

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Friday, July 01, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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Mariama S. Yilla
Ext 7217 / 7216

Awoko. Friday July 1st, 2005.

Amnesty heightens Taylor's extradition campaign

By Tamba Borbor

A coalition of up to 300 African and international civil society groups including Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch and Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) have joined in calling on the leadership of the African Union (AU) to hand over Charles Taylor for trial in Sierra Leone. Speaking at a Press Briefing

organised at the offices of AI Thursday 30th June, the Executive Director of Amnesty International Sierra Leone Chapter, Mr. Momoh A. Jimmy said that the essence of their campaign is to break the cycle of impunity. He stated that they intend urging the AU to come out with a resolution aimed at extraditing the former Liberian leader

for trial at the Special Court. He maintained that the media is an integral part of this campaign to fight impunity in the world. The Chairman of AI-SL, Mr. Nabie Vandi noted that their work has not just been specified to the issue of Charles Taylor but that they made significant contributions in the Pinochet case and that of

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Amnesty heightens Taylor's extradition campaign

From Front Page

the present Israel Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon sometime ago. He maintained that there can be no peace without justice; adding, "the continuous harbouring of Charles Taylor in Nigeria is slowing the pace of the trials at the Special Court." Mr. Vandi stated that crimes against humanity are extraditable anywhere in the world and that countries don't need treaties to act on them. Harpinder Athwal, the Special Assistant to the Prosecutor of the Special Court said it is absolutely energising and refreshing for the Special Court to see such a massive African build up of civil society organisations focused

at ensuring the Special Court indictee faces the Court. She stated that they are looking up to the African leaders to take seriously and act on the urgent call of civil society organisations in Africa regarding Taylor's extradition. In a Press release, the African Program Director of Amnesty International-Kolawole Olaniyan stated, "it is now time for the African Union to join ranks with other key nations and international bodies in calling for Charles Taylor to face trial for these serious crimes." He went on to say that "taking a stand

will not only bring justice to the countless victims of Charles Taylor and their families but also show that the AU is serious about combating the disastrous cycle of impunity in West Africa." Richard Dicker, the Director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch said that Taylor's facing justice is key to maintaining stability in the sub-region; adding that President Obasanjo as chair of AU must provide the necessary leadership to achieve this. Amnesty International is also working in collaboration with about 30 civil society organisations in Sierra Leone to push forward the campaign of ensuring Charles Taylor's extradition to Sierra Leone.

Concord Times. Friday July 1st 2005.

Amnesty International, Civil Societies want Taylor to face justice

Story: Joseph Kamanda

A coalition comprising 300 African countries in collaboration with civil society groups, Amnesty International Sierra Leone, Human Rights organizations, Open Society Justice Initiative campaigning against impunity Thursday called on the African Union Assembly to demonstrate its human rights commitment when they meet in Libya come next week, by ensuring that former Liberian President Charles Taylor faces justice for alleged crimes that he committed against the

people of Sierra Leone during the decade long civil war.

Addressing newsmen at AISL's conference hall Pademba Road Nabie Vandie Chairman AISL said their role in fighting against impunity is not only limited to the issue of Taylor as it's the right time for Civil Societies to take action as AISL believes in the fair trial of Taylor that's why they declared Thursday June 30th as a campaign against impunity.

He said even when Taylor's indictment was declared there was a regional

conspiracy surrounding the whole issue and he was flown from Ghana to Liberia forgetting that he has to stand trial in Sierra Leone for crimes committed against the people of this country.

"Justice cannot be dictated and the Special Court is only subject to the jurisdiction of the International Community. The question of democratic elections in Liberia before handing over Taylor is just a tactics by the Nigerian government to retain Taylor in Calaba," Nabie said.

