

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



A seaside village in Northern Sierra Leone

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office**

**as at:**

Wednesday, 1 August 2007

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

Wednesday, 1 August 2007

### Hinga Norman Spokesman Rejects Special Court Report

*"In my opinion, Mr. Sam Hinga Norman died due to MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE AND THE FAILURE OF THE SPECIAL COURT TO PROVIDE THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT I.E. PROPER MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR HIS TREATMENT"* Albert Joe Demby, MD.  
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**SAMFORAY:** On February 23, Special Court President Justice George Gelaga-King appointed Justice Renate Winter to head an inquiry to look into the circumstances of Mr. Norman's death. On July 16, 2007, Justice Winter submitted that report to the President of the court. Below is my response as the family's representative to Justice Winter's report along with some of the evidence tendered but obviously not considered by Justice Winter in her inquiry.

First, let me make it very clear that the release of this report without first informing the family of Chief Norman who are the primary beneficiaries of the findings and whose cooperation the court sought and received in the course of the investigation is insensitive, unprofessional and in my opinion grossly unethical on the part of Justice Winter.

For the purpose of clarity, my response is in bold print and has been woven into the various points stated in the report. The Special Court report is in italics. I have also included relevant portions from the reports submitted to the court by former Vice President, Dr. Albert Joe Demby, who was the family's representative present at the autopsy in Senegal as well as Chief Hinga Norman's son, Mr. Mohamed Lansana Jawara, who was with Chief Norman from day of the surgery to the moment the Chief collapsed and died and was subsequently forced to leave the room by hospital staff.

**JUSTICE WINTER:** *An independent autopsy found that he died of natural causes, and that his death was unrelated to the treatment, which he received.*

**SAMFORAY:** We note that the facilities, the medical examiners and the timing of the autopsy were entirely chosen by the court without due regard to the family's wishes to have one of their own medical examiners present. Dr. Albert Joe Demby was present at the autopsy only as a representative of the family not in his capacity as a physician. Neither did Dr. Demby participate in the procedure itself. As such, the autopsy cannot be honestly described by any reasonable person as "independent". Furthermore, as we will show below, the treatment, which Chief Norman received or failed to receive and the deplorable facility where he was detained in Senegal were the direct cause of his death.

**JUSTICE WINTER:** *1. Mr. Norman died at L'Hopital Aristide Le Dantec on Thursday, 22 February, at around 11:00. He died in the presence of the Special Court's Medical Officer and the Senegalese doctors and nurses who were called in to resuscitate him.*

**SAMFORAY:** The hospital where Mr. Sam Hinga Norman was admitted and died was described by President Tejan Kabbah as "one of the most renowned hospitals in Senegal..." Ray Cardinal, Chief of Detention, described the hospital as a Military Hospital called De La DANTEC. According to Dr. Albert Demby, Mr. Mohamed Jawara and Mr. Sam Norman, Jr. as well as Chief Norman himself in an extemporaneous interview with the BBC brutally interrupted by special court staff, Chief Norman was never admitted to De La Dantec Hospital but to an old colonial teaching hospital called Aristede Le Dantec meant for the indigent and common prisoners. And where Mr. Norman was admitted "was a prison cell, not a hospital ward".

Based on the above observations by family members present in Dakar, it is evident that either President Kabbah was grossly misinformed or he is being purposefully deceitful. Or both. In the case of Mr. Cardinal, it is inconceivable that he would not know the facilities where his own prisoner was being held. Obviously, he was lying about Mr. Norman's status of detention in Dakar. Justice Winter, for her part, had a moral and

professional obligation to find out and she apparently did not want to know the truth in this matter.

**JUSTICE WINTER:** *2. An autopsy with full pathological and toxicological examinations was conducted by independent pathologists. The findings of this inquiry confirmed that Mr. Norman died of natural causes from a myocardial infarction. There were no indications of violence, nor was poison found in his body.*

**SAMFORAY:** According to Dr. Demby, "No proper investigation was done prior to his (Chief Norman's) hospitalization or after his collapse on 20 February."

