red line must not be crossed but could be flirt with or bend to publish legitimate articles to disseminate the pains and fear caused by rape.

There should be no safe haven for rapists in Sierra Leone, we should make all vicinities difficult for them to strive and also advocate for the application of the nuclear option in order to equally traumatise these scumbags roaming across the country.

The media should enjoy the blessings by having the intra vires under freedom of expression to publish photos and addresses of these criminals to deter them causing further pains on women. Anyone found culpable of rape having reconciled the actus reus and mens rea must be banned from holding public office or any position of trust for good.

That has to be the bottom-line going forward. Infringing on the Human Rights of rape victims has given us the utter justification to infringe upon the rights of these rapists by publishing their photos and addresses. It is a reasonable deterrence and proportional approach in my view.

The burden to act or the moral prerogative is on us as citizens to vent out the message by connecting the dot from Waterloo to

Lumley against these paedophiles raping our women with pleasure to quench their sexual thirst.

Sexual assault against either a man or woman, is deemed as sexual terrorism, trespassing someone's private property, a breach of Human Rights, crime against humanity and a curse to our integrity as Sierra Leoneans.

Thus, zero tolerance and causing distress on proponents of rape has to be our duty to deter this outrageous grievous bodily harm to become integral in our country.

Meanwhile, addressing another burning issue on the public domain which is the duty of police officers in a state. If I could coherently reiterate this point, Police officers prime duty is to protect the lives and properties of the natives of that country from time to time.

Turning guns against your very own citizens that you are paid and sworn to protect does not only mean shredding the police code of conduct but bringing anarchy and distress in a country dusting itself from the ruins of a decade vicious civil war.

In addition, Police officers, Doctors, Politicians and the Army etc to remind some sceptics are under legal duty to protect the lives of all and sundry in society failing to do so is a legal justification which makes your position untenable and thus resignation or dismissal instantaneous.

The desire to shoot and killed unarmed civilians especially school goers are not palatable in this day and age therefore the reckless act must stop with no condition attached.

Sierra Leone is no North Korea where torture and inhumane treatments is normal; our country is one of the most tolerance states in Africa where everyone is a citizen. Our behaviours particularly those of police officers have to mirror this ethical standard and legitimate expectation consistently.

We don't shoot these people when we want them to cast their votes for us; instead we lulled them, patronised with them and dumped them as we please. We are all equal before the law, the modus operandi of the Justice System should not be seeing to discriminate against a section of the community, and the application of the law has to be holistic to enhance the integrity of our Justice System.

As a feminist and a democrat, this is my proposition to fight back against those junkies and cannibals who see women as easy meat. Finally, Salus populi suprema lex esto, adios.

Frontpage Africa (Liberia)

Tuesday, 10 December 2013

Sanctions Lifeline for Urey - UN Verdict Could Boost Potential Quest for Presidency

Monrovia — Light appears to be at the end of the tunnel for Benoni Urey. The erstwhile former head of the Liberia Maritime Authority during the **Charles Taylor** era, who has been languishing on the United Nations Travel ban and assets freeze ban for years, may finally be on the verge of having limitations on his movement restored with calls for the UN to relax sanctions imposed on prominent figures from the Charles Taylor era, by the United Nations Panel of Experts.

Urey, whose relationship with the ruling Unity Party government was strained in the wake of the 2011 presidential and legislative elections because of his support for the opposition Congress for Democratic Change, was left in the cold last July when the UN Security Council dropped several of his peers from the Taylor era off the list of 17 Liberians which included the ex-wives of former President Taylor: Agnes and Jewel, former Senator Adolphus Dolo, once a key Taylor military ally, former minister Reginald Goodridge and Taylor's former economic advisor, Emmanuel Shaw, who was accused of organizing arms deliveries, had a travel ban and assets freeze lifted. John Richardson, a former security advisor, also had his travel ban removed as was Chief Cyril Allen. The sanctions list once contained over 55 names.

Flirting with CDC

The panel's recommendation if implemented could boost Urey's reported presidential quest. Speculations have heightened in recent weeks that Urey is contemplating a run for the presidency and has been flirting with the opposition Congress for Democratic Change. It is unclear whether the move points to a marriage with football legend George Weah or a political play to gain CDC's support. Urey was recently given a prominent speaking spot at the CDC's membership drive.