Section Director AISL, Momoh A. Jimmy said they started the campaign against impunity even before the inception of the Special Court and pleaded with

President Kabbah not to escape the issue of Charles Taylor which is "a clear concern of the people of Sierra Leone and we don't need to have any treaty with Nigeria before extraditing Taylor to face justice," Jimmy said pointing out that bringing Taylor to book will add a whole lot of value to the profile of the Special Court as Nigeria cannot grant asylum to Taylor in order to maintain peace whilst Sierra Leone does not have justice.

AISL wants Taylor in Sierra Leone to stand trial for charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity ranging from killing, mutilation, rape and other forms of sexual violence, the recruitment and the use of child soldiers as well as forced labour.

Concord Times . Friday July 1st, 2005.

For Hinga Norman's indictment...

Kamajor exposes SLPP over Special Court



Chief Hinga Norman - suffered for the SLPP

Another war of words has broken out between two Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) officials over the Special Court. The Spokesman of the Civil Defense Force, Rev. Alfred

Samforay blasted some verbal fusillades at the former Sierra Leone Ambassador to the U.S. and prospective Presidential

candidate John Ernest Leigh Saturday. But Leigh parried the shots and launched his own attacks. The latest round of invectives over national events salvos were started by the CDF Spokesman, Rev. Samforay, when in a public release, he responded to earlier comments made by Mr. Leigh that he played no role in the agreement to establish the Special Court for Sierra Leone. According to Mr. Leigh, who earlier promised in a Freetown press conference that he will re-negotiate the Special Court agreement, if he is elected

President of Sierra Leone, explained that the contract (To set up the Special Court) was between the United Nations and the
Continued page 3

Kamajor exposes SLPP

From page 1
government of Sierra Leone.

But Saturday, Samforay released a public statement, stating that he and persons he did not name had "uncovered several instances contradicting Mr. Leigh's statements ..." and he went on to outline what he described as "Great satisfaction" in Mr. Leigh for the establishment of the court. Mr. Leigh, who is known for saying it as it is, swiftly responded to refute SamForay's claims and restate his claim that he played no part in the establishment of the Special Court.

SAMFORAY'S LETTER TO JOHN LEIGH JOHN LEIGH AND THE SPECIAL COURT

Alfred Munda Sam Foray,
The Hinga Norman-CDF
Defence Fund & the Sierra
Leone Working Group

June 24, 2005

"With malice towards none,
and charity towards all,"
Abraham Lincoln.

In a recent letter to this writer,
former Sierra Leone
Ambassador to the United
States, Hon. John Ernest Leigh,
stated quite emphatically that:-

He played no role in the
agreement to establish the so-
called special court for Sierra
Leone. Credit: cocorioko

TO BE CONTINUED

Independent Observer. Friday July 1st 2005.

War Crimes Prosecutors Meet in Freetown

The Second Prosecutors Colloquium, hosted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, provided a venue for all the Prosecutors to meet and discuss the challenges facing the international criminal tribunals, as well as share success stories and best practices. The Special Court's Prosecutor, David Crane, was joined by Luis Moreno Ocampo, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court; Hassan Bubacar Jallow, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; and David Tolbert, Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

The Prosecutors represented the world's four major criminal tribunals working to end impunity for the most serious crimes that plague humankind, and to contribute to peace and the prevention of future crimes. The tribunals have been entrusted with the responsibility of bringing to justice individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The colloquium discussions determined that international justice is at a crossroads. To succeed in fulfilling the mandates and deliver justice effectively and efficiently, the tribunals are greatly reliant upon the cooperation of national states.

The commitment of national states and the international community will be measured by their willingness to deliver indictees for trial, even if politically difficult. International criminal justice must apply to indicted fugitives such as Charles Taylor, Radovan Karadzic, and Ratko Mladic. To permit individuals accused of the gravest of crimes to evade justice would reinforce the culture of impunity that fuels conflict and atrocities.

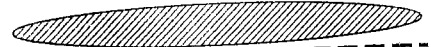
Furthermore, investigations of the tribunals cannot be completed without open access to all areas and documents under investigation. Investigating teams cannot complete their missions unless granted permission to move freely and securely within the state/area of investigation and with the cooperation and support of the national state.