Chief Norman was given blood that was never typed to his own blood nor was it commensurate with his body size for quantity of blood he had already lost. Two of his ribs were fractured and he bled continuously for two weeks during post-operative care. Justice Winter requested and received the bloody beddings from Mr. Norman's cell. As such, no serious inquest could have concluded that "Mr. Norman died of natural causes from a myocardial infarction" especially given Dr. Demby's own conclusion that..."In my opinion, therefore, while I do still accept the autopsy findings, yet I do record here that Mr. Sam Hinga Norman died, due to MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE AND THE FAILURE OF THE SPECIAL COURT TO PROVIDE THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT I.E. PROPER MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR HIS TREATMENT (HOSPITAL)" Or Mr. Jawara's own conclusion that..."In my opinion, my father died due to MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE, THE DOCTORS AND SPECIAL COURT AUTHORITIES".

**JUSTICE WINTER:** *3. Security at the hospital was tight. Outside security was provided by Senegalese security officers, and inside by both Senegalese security officers and security officers from the Special Court.*

SAMFORAY: Again, this is deceitful and purposefully misleading. The fact of the matter is that Chief Norman was held in a prison cell (called cubicle in Senegal) in a prison house within a hospital complex. This extraordinary security – three checkpoints before getting to Chief Norman – was the very reason why rescue staff was not able to assist him in time when he collapsed on February 22.

JUSTICE WINTER: 4. *Allegations made by some media outlets and by Mr. Norman himself that he was being poisoned were completely unfounded.*

SAMFORAY: Justice Winter had no way to know based strictly on a toxicological report performed entirely by the court's own toxicologists at a sub-standard facility with any degree of medical certainty whether or not Mr. Norman was poisoned. There are indeed many drugs, which are essentially undetectable without extensive and expensive toxicological testing by highly trained toxicological personnel which the court did not have in Senegal.

JUSTICE WINTER: 5. *Throughout his detention, Mr. Norman was treated by the Special Court's Medical Officer. He arranged Mr. Norman's treatment in accordance with the available advice of other medical specialists.*

SAMFORAY: Again according to Dr. Demby, "The hospital was not ideal to handle such cases. If the hospital was ideal, then Mr. Norman was regarded as a prisoner or a detainee, hence kept in a cubicle (prison cell) without proper medical care." Dr. Donald Harding, the court physician who accompanied Mr. Norman to Senegal was cold, callous, insensitive and entirely disengaged from Mr. Norman throughout the stay in Dakar. Harding who confirmed Chief Norman's death to me assured me that he did every thing possible to save the Chief. I later found out that he was rarely around the two patients he had in Senegal. He ordered Norman's son not to bother him and if Mr. Norman needed any thing, security or the duty supervisor will contact him. So when on two separate occasions Mr. Norman collapsed, Harding was not near him. He prevented Chief Norman to be taken to intensive care unit as advised by other doctors

present after Chief Norman collapsed the second time in two days. Harding cited security reasons for his refusal. He played no pro-active role in Mr. Norman's post operative therapy or the botched CPR on Mr. Norman that resulted in two broken ribs. Instead, some fellow named Osman was in charge of this. Dr. Harding's only duty was to pronounce Chief Norman dead.

JUSTICE WINTER: 6. *Registry staff responded quickly to Mr. Norman's need for medical treatment, and ensured that adequate medical treatment was provided.*

7. *Mr. Norman had cardiac problems at the time of his arrival at the Court's detention facility in 2003. Throughout his detention, the Special Court's Medical Officer regularly checked Mr. Norman's cardiac health.*

SAMFORAY: This is perhaps the most ridiculous and self-indicting statement in this whole report. If the court's physician was well aware that Mr. Norman had a chronic cardiac problem at the time of his arrest, why was he allowed to undergo a major surgery resulting in a significant loss of blood, which obviously culminated in heart failure apparently due to cardiac fatigue? What was the compelling reason to have the operation done at this time without solving the cardiac problem of which the court was well aware?

JUSTICE WINTER: 8. *During his detention, Mr. Norman suffered from several other health problems which were immediately looked after. For any medical problem which required a specialised opinion, treatment was reviewed by specialists and regular check-ups were made.*

SAMFORAY: The family is well equipped with Chief Norman's medical records as well as other relevant information. We are not aware that at any time during Mr. Norman's incarceration, he was seen by a specialist in cardiology or orthopedic medicine. Unless Justice Winter can provide such a record, this part of her report remains a falsehood calculated to deceive the public and the Hinga Norman family.