In its latest report, the panel said evidence collected by the Special Court for Sierra Leone and reviewed by the Panel has shown that, while serving as Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, Urey authorized payments for arms purchases from Serbia from the accounts of the Maritime Bureau in 2000. The accounts were set up to disburse payments in late 1999; the first shipment of arms arrived from Serbia in 2001 or 2002. The evidence indicates, however, that in approving the funds Urey was acting on the orders of Taylor.

Urey, according to the panel, currently serves as the Chair of Lonestar Communications Corporation, which is one of the largest taxpayers in Liberia. He owns 20 per cent of the company's shares through PLC Investment Limited, a Liberian company that is in turn owned by IDS and Nexus -- two other Liberian companies established in 1989 with anonymous bearer shares.

Frontpage Africa (Liberia)

Wednesday, 11 December 2013

Still a Fragile State - UN Maintains Sanctions On Post-War Nation

The United Nations Security Council has alarmed that while significant progress has been made in Liberia since the end of the civil war, the situation in the post-war nation Liberia remains fragile and continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region.

In the same vein, the council voted unanimously to maintain an arms embargo on the post-war nation, which was battered by back-to-back civil wars from 1989 to 2003; a travel ban on named individuals, and an asset freeze against former Liberian president Charles Taylor, his key allies and associated companies. The resolution adopted however requested the committee monitoring sanctions to review all those subject to the asset freeze within 90 days and determine whether they should still be subject to sanctions.

The resolution ordered the panel to renew the measures on travel imposed by paragraph 4 of resolution 1521 (2003); (b) To renew the measures on arms, previously imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1521 (2003) and modified by paragraphs 1 and 2 of resolution 1683 (2006), by paragraph 1 (b) of resolution 1731 (2006), by paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 of resolution 1903 (2009), and by paragraph 3 of resolution 1961 (2010), and to modify the associated notification requirements as follows: (i) Notification for non-lethal materials and associated training is no longer required."

According to the council, the Liberian authorities shall have the primary responsibility to notify to the Committee at least five days in advance of the shipment of any supplies of lethal arms and related materiel, or any provision of assistance, advice or training related to military or other security sector activities for the Government of Liberia.

The council also ordered a review of all sanctions in six months "with a view to modifying or lifting all or part of the measures" depending on Liberia's progress toward disarming combatants, reforming its security sector, fully implementing a peace agreement, and maintaining stability throughout the country.

The council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, decided in a resolution Tuesday to extend the mandate of the Panel of Experts appointed pursuant to paragraph 9 of resolution 1903 (2009) for a period of 12 months from the date of adoption of this resolution to undertake among other things, the conducting of two follow-up assessment missions to Liberia and neighboring States, to investigate and compile a midterm and a final report on the implementation, and any violations, of the measures on arms as amended by resolution 1903 (2009), and including the various sources of financing for the illicit trade of arms, on progress in the security and legal sectors with respect to the Government of Liberia's ability to effectively monitor and control arms and border issues, and on the Government of Liberia's progress on meeting notification requirements.

The News (Liberia)

Monday, 9 December 2013

Yeaten Remains Threat to Peace

The whereabouts of Benjamin Yeaten, former security chief to ex-Liberian president **Charles Taylor** remain unknown. However, the latest report of the UN panel of experts has indicated that Yeaten, a notorious commander of the Anti-Terrorist Unit (ATU), still remains a threat to peace in Liberia.

Yeaten, still on the assets freeze and travel ban list, according to the panel, is believed to have recruited Liberian mercenaries on behalf of FRCI group to fight in the Ivorian post-electoral conflict in late 2010 and early in 2011.

The panel says Yeaten reportedly conducted this operation from Côte d'Ivoire. The Panel also said that it received persistent rumors in 2012 and 2013 that Yeaten was involved in recruiting Liberian mercenaries in Nimba County to fight against FRCI, and also to undermine stability in Liberia, but has not been able to independently verify this information.

The panel said it has not obtained any information concerning Yeaten's assets. However, because of his activities to recruit mercenaries in Liberia (as outlined above), the assets freeze pertaining Yeaten should be maintained.

The Panel added that it has been informed on multiple occasions, in 2012 and 2013, by several high-ranking officials of the Government of Liberia that Yeaten resides in Togo. The Panel has sought further details concerning Yeaten's possible residency, but has not been able to verify such information independently.