Fundamentally, the tribunals cannot succeed without the firm commitment of sovereign states to discharge their legal and treaty obligations. Treaties such as the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and other international agreements and conventions need to be complied with. State cooperation with the international criminal tribunals is one of the pillars upon which the future development of international law depends.

The Prosecutors stated: "These tribunals have made great progress and set new precedent in

international law. Violators of international criminal law including heads of state or government have been indicted and brought to justice. Others are awaiting trial. All this underlining the fundamental principle that in the rule of law no one is above the law. Nevertheless, many continue to suffer from these crimes throughout the world, we affirm that only a sustained commitment to accountability will deter these atrocities. We call upon all national and international authorities to strengthen their dedication to justice.

"We believe that the people of the world are entitled to a system that will deter grave international crimes and hold to account those who bear the greatest responsibility. Only when a culture of accountability has replaced the culture of impunity can the diverse people of the world live and prosper together in peace."



The Exclusive. Friday July 1st, 2005.

Taylor Will Not Come To Salor

By Foday Fofana

The Nigerian government has made it abundantly clear that they will only hand over war criminal and former NPFL warlord, Charles Gangay Taylor, to a democratically elected government in Liberia. In an interview with the BBC's Ofeibea Quist-Arcot over the BBC's Network Africa yesterday, the Governor of Calabar, Mr. Donald Duke, who is the host to My Taylor, denied reports that the former rebel leader was travelling wide far in Nigeria.

GOVERNOR ESCORT

"I personally travelled with Mr. Taylor everywhere he goes in and around Calabar and when he wants to go out of Calabar, he needs a special authorisation from me... He's not a prisoner neither is he under house arrest... Mr. Taylor is free to move around." Governor Donald Duke stated.

WAR CRIMINAL

When Ofebia puts it to the Governor of Calabar that he was hosting a war criminal who has committed numerous atrocities like cold blood murder and alleged genocide, rape; fuelling the war in Sierra Leone" Mr. Duke replied:

"Every man shall have to answer for what they did or did not do in the war in Sierra Leone and Liberia. We have given Taylor accommodation, care and check with the knowledge and approval of the UN, the EU, AU and ECOWAS Heads of State (including President Kabbah)

and so far he is comporting self very well."

Charles Taylor stands accused of bank rolling at least nine (9) political parties, Radio Stations and newspapers in Liberia to influence the upcoming elections back home.

He is also believed to be scheming to destabilise the West African subregion and that he master minded the assassination attempt on President Lansana Conte of Guinea, his bitterest enemy.

TAYLOR, DOLLARS & SEX

It is also alleged that Mr. Taylor married the daughter of the Governor of Calabar at a lavish ceremony, and that he also influenced a love relationship between his younger sister and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, so as to distract the latter's attention from his problems with the Sierra Leone Special Court.

US Illinois Senator, Barack Obama has allegedly stated that any debt relief to be enjoyed by Nigeria must be conditioned by Taylor's surrender to the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The Exclusive learnt that during recent discussions with the World Bank's President Paul Wolfowitz in Abuja and with President George Bush in Washington, President Obasanjo reiterated his unwillingness to trade Taylor in exchange for debt relief for Nigeria.

Nigeria's foreign debt is officially 35 billion dollars and President Obasanjo has in the recent past, campaigned actively for debt relief for Africa in general and Nigeria in particular.

OBASANJO SUSPICIOUS

"It is amazing that Obasanjo can allow his people to suffer just because he does not want to hand over a war criminal... He, (Obasanjo) must have a secret agenda which is probably why he continues to be reluctant to do so... May be he's benefitting from Taylor's blood money lodged in Western Account", one diplomat said.

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LIBERIA: Taylor still looms large as election countdown begins

30 Jun 2005 20:36:17 GMT

Source: IRIN

Background

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- CRISIS PROFILE-Is Ivory Coast heading for all-out war?