JUSTICE WINTER: 9. *Mr. Norman refused the doctor's advice to follow a healthier lifestyle. When asked a second time to do so he stated that he might be poisoned.*

SAMFORAY: This is pure and undulated falsehood. Mr. Norman was a compulsive walker prior to his arrest. He was a moderate user of alcohol (mostly wine after meals) and never used tobacco in any form. He went to bed early and always woke up without the assistance of an alarm clock. The long hours he put in at the office – ten to twelve hour days – may have contributed to his moderate obesity. Otherwise, Mr. Norman had no destructive habits or negative life style that would have contributed to his death from myocardial infarction. As the court was already aware, Mr. Norman had a dislocated right hip, which severely restricted his physical mobility. This coupled with his age and the long period of incarceration may have resulted in undesired weight gain during the time he was at the Detention Center. The second part of this paragraph makes no sense.

JUSTICE WINTER: "In light of the above considerations, I find that proper care was taken by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the furnishment and provision of medical care for the late Mr. Sam Hinga Norman during the entire time that he spent at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Detention", Justice Winter concluded.

*She noted that, apart from Senegal, no country had volunteered to provide medical assistance to treat Mr. Norman's hip problem. The Special Court therefore had no other option than to transfer Mr. Norman, with his consent, to L'Hopital Aristide le Dantec in Dakar.*

SAMFORAY: This also is a gross misrepresentation of facts. The court on several occasions refused requests by Mr. Norman and his family to take him to a First World nation for the surgery. According to the courts information director, Peter Andersen, the court feared that once in the United Kingdom or United States, for instance, there was a real possibility for Mr. Norman or his supporters

to seek asylum for him. Secondly, the court failed to inform the countries involved that unlike the AFRC and RUF indictees, there was no international travel ban on Chief Norman. The reason these countries refused to accept Chief Norman was that they feared violating the UN travel ban placed on the AFRC and RUF. Thus the notion that “*the Special Court therefore had no other option than to transfer Mr. Norman, with his consent, to L’Hopital Aristide le Dantec in Dakar*” is once again false and purposefully deceitful. It is also a lie that Chief Norman went to Senegal and L’Hopital Aristide le Dantec “*with his consent*”.

The president of Senegal has stated very clearly on Senegalese television that his government was not made fully aware of the full particulars of Chief Hinga Norman when Senegal accepted him and the RUF leader Hassan Issa Sesay. The special court essentially conned Senegal into accepting Chief Norman with the same status as the rebels and the Senegalese had no choice but to treat Chief Norman and Isa Sesay together as one and the same – common criminals. This is why the Senegalese were obliged to send a delegation to Chief Norman’s funeral and to express their sympathy to his family.

*JUSTICE WINTER: “I, therefore, find no reason to believe that the concerned authorities of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have failed in providing the best possible medical treatment available”, Justice Winter said.*

*“Concerning the medical care provided at L’Hopital Aristide le Dantec, I find, taking into consideration the evaluation of the independent medical expert, that international standards in diagnosis and treatment have been upheld”.*

SAMFORAY: Chief Hinga Norman’s eldest son was in Senegal following the death of his father. He identified the body and accompanied the corpse home following the autopsy. He presumably made visual and pictorial observations of the facilities where Chief Norman was held and died. I spoke to Chief Norman almost everyday while he was in Senegal. I was told much about the type of care Chief Norman was receiving. I made the public release of Chief Norman’s death prior to the special court release. The court was also fully informed that I was the family’s representative on the matter relating to the inquiry into the death of Chief Norman prior to the release of this report. Yet neither Sam Norman, Jr. nor I was asked to make a submission for the inquest. Nor were either of us or the family’s chief representative, Dr. Albert Joe Demby, informed of the outcome of the inquest apart from reading about it on the internet. We still have no official report from the court.

