

**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:

Thursday, 12 December 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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The New Dawn (Liberia)

Thursday, 12 December 2013

Urey's Presidential Ambition

J. Karyounean Browne

Former Maritime Commissioner and close confidant of ex-president Charles Taylor, Benoni Urey has reportedly expressed interest here in contesting for the Liberian Presidency in 2017 as an Independent Candidate.



A recent report by the UN Panel of Experts notes that Urey's apparent commitment to the democratic process, albeit in opposition to the governing Unity Party of Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, does not threaten the peace of Liberia.

The report details that Benoni Urey, who was the Commissioner of Maritime Affairs under former President Taylor, is subject to UN assets freeze and travel ban measures.

The Panel of Experts say evidence collected by the **Special Court for Sierra Leone** and reviewed by the Panel showed 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 and that the first shipment of arms arrived in Liberia in 2001 or 2002.

But in subsequent interviews with the Panel, Urey insisted that, as a civilian, who had been appointed to the position of Commissioner of Maritime Affairs by Taylor, he did not make any war-related decisions.

Mr. Urey 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, the Panel added.

The report observes that Urey has also invested in residential housing, hotels, a car rental company, radio and television stations and several newspapers.

“He is one of the wealthiest citizens of Liberia. On 1 October 2009, President Sirleaf appointed Urey to serve as mayor of Careysburg, but removed him from this position when it became clear that Urey would not back her re-election bid in 2011.”

The UN however warns that Urey clearly has the resources and the leadership capacity to command support and undermine peace and security in Liberia if he chooses, noting that the animosity that exists between him and the Government of Liberia has led some ranking officials in President Sirleaf's Government to speculate that he might have the motivation to do so.

“The Panel attempted to investigate Urey’s extensive assets to determine whether they are being used to support groups seeking to destabilize Liberia and the subregion. Urey’s assets have not been frozen or fully disclosed.

The Panel relied on information provided by confidential sources, the Government of Liberia and Urey himself. The Panel did not have information suggesting that Urey was involved in activities that would destabilize Liberia and the subregion.”

The report says it is difficult for the Panel to assess Urey’s intent as during the presidential and legislative elections of 2011, the Government of Liberia alleged that Urey used his radio station, Love FM, to broadcast inflammatory anti-Government statements.

“Officials saw this as evidence of Urey’s seditious intent. The Panel interviewed Urey on 15 March and 27 September 2013, a day after Taylor’s conviction was upheld. During the interviews, Urey stated to the Panel that his radio station was a commercial outlet and that it granted both government officials and opposition figures paid airtime to broadcast their views, without censorship.

The Panel has confirmed that this is the case and that Love FM is not unique among Liberian radio stations in airing inflammatory anti-Government statements. Urey, in turn, has accused the Government of involvement in the subsequent burning of the radio station’s offices because he was a financial supporter of an opposition political party, the Congress for Democratic Change.”

The Panel further notes that Urey’s business activities, and the profits gained from them, would appear to suggest that the civil conflict in Liberia would have a significant negative financial impact on him.

He reportedly informed the Panel that he had submitted a delisting request to the relevant focal point in the United Nations Secretariat as well as provided the Panel with a letter dated 6 September 2013 and signed by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, supporting his petition for delisting from the UN Travel Ban, perhaps to enable him adequately prepare for the Presidency in 2017.

Left Foot Forward

Wednesday, 11 December 2013

<http://www.leftfootforward.org/2013/12/forgotten-people/>

Forgotten people

By Carl Packman

No doubt every western individual privileged enough to travel abroad to countries poorer than their own has had the feeling that they are doing something slightly murky; that they are perhaps on occasions indulging in poverty tourism.

-SNIP-

Sierra Leone's Special Court, which got its biggest hit with the trial and conviction of Charles Taylor, closes down this year, which marks a successful end, now replaced by a residual court overseeing the protection of witnesses.

-SNIP-

The Cambodia Daily
Thursday, 12 December 2013

KRT Judges and Lawyers Begin Talks on Second ‘Mini-Trial’

By Lauren Crothers

Lawyers, judges and administrative officials at the Khmer Rouge war crimes tribunal began talks Wednesday on when a second trial against Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan could start, and whether it would be necessary to establish a second panel of judges to hear it.

The meeting took place on the back of a Supreme Court Chamber decision that ordered Case 002/02 to start “as soon as possible” and consider crimes including genocide, a Khmer Rouge worksite, and a cooperative.