The Government of Liberia charged Yeaten with murder in absentia and issued an arrest warrant for him in 2009; it still considers Yeaten a threat.

Notwithstanding, the Panel concurs with the assessment that Yeaten remains a threat to peace and security in Liberia and the sub-region.

EEEC

Wednesday, 11 December 2013

Press Release

Nicholas Koumjian appointed as new international Co-Prosecutor

Following the nomination by the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and the approval by the Supreme Council of the Magistracy, His Majesty the King Norodom Sihamoni has appointed Mr. Nicholas Koumjian (USA) as new international Co-Prosecutor in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

Prior to his appointment, Mr. Koumjian was Senior Appeals Counsel for the prosecution of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He represented Abdallah Banda and Saleh Jerbo before the International Criminal Court in a case involving the situation in Darfur, and assisted victims from the Ivory Coast on a pro-bono basis. He was previously Principal Trial Attorney for the trial of Charles Taylor, headed the UN-funded Serious Crimes Unit in East Timor, and was a trial attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before entering the international arena, Mr. Koumjian worked as a prosecutor in Los Angeles for twenty years.



Truth-Out.org

Monday, 9 December 2013

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/20517-economics-by-other-means-war-poverty-and-conflict-minerals-in-africa>

Economics by Other Means: War, Poverty and Conflict Minerals in Africa

By Kwei Quartey, Foreign Policy in Focus | News Analysis

Throughout the postcolonial period, internecine warfare—along with the poverty and underdevelopment that attend it—has been endemic to sub-Saharan Africa. The images are depressingly familiar: government forces fighting against armed rebel militias; terrorized, starving refugees fleeing for their lives; villages burned to the ground; women raped and men tortured.

Conflict seems to radiate from the continent's heart. A 2001 Institute of Development Studies (IDS) report listed 28 sub-Saharan African countries that have been embroiled in some form of warfare since 1980, including Angola, Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, and Sudan along with many others. Many have suffered fatalities in the hundreds of thousands along with the maiming and traumatization of countless victims.

And then there is the broader toll. "Armed conflict," observes the IDS report, "is arguably now the single most important determinant of poverty in Africa," although the linkages between conflict and poverty remain poorly documented and inadequately understood.

The authors suggest that the continent's often overlapping conflicts have arisen in various ways out of the "profound legitimacy crises" of post-colonial African governments, with the fracturing of weak states and the emergence of warfare as a means of accumulating power and wealth driving an endless cycle of violence. And with the drop in foreign assistance to many governments and rebel groups resulting from the end of the Cold War, belligerents have become more dependent upon private sources of support to sustain their military and political activities.

With largesse from Moscow, Washington, and the former imperial capitals no longer assured, armed groups now search for riches within their own borders—in diamond mines, gold pits, oil wells, and rare earth deposits. The struggle for control of these resources has become a source of endless strife.

Markets and Mayhem

In a 2001 study called *The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts*, researcher Philippe Le Billon analyzed the role of natural resources in armed conflict, both their scarcity and abundance. "The availability in nature of any resource is...not in itself a predictive indicator of conflict," he wrote. "Rather, the desires sparked by this availability as well as people's needs (or greed), and the practices shaping the political economy of any resource can prove conflictual, with violence becoming the decisive means of arbitration." In other words, resource deposits themselves are not good predictors of conflict, but in an unstable political environment, resource markets can be.

Diamonds—an extremely valuable, if useless, commodity—were once marketed in the affluent West as "a girl's best friend." At the same time, they also became the best friends of the warring parties that brought havoc to Angola and Sierra Leone.

In the latter conflict, rebel-turned-Liberian-President **Charles Taylor** supplied weapons to the Rebel United Front (RUF)—an armed group in neighboring Sierra Leone that was notorious for terrorizing the population by hacking off limbs of civilians—in exchange for so-called blood diamonds. Beginning in 1991, the civil war lasted 10 years. As early as 1994, more than 50,000 people had been killed and about half the country's 4.5 million people displaced. Even now, in peacetime, the effects of the strife still linger. The reconstruction needs are overwhelming, and the notorious and cruel amputations carried out by the RUF have irrevocably damaged a major segment of the workforce, not to mention setting in place a heavy economic national burden of medical care for these amputees.

The diamond trade has fueled violence farther down Africa's Atlantic coast as well. In the Angolan civil war that raged from 1974 to 2001, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) sold diamonds valued at \$3.72 billion to finance its war with the government. It continued to do so in spite of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1176 banning the purchase of Angolan blood diamonds.