IT IS, THEREFORE, MY CONCLUSION THAT JUSTICE WINTER’S ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS ARE INCREDIBLY SUPERFICIAL, PATENTLY SELF-SERVING AND GROSSLY UNREPRESENTATIVE OF THE FACTS OF THE MATTER. THIS REPORT ALSO GROSSLY UNDERMINES THE CREDIBILITY OF THE SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE AS WELL AS THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY OF THE AUTHOR OF THIS REPORT.

Furthermore, the report serves only as a cover your behind exercise meant to placate donor nations who may ask why a court mandated to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for unlawful killings in Sierra Leone has essentially become a Killer Court in its own right. To wit, three of the leading defendants, Foday Sankoh, Sam “Maskita” Bockarie and Chief Hinga Norman and presumably Johnny Paul Koroma have either died while in the custody of the court or escaped justice without any determination of their guilt or innocence.

-On behalf of the Hinga Norman family, I categorically reject this report as false, dishonest, speculative and unreliable for the purpose of establishing the true cause of the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman.

Rev. Alfred Munda SamForay,  
Representing the Hinga Norman Family

The New Citizen  
Wednesday, 1 August 2007

## First Khmer Rouge Leader Charged



### *Duch is the first of five suspects to be investigated*

An ex-Khmer Rouge prison chief has been charged with crimes against humanity by a UN-backed tribunal in Cambodia.

Kang Kék Ieu, also known as Duch, was in charge of the notorious S21 jail in the country's capital, Phnom Penh.

Duch is the first of five suspects whom prosecutors have asked the tribunal to investigate over their role in the brutal Khmer Rouge regime.

More than a million people are thought to have died during the four years of Khmer Rouge rule between 1975-79.

Judges spent several hours interviewing Duch on Tuesday before formally filing charges against him.

"The co-investigating judges of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia have charged Kang Kek Ieu, alias Duch,

for crimes against humanity and have placed him in provisional detention," tribunal judges said in a statement.

# **First Khmer Rouge leader charged**

Key figures in the Khmer Rouge Duch was not among the top level of Khmer Rouge leaders but he has become one of its most notorious members, according to the BBC's Guy De Launey in Phnom Penh.

## Cocorioko Website

Tuesday, 31 July 2007

### **CDF Verdict Due on Thursday**

Comments by

Alfred M. SamForay, CDF Defence Fund.

The verdict in the matter of Prosecutor versus the two remaining CDF Accused, former Director of War, Moinina Fofana, and former Chief Initiator, Dr. Alieu Kondewa, is due on Thursday 2 August 2007. By the time the verdict is given, it would have taken the three judge Chamber over eight months to ascertain the guilt or innocence of the CDF accused. No verdict is expected in the case of First Accused, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, who died in a prison cell in Dakar, Senegal on 22 February 2007 following hip replacement surgery. The case against Chief Norman was closed following his death. Efforts by members of his family to obtain a verdict post-mortem was unsuccessful, the court arguing that a verdict will not serve the interest of justice.

It also would have been four long years since these men were arrested and detained, and the toll on them and members of their families who are sustained only by the goodwill of friends and supporters has been devastating, to say the least. SO WE ASK WHAT HAS TAKEN THE CHAMBER THIS LONG TO DECIDE ON THE CASE OF THE CDF ACCUSED? We are, of course, not unaware of the fact that the court has allowed four of its leading defendants, Foday Sankoh, Sam Bockarie, Chief Hinga Norman and possibly Johnny Paul Koroma, to die in custody without determining their guilt or innocence.

In the case of Chief Norman, not just that we will never be able to know the outcome of the charges leveled against him, we may also never know the true cause of his death. The court in a cover your behind internal investigation recently concluded that Chief Norman died of what it called "natural causes". This despite the fact that overwhelming evidence was submitted to the court stating unequivocally that Mr. Norman died as a result of medical negligence in a prison cell at a significantly sub-standard medical facility in Dakar.

For the remaining two accused leaders of the CDF, we can only hope that sense and sensibility will prevail and these men will be freed to proceed with the remainder of their lives so unfairly interrupted by these bogus charges brought against them. It will then be left to the people of Sierra Leone when they go to the polls on August 11 whether they will re-elect and reward the useless government that allowed this tragedy to visit our people in the form of an avoidable coup followed by an exercise in judicial duplicity by indicting Chief Norman, Mr. Fofanah and Dr. Kondewa without indicting the political leaders who actually directed the war "President Kabbah inclusive.