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ZWEDRU, 30 June (IRIN) - It's Sunday afternoon and the ramshackle cinema is packed to the rafters for the matinee showing -- 'The Rise and Fall of Charles Taylor'.

A cheer goes up from the Liberians watching the film in this onetime rebel stronghold as the

former president boards the plane that will take him out of the country and bring the 14-year civil war to an end. "Bye Bye," one woman yells, frenetically waving her hand at the screen.

Sporting his trademark white suit, Taylor went into exile in Nigeria in August 2003, casting himself as a "sacrificial lamb" and shrugging off international accusations that he fomented civil wars across West Africa.

But nearly two years later as Liberia prepares for presidential and parliamentary elections and a return to democracy, the former warlord still looms large in the nation's psyche and diplomats and international researchers say he continues to pull political strings from abroad.

In Zwedru, the former headquarters of the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) rebel group, hundreds of men, women and children crammed onto the creaking wooden benches of the shack-cum-cinema to watch Taylor's life story unfold with fuzzy images and broken sound.

After training as a guerrilla fighter in Libya, Taylor launched a bush war on Christmas Day 1989. His faction gained the upper hand and he was finally elected president in 1997 but it was to be another six years before the war finally ended.

Most people in this eastern town, which lies just 30km from the Ivorian border, were glad to see Taylor go, but some worry that his departing words "God willing, I will be back" may prove prophetic.

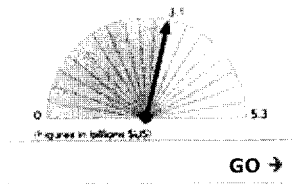
"We are happy that he's not here. He's a terror," said Zwedru resident

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Sam Nuah. "He ensured there was no future for young people. Kids that should have been in school were out fighting."

Even in Gbargna, in the middle of Taylor's former heartland, it is not difficult to find people who agree. Many admit to fighting alongside him and calling him "Pappy", but say they have now turned against him after experiencing two years of peace.

"I do not want to see that man again. If he came back, so would the fighting. He's a bad person but he's good at fooling people," said 27-year-old Mustapha Konneh.

Power to mobilise

Zwedru residents expressed similar worries about the power that this teacher-turned-warlord could exert from abroad.

"Taylor has charisma, he's able to mobilise people. Just talking on the radio, he can move people in Liberia," said Ernest Freeman.

These preoccupations are shared by some of the biggest names on the diplomatic stage.

"Concerns about former President Charles Taylor's continued interference in the political process in Liberia have increased," UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said in his latest briefing to the Security Council two weeks ago.

Any such interference would flout the terms of Taylor's exile deal -- an agreement which is currently protecting him from standing trial in Freetown on 17 charges of crimes against humanity committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war.

The main charges laid against Taylor in the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone are that he supported the brutal rebellion waged by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from 1991 to 2002, supplying its leaders with guns and ammunition in return for smuggled diamonds. He is also widely believed to have supported an abortive invasion of Guinea in 2000.

But prosecutors say Taylor has continued to play his destabilising games since going into exile in the remote town of Calabar in the Niger Delta.

They allege the former president wired US \$160,000 to his supporters in the Liberian capital Monrovia last October to help start riots that killed 16 people and injured hundreds of others, and that despite Nigerian government assurances that he cannot leave his heavily-guarded and luxurious compound in Calabar, Taylor moves freely around West Africa,

Meanwhile, a report this month by the London-based research group Global Witness accuses Taylor of controlling or helping to finance as

many as nine of the 30 or so political parties that have thrown their hat into the ring for Liberia's elections on 11 October.

"He seems to be trying to ensure he has control over Liberia in the future," Natalie Ashworth of Global Witness told IRIN on Thursday. "It would obviously be extremely worrying if someone backed by Taylor ended up winning the elections. It is critical that his influence on the upcoming polls is curtailed."