But few cases can compare to the ongoing war in the DRC, an immense country with enormous natural resources that has been embroiled in what has been called Africa's world war. Since fighting began in the 1990s, millions of people have died in the war's overlapping and interlocking conflicts.

In early November 2013, the militia group M23 surrendered after its defeat by the DRC army. Despite the general jubilation greeting this news, critics have warned that if no effort is made to address the root sources of violence in the eastern Congo—which include simmering ethnic tensions and a lucrative minerals trade—some other rebel group could easily arise in M23's stead.

In the DRC, the mineral that has up until recently fueled the war is called coltan, short for columbite-tantalite, from which tantalum is extracted. The tantalum capacitor is a stable and reliable component in smartphones, DVD players, laptops, hearing aids, and other devices. This has led critics of the mineral trade to lampoon smartphones as “blood phones,” a designation particularly aimed at the iPhone, although Apple is by no means the only guilty party. However, there are some indications that miners have switched to digging for gold, which has become much more profitable than the other so-called conflict minerals: tin, tungsten, and tantalum, known as the “three Ts.”

International markets for conflict commodities have often roped former colonial powers into resource wars directly. A case in point is Nigeria, where the entrenched hand of the British played a conniving role during the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. Charismatic Colonel Odumewu Ojukwu led the attempted secession of southeastern Nigeria, which was to be called Biafra. If successful, the breakaway would have cut the oil production of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in half. The military government in Lagos, headed by General Yakubu Gowon, was not the only one panicked over the potential loss of all that crude oil. So were the British, who went on to aid Gowon with a steady supply of weapons. Abetting Gowon's food blockade of Biafra, the British contributed to the starvation of Biafrans.

Images of skeletal, pot-bellied children shocked the world, but the position of the British was clear: “The sole immediate British interest in Nigeria,” wrote Commonwealth Minister George Thomas in August 1967, “is that the Nigerian economy should be brought back to a condition in which our substantial trade and investment in the country can be further developed, and particularly so we can regain access to important oil installations.

While Britain supported Nigeria, France and other countries covertly supplied weapons to Biafra. Did oil cause the Nigerian civil war? No. But was it an important contributing factor? Certainly.

Economics by Other Means

In the triangle of war, poverty, and conflict minerals, it is the latter that often garners the most attention among socially conscious observers.

However, as much as the minerals may be in the thick of the conflict, they aren't necessarily the immediate cause of these wars. Rather, complex social and political factors in the region, many but not all of them colonial legacies, create an environment ripe for the outbreak of wars in which the valuable minerals become a funding source for the combatants. Some of these factors include social inequality and ethnic rivalries (Tutsis and Hutus of Rwanda and the DRC); peacetime kleptocracy (Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone); a lack of employment opportunities for young men; disillusionment with government; weak democratic institutions; and poverty itself.

We tend to watch these civil and cross-border wars in sub-Saharan Africa and pronounce them irrational—"Why don't these crazy people put their energies and resources into development rather than fighting with each other?" we wonder.

But with remarkable clarity, David Keen, in the book *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, makes the point that labels such as "ethnic hatred," "mindless violence," and "chaos" are applied chiefly by people who assume that the goal of any war should be victory. However, as Keen notes, sometimes the image of war serves as a smokescreen for the emergence of a wartime political economy from which rebels and even governments may be benefitting. Small wonder the warring factions may show little interest in negotiating a settlement. War for them is not just a continuation of politics by other means; it may be a continuation of economics by other means.

There is some reason for hope—sub-Saharan African countries like Ghana and Botswana continue to strengthen their democratic institutions while capitalizing on resource boons—but millions of Africans remain caught at the dangerous intersection of poverty, war, and resources. Averting one path alone will not suffice to reduce the hazard, but escaping all paths at once is a difficult feat to execute. This piece was reprinted by Truthout with permission or license. It may not be reproduced in any form without permission or license from the source.

*Kwei Quartey was born in Ghana and raised by an African American mother and a Ghanaian father, both of whom were university lecturers. He lives in Pasadena, California where he runs a wound care clinic and is the lead physician at an urgent care center. He is the author of two novels, *Wife of the Gods* and *Children of the Street*, with *Murder at Cape Three Points* due out next year.*