Both Mr. Fofana and Dr. Kondewa are charged with eight counts each of Crimes against Humanity, violations of Article III Common to the Geneva Conventions (War Crimes) as well as other serious violations of international humanitarian laws. Each man can be found separately guilty or not guilty on all or any of the eight charges without prejudice to the other. We look forward to the release from custody of these men on Thursday so that the healing process begun following the eleven-year civil war will resume in earnest. Any thing other than total vindication for these men will be unacceptable in the interest of justice and national unity. Simply stated, Mr. Fofana and Dr. Kondewa are not the men who bear the greatest responsibility for the alleged violations of the protocols of war as defined by the court. The people of Sierra Leone and the international community which has wasted over \$200 million on this court is no doubt watching very carefully the outcome of the CDF trial.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 31 July 2007

*[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]*

### **International Clips on Liberia**

*There were no relevant stories on Liberia in the international media today.*

### **International Clips on West Africa**

BBC Last Updated: Monday, 30 July 2007, 17:51 GMT 18:51 UK

#### **Ivory Coast leaders burn weapons**

Ivory Coast's president and prime minister have set fire to stockpiled weapons to symbolize the end of the country's five-year conflict. It was the first time that President Laurent Gbagbo had gone to the former rebel-held north since 2002, when an uprising against him split the country.

"People of Ivory Coast, the war is over," he said in Bouake.

#### **Sierra Leone polling body vows to make sure vote is free, fair**

FREETOWN, July 30, 2007 (AFP) - Sierra Leone's national elections commission on Monday vowed to do all in its powers to ensure that upcoming general elections are free and fair. The commission has put in place "contingency plans to ensure fair and transparent general elections on August 11," commission spokeswoman Miatta French said.

#### **Overcrowding blamed for deaths in Sierra Leone jail**

FREETOWN, July 30, 2007 (AFP) - Sierra Leone's prisons chief on Monday acknowledged that overcrowding has led to an upsurge in the deaths of inmates at the country's top jail in Freetown in recent months. Prisons director Francis Conteh confirmed recent media reports that 16 prisoners have died since May at Pademba Road maximum security prison in the capital, mainly from pneumonia.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **China Not Deterred by Killing of its Citizen**

*(The Analyst, National Chronicle, The Informer, Inquirer, Daily Observer and The News)*

- The Chinese Government has renewed its commitment to the bi-lateral relations with Liberia and said the murder of one of its citizen, Mrs. Jiang Chongyu will not discourage them from contributing positively to the development initiatives of government. Speaking yesterday in Monrovia, Out-going Chinese Ambassador, Lin Songtian condemned the killing and called on government to bring the perpetrators to justice. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has assured that government will speedily prosecute the culprit.

#### **Treason Trial Rescheduled Following State Prosecutors Request**

*(The Analyst, New Democrat, Inquirer, Daily Observer and The News)*

- State lawyers in the treason trial of former Presidential Guard Commander, Charles Julu and the Former Speaker of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly, George Koukou asked for the postponement of the case to. The case was scheduled to have resumed today, after both men were charged with treason on Friday July 20<sup>th</sup>.



### **President Sirleaf Signs 2007/2008 Budget into Law**

*(The Analyst, Heritage and The Informer)*

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf yesterday signed into law the National Budget for the fiscal year of 2007/2008 amounting to L\$11.6 billion (US\$199.8 million). Making remarks during the signing ceremony, President Sirleaf praised the members of the National Legislature for their cooperation with the Legislative and Executive Branches of Government, during the budget review process.

### **Truth Commission Urged to Tackle Root Causes of Conflict**

*(The Informer, New Democrat and Daily Observer)*

- Speaking during a visit to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) yesterday, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf urged the Commission to tackle the root causes of the conflict to arrive at a formula for national identity and reconciliation. President Sirleaf said the inquiry by the TRC should not only address the recent dislocation but should go back to the founding of the State.