Continued meddling

Taylor's party, the National Patriotic Party, has chosen Roland Massaquoi to be its presidential candidate. Some party members have said that Taylor, who picked Massaquoi to be the Agriculture Minister in one of his cabinets, made telephone calls during the nomination process to influence the voting.

Taylor is also accused of continuing to meddle in affairs beyond Liberia's borders. The Special Court publicly named him as being involved in a January 2005 assassination attempt on ailing Guinean President Lansana Conte, and warned he would probably try to topple his long-standing rival again.

Diplomats and aid workers say Conte provided arms and rear support bases for the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebel movement which swept into Monrovia in 2003 and hastened Taylor's departure.

In spite of all the allegations, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has so far refused to expel Taylor until he has concrete proof that the terms of his asylum agreement have been violated. But the pressure on him is mounting.

A coalition of some 300 African and international groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, is the latest to bang the drum. It issued a statement on Thursday calling on the African Union, of which Obasanjo is currently president, to take action.

"Taking a stand will not only bring justice to the countless victims of Charles Taylor and their families but also show that the AU is serious about combating the disastrous cycle of impunity in West Africa," the statement said.

A UN Security Council resolution last week stopped short of asking for Taylor to be handed over to Sierra Leone's Special Court, but Britain's UN ambassador told reporters that there were sensitive discussions taking place in Africa on the subject.

"Taylor cannot avoid coming to justice and at some stage his impunity will have to end. The only question is how do we do it. We didn't believe this (resolution) was the vehicle to achieve that," Emyr Jones Parry said, declining to elaborate further.

Where should justice be done?

Liberians seem divided about whether Taylor should stand trial before the UN-backed Special Court in Freetown, a war crimes tribunal which has a mixed panel of international and Sierra Leonean judges.

"For the time being he should not go to Sierra Leone because I do not think he would get a fair trial in Freetown. Maybe he should be tried at the Hague," said one resident in Zwedru, who would only give his name as Charles.

Other Liberians want him to face justice on home soil, where his worst crimes were committed. Several hundreds of thousands of people died in Liberia's civil war, which began when Taylor launched a rebellion against the then president Samuel Doe.

"He should be brought here and judged here," said 23-year-old Tuboy Mulbah, who lives opposite the burnt-out shell of Taylor's old residence in the central town of Gbargna. "But it's not just him. If he faces justice then a whole lot of other people have to face justice too."

The 2003 peace agreement which ended Liberia's civil war, provided for the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to shed light on past atrocities, but said nothing about establishing a war crimes tribunal to try those responsible for committing them.

Obasanjo has promised to send Taylor back to Monrovia to stand trial, should a future elected government in Liberia ever decide to press charges against him and demand his extradition.

With just a little over three months before the crucial elections, there is no chance of Taylor disappearing off the agenda.

Oliver Jellu, the cinema manager in Zwedru, says he screened the Taylor documentary to educate voters in his own small way.

"We'll soon be having elections in Liberia and it's a reminder of what happens when there's a bad person in power," the 25-year-old told IRIN. "This time we have to be careful not to choose another warlord."

Taylor won a landslide victory in Liberia's last presidential election. The unofficial slogan accompanying his 1997 campaign was "You killed my ma; you killed my pa; I'll vote for you".

Although many people voted for Taylor out of fear he would restart the war if he lost the election, the war continued after he won. Taylor's government failed to invest in national reconstruction and idle and impoverished ex-combatants were sucked back into fighting and looting.

"Of course we are worried about things repeating themselves," said

Stephen Musa, the head of one the camps for internally displaced people that are still home to about 140,000 Liberians. "But we are hoping that a truly new government will make a difference, and will think about the whole country from head to toe."

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REUTERS
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Fri Jul 1 06:1



Alerting Humanitarians to Emergencies

Rights groups urge trial for Liberia's Taylor

30 Jun 2005 16:06:10 GMT

Source: Reuters

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· CRISIS PROFILE-Is Ivory Coast heading for all-out war?