Tony Kranh, acting director of the court’s Office of Administration, told the Trial Chamber judges, who were questioning him on the feasibility of a second trial, that the establishment of a second panel of judges would be at their discretion. The current panel is in the midst of deliberating on Case 002/01 and considering a verdict.

Mr. Kranh said the office would “lend support financially and materially” to a second mini-trial and could “foresee no obstacles” in it moving forward.

His deputy, Knut Rosandhaug, echoed this and said that there would be no financial impediments to a second trial.

Trial Chamber Judge Silvia Cartwright, however, raised a number of concerns about how the case would proceed in the event that a second judging panel is not established, particularly in the wake of a funding crisis that saw national staff at the court go unpaid for months this year.

“Once it starts, we don’t want there to be any obstacles, be they administrative” or otherwise, she said.

“Have you taken into account the time judges would need at a time when they are invested totally in a verdict?” she asked the prosecution, who want the trial to proceed before the same judging panel.

Nicholas Koumjian, who was formally appointed Wednesday as international co-prosecutor after replacing former prosecutor Andrew Cayley, argued that plans need to be made as soon as possible to ensure that the case can get underway. Prosecutors said it would be possible to start by the end of February.

“Now that you’ve had this meeting, we urge Your Honors to start Case 002/02,” he said.

“It is in the interest of justice...victims...and donors that we have a plan so that we can terminate or finish our work [if a second mini-trial does not go ahead].”

He told Judge Cartwright that judges at the **Special Court in Sierra Leone** were able to adjudicate one case while deliberating another.

ANSAmед

Thursday, 12 December 2013

http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/analysis/2013/12/11/Syria-Victims-conventional-weapons-the-rise_9761702.html

Syria: Victims of conventional weapons on the rise

Head of team documenting war crimes speaks about project

(by Lorenzo Trombetta) (ANSAmед) - BEIRUT, December 11 - Since the chemical attack in the Damascus region four months ago, crimes committed with conventional weapons in Syria against civilians--particularly women and children--are on the rise. The findings were revealed in an ongoing survey of war violence being conducted by an international team of legal experts and investigators led by **David Crane**, professor at Syracuse University's College of Law, and former Chief Prosecutor of the **Special Court for Sierra Leone**, a war crimes tribunal.

In a telephone interview with ANSA, Crane said, "Up until now we've documented crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Syria by both sides. Compared to 2011, the country is now a blood swamp that many are a part of, and the bloodiness continues to get worse." Since autumn 2011 the team led by the American law professor and made up of experts of "the highest profile," has been collecting proof as part of the Syrian Accountability Project (SAP), which Crane describes as "a group project that forms a bridge between collection of evidence and creation of a tribunal," and which will serve as the basis for a special tribunal for crimes committed in the Syrian war.

SAP came about just a few months after the start in spring 2011 of the bloody military repression in Syria conducted by forces loyal to Syrian president Bashar al Assad and undertaken as a response to the massive, and at the time unseen, popular anti-regime demonstrations that exploded on the wave of other revolts in North Africa and the Middle East.

"At the time we were prompted by the National Syrian Council," said Crane, referring to the first group of Syrian opposition exiles, formed in November 2011 and merged one year later into a larger but still fragmented and delegitimized platform of opposition groups based in Turkey. "We coordinate with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and we're in contact with the International Criminal Court, as well as members of the US Congress and the US administration," Crane added. "Several foreign NGOs work with us as well, such as No Peace Without Justice," he said, referring to the Italian non-profit founded by Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Emma Bonino.

Crane specified that the team collects evidence of crimes committed not only by Assad and his associates, but by all those involved, including rebels and non-Syrian forces. "We work on the principle of impartiality," he said. When asked about the sources drawn upon for proof, Crane said, "We track on a daily basis the events of the war while it's happening. We map the conflict and follow various leads at all possible levels. We verify witness testimonials by cross-checking them with other reports we receive from various sources. It's an ongoing challenge because there's an overwhelming quantity of information." Crane also said, "At this stage I can't reveal names of those presumed responsible for crimes or indicate specific episodes, but I can say that compared to when we started work, the situation has changed. First there was the regime and the rebels. Now the forces involved have multiplied." Crane said that he couldn't commit on the exact type of tribunal that might be created, and added, "In any case, we'll have to wait for the hostilities to end in order to start the procedures of creating a court." When asked whether Assad or the rebels could be accused of crimes while at the same time considered legitimate partners for finding a

political solution to the conflict, Crane said, "The fact of coming to a political solution before justice is served isn't negative in and of itself. What's important is that sooner or later justice is served for the victims. Behind the creation of every tribunal there is always a political decision. If this should turn out to be the case, we could offer the material that we're working on." (ANSAmEd).