**Local Media – Star Radio** *(News culled from website today at 9:00 am)*

### **President Signs Fiscal Budget into Law**

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas and ELBS)*

### **Chinese Suspend Weaving Project at Vocational Training Institute**

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas and ELBS)*

### **Telecom Regulators Halt Activities of new Telecom Company**

- A statement issued yesterday said that the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) directed the newly established West Africa Telecommunications (WAT) to suspend all its activities, pending the standardization of licenses and radio-frequency authorizations. The Authority said that the action is in line with the new Telecommunication Law just passed by the National Legislature.

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas and ELBS)*

### **Human Rights Lawyer to Defend Alleged Coup Plotter**

- According to Correspondents, Human Rights Lawyer Dempster Brown said that he would defend suspected coup plotter, General Charles Julu on grounds that Julu's family told him that the suspect had no lawyer and money and therefore requested him to do so. General Julu and the former Speaker of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly, George Koukou are charged with treason for their role in plot to topple the Government of Liberia.

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas and ELBS)*

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

Liberia Government (Monrovia)  
Tuesday, 31 July 2007

### **President Sirleaf Urges TRC to Identify Structural Flaws That Have Impeded Progress**

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says there is a need to identify those structural flaws that have impeded Liberia's progress over the years. Such an exercise the President said, would help government in shaping its policies that would put the country on an irreversible course. The President said Liberia has an opportunity to get the country on the right path that will fundamentally alter the course successive government would follow.

According to an Executive Mansion release, the President was speaking on Tuesday during a visit to the offices of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

During a meeting with the Chairman and members of the Commission, the President said it was important for the TRC to go beyond recent events in the country's history and address the root causes of events dating back to the founding years. President Johnson Sirleaf attributed some of the problems which have affected the country to 'social cleavages' that resulted in crisis of identify and participation. The President said unless such issues are addressed, the country would have missed an opportunity to address the serious structural flaws that could lead the country to conflict.

The Liberian leader said, government remains supportive of the decision which set up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission during the 2003 Accra Peace Conference and would continue to provide budgetary support to enhance the work of the Commission. The President, however, added that "those who want to pursue justice beyond the process of contrition and forgiveness, our government should support the process through the guidance of the Commission."

TRC Chairman, Cllr Jerome Verdier thanked the President for the visit, noting that the success of the Commission is crucial to the attainment of the total restoration of peace in the country. Cllr. Verdier observed that the divisions among Liberians run very deep, and pointed out that it was only through the TRC process that the divisions could be bridged.

Monday's visit to the TRC Sinkor offices by the President was the first since the Commission opened its offices last year.

Chicagotribune.com

Tuesday, 31 July 2007

## WAR'S CHILDREN

A generation is left wanting years after battles have ended

Stories by Christine Spolar, Tribune foreign correspondent. Photos by Kuni Takahashi, Tribune staff photographer

Faraway wars are easy to forget. Liberia's 14-year plunge into bloodlust lingers, in images and memory, for its stain on a generation in West Africa. Among its 3.5 million people, thousands were particularly vulnerable. They were children.

It is difficult to know how many youths could have resisted joining some side at some time in the on-and-off-again civil war that began in 1989, ended in 2003 and left at least 150,000 people dead. Thousands of boys were kidnapped by gangs from three warring factions; others, infected by feverish times, chose to fight. Girls were grabbed, forced into the ranks and repeatedly raped.

Photographer Kuni Takahashi recorded the chaos that swept the country before international intervention stopped the slaughter in August 2003. Takahashi then stayed on to follow dozens of children--victims and survivors as well as former soldiers--as they sought some kind of peace in a devastated world.

Three of those children, first seen in 2003 and found by Takahashi again in 2004 and 2005, are profiled in the Tribune today and Tuesday as reminders of what happens after war. Their names are simple: Momo, Gift and Musu. Momo was a soldier, one of thousands of boys turned into killers. Gift and Musu are girls who were caught in the war's crossfire.

Momo put down his guns and for months found little else to fill his days but memories of battle. He still struggles to find work. Illiterate, Momo has scant opportunity for school or training even in peace. Musu and Gift cope with scars from combat. Musu lost her hand to a rocket attack. Gift saw her family wiped out in a mortar blast. She exists as a living casualty, a teenage girl left on her own.