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By Alain Ngono

PRETORIA, June 30 (Reuters) - Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and other rights groups joined forces on Thursday to urge Nigeria to send exiled former Liberian leader Charles Taylor for trial at Sierra Leone's war crimes court.

Taylor, accused of fomenting a 10-year civil war in neighbouring diamond-rich Sierra Leone, relinquished power in Liberia in 2003 and took up asylum in Nigeria as part of a deal to bring an end to civil war in his West African country.

Rights campaigners said Taylor should not be spared justice because of his previous position as Liberian president.

"We want justice to be done without looking at who the perpetrator is," Olajobi Makinwa, executive director of Amnesty International South Africa, told a news conference in Pretoria.

Human rights groups have repeatedly demanded Taylor face trial for atrocities in a special war crimes court created in Sierra Leone after its own war ended.

"These crimes include killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and the use of forced labour by Sierra Leonean armed opposition groups, which Taylor actively supported," Amnesty said in a statement on Thursday.

London-based Amnesty International, New York-based Human Rights Watch, the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) and 300 African and international civil society groups had joined together to urge Nigeria to surrender Taylor.

The groups called on Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, the chairman of the African Union, to ensure Taylor was brought to justice.

Nigeria has said it will not expel Taylor unless he is found to have broken his exile agreement -- which includes not meddling in Liberian

affairs.

Taylor is accused of having helped Sierra Leone's rebel Revolutionary United Front -- notorious for hacking limbs and other body parts off women and children -- by providing guns in return for diamonds from rebel-held parts of Sierra Leone.

The U.N. Security Council voted last week to extend a ban on diamond exports from Liberia. Its resolution expressed "deep concern" at reports Taylor continued to engage in activities undermining peace and stability in Liberia and the region.

British ambassador to the U.N. Emyr Jones Parry said last week that there were sensitive discussions taking place in Africa on the matter of bringing Taylor to justice.

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Sierra Leone: AU Should Ensure Taylor Faces Justice

30 Jun 2005 14:55:26 GMT

Source: Human Rights Watch

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(New York, June 30, 2005) – African and international civil society groups are today launching a campaign urging the African Union Assembly to demonstrate its human rights commitment when it meets in Libya next week by ensuring that Charles Taylor faces justice for the crimes that he committed

against African men, women and children. "It is now time for the African Union to join ranks with other key nations and international bodies in calling for Charles Taylor to face trial for these serious crimes," said Kolawole Olaniyan, Africa program director at Amnesty International. "Taking a stand will not only bring justice to the countless victims of Charles Taylor and their families but also show that the AU is serious about combating the disastrous cycle of impunity in West Africa."

Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, has been accused of 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity against the people of Sierra Leone. These crimes include killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and the use of forced labor by Sierra Leonean armed opposition groups, which Taylor actively supported. In 2003, Taylor sought refuge in Nigeria, where he currently resides.

A coalition of up to 300 African and international civil society groups, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Open Society Justice Initiative, have sent a declaration to the AU demanding that Nigeria surrenders Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Press conferences are being held in 14 countries throughout Africa today to ensure that this message is heard loud and clear.

The AU has publicly expressed commitment to protect and promote human rights in Africa, and one of the fundamental objectives of the AU under its Constitutive Act of 2000 is "condemnation and rejection of impunity."

"The failure of the AU Assembly to publicly support the handover and trial of Charles Taylor before the Special Court would be inconsistent and incompatible with the organization's principles and

objectives," said Olaniyan. "The AU must discourage its members, including Nigeria, from shielding Taylor from prosecution before the Special Court."

"As long as Nigeria continues to shield Charles Taylor from trial, his victims will not receive justice and West Africa will continue to be insecure and unstable. As long as the AU Assembly fails to act, African leaders must accept responsibility for this instability," said Chidi Odinkalu, Africa director of the Open Society Justice Initiative.

"Ensuring that Taylor faces justice is key to maintaining peace and stability in the subregion," said Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch. "President Obasanjo, as the chair of the African Union, must provide the necessary leadership to achieve this."