Agence France-Presse
Wednesday, 11 December 2013

UN court says Mladic must testify in Karadzic trial

The Hague — Former Bosnian Serb army chief Ratko Mladic must give evidence in the war crimes trial of his political counterpart Radovan Karadzic, a UN tribunal ruled on Wednesday.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) said Karadzic had asked that the former military leader act as a witness for the defence.

Both men have been charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity over their roles in the 1992-1995 Bosnian war, in which 100,000 people died.

Karadzic expects Mladic to testify that "in numerous conversations and meetings he had with the accused 'they never agreed or planned to expel Muslims or Croats' from areas under Serb control," The Hague-based court said in its ruling.

The 68-year-old is blamed for authorising so-called "ethnic cleansing" in the bitter war against Bosnia's Muslim-led government.

Mladic, 71, had refused to testify in Karadzic's trial, citing his health and the amount of time taken up by his own trial.

But the judges rejected Mladic's argument, saying he was in a unique position to tell the court what information he had given the accused in relation to incidents he was allegedly involved in. He is expected to give evidence in January.

The ICTY was created in 1993 to try perpetrators of war crimes committed during the former Yugoslavia's bloody break-up.

Karadzic and Mladic both face charges over the massacre of almost 8,000 Muslim men and boys in the eastern town of Srebrenica in July 1995.

They could have been tried together had they been arrested around the same time. But Karadzic was arrested in July 2008 and Mladic in May 2011.

UN News Centre

Thursday, 5 December 2013

UN tribunals have lessons to offer on helping States deliver justice, Security Council told



President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Theodor Meron. UN Photo/Evan Schneider

As the United Nations tribunals set up in the wake of the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s and the 1994 Rwandan genocide prepare to conclude their work, there are lessons to be learned in terms of building the national capacity of States to deliver justice, officials from the courts told the Security Council today.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the creation by the Council of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which was tasked with trying those responsible for the worst war crimes and other breaches of international humanitarian law committed during the various conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

“What the Tribunal has achieved in the course of two decades has been extraordinary,” Judge Theodor Meron, President of the ICTY, said in his briefing to the Council.

He noted that the Tribunal has accounted for all 162 indicted individuals; given rise to an authoritative and extensive body of procedural and substantive law relating to serious international crimes; assisted national judicial systems in conducting their own trials of such crimes; and helped to end impunity, even for national or military leaders.

These accomplishments, he added, are a reflection not just of the hard work and dedication of the Tribunal's staff and judges, but also of the key assistance provided to the court by the UN and its Member States.

“Without this support, the success of the bold experiment in international justice initiated by this Council in 1993 would never have been possible.”

The Prosecutor for the ICTY, Serge Brammertz, told the Council that it is clear that the future of international justice is, increasingly, national justice. “While international courts will always be needed to provide an accountability safety net, building the capacity of national systems to effectively handle crimes under international law is the linchpin of the justice system.”

In this respect, the former Yugoslavia provides an important precedent, he stated. “There are lessons to learn from the different models and structures adopted by countries of the former Yugoslavia who have assumed responsibility for war crimes cases. And there are also lessons to learn from the process by which the Tribunal has transferred expertise and helped to build capacity nationally. This is an ongoing process.”

Mr. Brammertz added that 20 years after the Tribunal opened its doors, “we are yet to fully deliver on our promise of justice for victims and survivors of atrocities in the former Yugoslavia.”

In December 2010, the Security Council set up the Residual Mechanism to take over and finish the remaining tasks of both the ICTY and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) once their mandates expire. Both branches of the Mechanism, located in The Hague, are now operational.

“As expected, the imminent closure of the ad hoc tribunals has generated broad interest within the international community on the potential for their practices and other aspects of their legacy to contribute to capacity-building of national and other international tribunals in the prosecution of international crimes,” Justice Hassan B. Jallow, ICTR's Prosecutor, noted in his briefing.

This “impetus” has encouraged his office to share experience with national and international stakeholders on best practices in the fight against impunity, he added.