Conventional wisdom held that Liberia could be revived by massive amounts of money and goodwill. Within months of the cease-fire, that hope dimmed. Warlords still wield power. Exiled President Charles Taylor, accused of war crimes, remains unencumbered by justice in nearby Nigeria. Amid the disorientation, there is a worry that terrorist groups can hide or operate and that former young soldiers, without work or school, can be drawn into other conflicts in the region.

This month, Liberia elected its first president since the war, and the exercise boosted hopes. The vote was deemed fair and proved historic. The winner appears to be Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard-educated economist who would be Liberia's first woman president. Still, there are no quick fixes. Corruption and carelessness--from within Liberia and even from those who came to help--continue to sap the country's prospects.

The United Nations devised a guns-for-money program, just after the war, aimed at keeping the peace. It promised that every soldier who gave up a gun would be rewarded with cash and a free education. Those plans were upended when three times as many people as expected showed up

with arms. Money earmarked for education was exhausted to pay for the guns. At one point, for as long as a year, 43,000 ex-soldiers drifted without school or training.

Frustrations grew for thousands of Liberians in the first year of peace. Their prospects paled next to what their parents and grandparents once dreamed. The UN came up with more money for schooling, but the delay deeply damaged the recovery.

Liberia faded from public consciousness when the worst of the fighting stopped. The truth is, after two years of what passes for peace, the perimeters of pain have only shifted. Liberia can offer its next generation only the barest of necessities.

Liberia's children must be strong enough or callous enough to get by on their own.

## BBC Online

Wednesday, 1 August 2007

### Child soldiers 'need mental help'

More must be done to help child soldiers deal with mental problems in order to break the cycle of violence in war-torn regions, a report has said.

The study by German researchers found that post-traumatic stress made former child soldiers less willing to reject revenge and consider reconciliation.

Their mental distress could "impose barriers to sustainable and long-term peace building", the study said.



The study said mental health issues needed urgent attention

An estimated 250,000 child soldiers are fighting in wars around the world.

For the study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers interviewed 169 children aged between 11 and 18 who had been forced to fight in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

They live in two rehabilitation centres which have been home to some 20,000 former child soldiers over the past 10 years.

### Important factor

Most of the child soldiers were subjected to violence to make them fight - they had seen beatings, shooting and rape, and more than half said they had killed.

The researchers found that about a third of the children were suffering from post-traumatic stress.

They were asked to agree or disagree with statements such as "I am ready to forgive the persons who harmed me", and "I am going to pay back the persons who harmed me for what they did".

Those with more severe symptoms of post-traumatic stress were significantly less willing to consider reconciliation and regarded acts of retaliation as a way to overcome their experiences, the study found.

The researchers said their findings underlined the urgency of dealing with the psychological effects of war on child soldiers.

"Post-traumatic stress might be an important factor influencing post-conflict situations and may contribute to cycles of violence found in war-torn regions," they said.

## BBC Online

Wednesday, 1 August 2007

### **Afghan judges' bodies discovered**

The bodies of four Afghan judges who were kidnapped nearly a fortnight ago, have been found in Ghazni province, officials have said.

The bodies were discovered on Tuesday night in Dehyak district, one of the officials told the BBC.

The Taleban have claimed responsibility for the killings.

The judges were from the neighbouring province of Paktita. They were abducted a day after 23 South Koreans were taken hostage.

Two of the Koreans, who are also being held in Ghazni, have been since killed.

#### **'Bodies seen'**

A man, who identified himself as Qari Yousaf and claimed to speak for the Taleban, told the BBC, "Our Mujahideens (fighters) killed the four judges last night around 8pm.

"They were killed because they were working for the Afghan government."

News agency AFP said its photographer had seen the bodies of the four men. One of the men had been shot in the head and others in the body.

Last month, suspected Taleban gunmen killed a judge in southern Afghanistan.

Judge Qazi Namatullah was killed by two men on a motorbike in Panjwayi district in Kandahar Province.

A man claiming to speak for the Taleban said the group had killed the judge because he worked for the government.