"Supporting the international and regional efforts to bring Charles Taylor to justice will show that the AU cares about the well-being of Africans. It will also demonstrate that the AU is totally different from its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), whose interest was to protect African presidents rather than the human rights of individuals," added Olaniyan.

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Seminar on best practices of UN-affiliated criminal tribunals held in Sierra Leone

30 June 2005 – The Prosecutors of the United Nations-affiliated criminal tribunals have met in Sierra Leone to review what has been learned from the many ad hoc criminal tribunals, including how best to deal with immunity, amnesty, child soldiers and forced marriages.

During the 24-25 June meeting, the Second Colloquium of Prosecutors, an international best practices committee was set up to oversee the process of collecting and analyzing material and the committee was to submit a plan of action by the end of August for approval, a statement from the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) said.

"State cooperation with international criminal tribunals is one of the pillars upon which the future development of international law depends," the Prosecutors said.

The areas to be covered include evidence management, witness and protection management, gender crimes, operating procedures, tracking and arrests and ways of speeding up trials, they said.

The committee members are the ICTR Prosecutor and Chief of Prosecutions, the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor and his Special Assistant, the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) Prosecutor-designate and Chief of Prosecutions and the Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The First Colloquium of Prosecutors was held at the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania, in November 2004. The Prosecutors accepted the joint invitation of the ICTY and ICC to hold the Third Colloquium at The Hague, the Netherlands, next year.



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MASKITA MADE CHILDREN MINE DIAMONDS FOR RUF/AFRC

Friday July 1, 2005

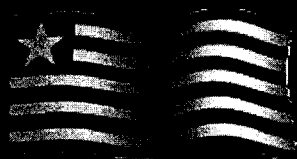
By Tamba Borbor in Freetown

Led in evidence by the Prosecution team witness TF1-062 told the Special Court Monday 27th June that the AFRC/RUF members gave orders that the civilians should mine in Tongo. The witness who was testifying in Temne, said that after the coup in 1997 as they were in Tongo, Sam Bockarie (Mosquito) went there and called a meeting and instructed the commanders of various locations that civilians should mine at 'Cyborg' pit - a land around the playing field.

Before Mosquito could leave Tongo the witness continued, he chose Jamay to be the next in command but he was later killed on the third day. There was no government workday wherein civilians were asked to mine for the government. They were not provided with any equipment or foodstuff and any diamond found was to be submitted to the commanders of the various locations who would then hand them over to Mosquito.

The witness maintained that the pit was so large that it could accommodate over two thousand men in it. The witness who said he was a Diamond miner in Tongo had about six boys working for him. He supplied them with equipment, foodstuff and even medical facilities. "When ever the commanders declared government work day everyone was tasked to work for them. As I also have my own boys that were working for me I used to send them to work on my behalf because if you refuse to work for them they will beat you up.

They were not supplied with any equipment not even food." The Diamond miner further stated that people were even killed for gravel. "On one occasion, a child was coming out of the Cyborg pit with a bag of gravel, when he was stopped by a soldier to give him the bag, but the child refused - so he was shot. On another occasion, a soldier took his gravel to be washed and went away when he returned the bag was nowhere to be found so he said he was going to set an example for the civilians. He immediately started shooting and one civilian was shot dead." The witness continued, "People were always killed, sometimes inside the pit and sometimes around the pit.

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The witness also stressed that when the civilians were washing the gravel, the guards who were armed with Rocket Propelled Grenades, Light Machine Guns and other guns stood there and watched them. "Some of them were small boys between the ages of 12 years. One small boy named Junior who was about 11 years even went to my house

CHRISTIANA THORPE WARNED : AVOID INTERFERENCE BY SLPP

By Olu Faulkner in Freetown

Thursday June 23, 2005

The Chief Electoral Commissioner, Miss Christiana Thorpe, has been warned by representatives of the various opposition political parties not to allow the ruling SLPP to interfere in the operations of the National Elections Commission (NEC) and to be independent as Sierra Leone prepares for an all-important General Elections in 2007.