The President of the ICTR, Judge Vagn Joensen, outlined various training programmes, workshops and partnerships instituted by the Tribunal over the years on a range of issues to help build capacities and share lessons learned.

“These capacity-building initiatives represent some of the concrete measures that the Tribunal has taken to help to restore peace and reconciliation in the region, and ensure that present and future generations are provided with the necessary tools to continue the fight against impunity long after the Tribunal closes its doors.”

The Star (Malaysia)

Thursday, 12 December 2013

The Court - A documentary about international justice

by Tan Yi Liang

KUALA LUMPUR: With a charismatic, hard-driving prosecutor for a lead, working to put a war criminal behind bars for recruiting child soldiers in a civil war and a plot spanning The Hague, Palestine, Libya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo ... one might think The Court is another big-buck Hollywood legal thriller with an A-list cast.

However, this film directed by Marcus Vetter and Michele Gentile is actually a documentary - starring Luis Moreno Ocampo, the first Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) or more specifically, his role in the trial of Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) founder Thomas Lubanga Dyilo - work which led to Lubanga's 14-year jail sentence for the use of child soldiers.

This trial acts as a backdrop to The Court, showcasing Ocampo's efforts to prosecute Lubanga while juxtaposing the relative sterility of the Lubanga trial in the Hague with the chaos taking place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo - showing scenes of children, some under ten being taken away and beaten up by soldiers linked to Lubanga.

The Court also shows the limitations of the ICC, with another undercurrent of the film being the repeated calls asking Ocampo to intervene and prosecute the Israelis for war crimes - and Ocampo's inability to do so due to a lack of jurisdiction - for as he explains to a journalist in one scene, he has no jurisdiction to even contemplate thinking of prosecuting Israel, as it is not a signatory to the Rome Statute, which gives the ICC its powers.

Only 122 nations have signed the Rome Statute - and these 122 nations are the limit to the ICC's jurisdiction, unless the United Nations Security Council refers the case to the ICC.

These issues were highlighted by Vetter, as he does "films that have a universal language and can generate universal interest."

The 47-year old Stuttgart native told The Star Online after a screening of The Court at the Malaysian Bar Council building here on Monday that he was working to break the notion that documentaries are meant to be educational but not entertaining.

"These issues presented in my films need a big audience," said Vetter, whose other feature-length works includes The Heart of Jenin, a documentary on a Palestinian who donated his late son's organs to Israeli children even though the child was killed by the Israeli military.

In fact, Vetter said the opportunity to make The Court came about through a screening of The Heart of Jenin in Berlin.

"Ocampo approached me; he is interested in what filmmakers do and when he saw the film, we discussed making a film about the International Criminal Court. I was very honoured," said Vetter.

He said that the timing of the filming of *The Court* managed to capture some unique moments of Ocampo's term as the Prosecutor of the ICC which ran from June 16 2013 to June 15 2012.

"We were filming the documentary at about the same time he was thinking of opening a case against Israel for war crimes - but he could not as Palestine is not recognised as a country by the ICC, and that is needed before the ICC can be asked to check that case. *The Court* shows how he can have no power," said Vetter.

He spoke of the challenges facing Ocampo and his staff.

"The ICC did not know what to do, whether to recognise Palestine as a country or not. At the same time, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) had recognised Palestine as a country and they suffered a lot for that because the United States cancelled their funding for recognising Palestine as a country," said Ocampo.

Asked how long it took to make *The Court*, Vetter said it took three years as he was helping to rebuild a cinema in the Palestine while filming *The Court*, which is his tenth feature film.

Vetter added the filming of *The Court* had its own unique challenges - such as when it came to choosing what to include from the 100 hours of footage he had obtained.

"We didn't want to be too voyeuristic in the scenes we included, but we wanted to show what can still be accepted by an audience. There was footage that was too cruel to be included in *The Court*," said Vetter.

Meanwhile, the moderator for the screening, lawyer K. Shanmuga said there was an attempt to get the Malaysian government to ratify the Rome Statute when Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan was Malaysian Bar Council president.

"Two years ago, the former Minister of Law said Malaysia would ratify the Statute, but two months ago, the current Law Minister came to the Bar Council and said it is still being looked into. The reason for this is because the ICC can take action against heads of state, including the commander of the nation's army which is notionally the Yang di-Pertuan Agong in Malaysia's case," said Shanmuga.