Miss Thorpe received the warning during her ongoing provincial tour which she and other electoral commissioners are using to sensitise the nation on the operations of the NEC. She was also in the provinces to unveil the NEC's seven-point plan of action.

During the tour, representatives of parties complained to Miss Thorpe that in the past the NEC had allowed the ruling SLPP to interfere in the decisions of the Elections Commission, thereby compromising the neutrality of the institution. Some of them also complained that the SLPP rigged the last two elections.

In response, Commissioner Thorpe assured the party representatives that she will ensure there was no rigging of the oncoming elections. She promised to fire any worker who did not discharge his/her duties well, asserting that the commission had the power to do so without consulting the government.

The last Electoral Commissioner, Mr. Eugene Davies resigned in protest against interference by the government which he accused of coercing him to change some results of the recent municipal elections.

HINGA NORMAN SAYS IS GOING ON HUNGER STRIKE UNTIL HE DIES

Monday June 13, 2005

War crimes indictee Chief Hinga Norman has threatened to go on a hunger strike until he dies, according to a letter from the Civil Defence Force (CDF) Coordinator.



UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 30 June 2005

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

International Clips on Liberia

06/30/2005 15:47:06

African coalition mounted to force extradition of Liberia's Taylor

DAKAR, June 30 (AFP) - About 300 African rights groups, backed by watchdogs Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, on Thursday urged the African Union to demand that Nigeria extradite former Liberian president Charles Taylor to face trial for war crimes in Sierra Leone.

06/30/2005 12:24:15

Liberia says should have new army by December

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA, June 30 (Reuters) - Liberia should have a new, partly U.S-funded national army by December, its defence minister said on Thursday, two years after a brutal civil war which tore the country's infrastructure and economy to pieces.

06/30/2005 11:42:30

Liberia paying off Taylor-era soldiers as it plans for new army

MONROVIA, June 30 (AFP) - The Liberian defense ministry was Thursday paying off former soldiers in the national army ahead of a US-funded restructuring of the armed forces as part of post-war reconstruction in the west African state.

International Clips on West Africa

06/30/2005 13:22:58

UN approves last extension for troops in Sierra Leone

UNITED NATIONS, June 30 (AFP) - The UN Security Council Thursday voted to extend for a final period of six months the UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone, known as UNAMSIL.

06/30/2005 10:19:30

Ivorian pro-govt militia says it's ready to disarm

By Loucoumane Coulibaly

ABIDJAN, June 30 (Reuters) - The leader of one of the main pro-government militia groups in divided Ivory Coast said on Thursday his fighters were ready to disarm before a late August deadline set as part of a revived peace effort.

Source: United Nations Secretary-General

Date: 30 Jun 2005

Secretary-General urges Ivorian parties to faithfully implement Pretoria Agreement

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan: The Secretary-General takes note of the renewed commitment expressed by the Ivorian parties in their declaration of 29 June, to implement the Pretoria Agreement on the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire, and congratulates the African Union Mediator, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, on this achievement.

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 and would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Ms. Kadiatu Konteh at kontehk@un.org.

Security Council votes to end U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone on Dec. 31

By EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press Writer
30 June 2005
15:04 GMT
Associated Press Newswires

UNITED NATIONS (AP) -- The Security Council voted unanimously Thursday to end the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone on Dec. 31, an expression of confidence in the west African nation's move toward peace after more than a decade of war.

A resolution adopted by the council stressed the importance of continued U.N. and international support for Sierra Leone's long-term security and development, and called for "a seamless transition" from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

The 3,370 U.N. peacekeeping force will be gradually reduced and some troops may be sent to beef up the U.N. peacekeeping effort in nearby Ivory Coast, said France's U.N. Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sabliere, the current council president. The council said previously that troops would begin to withdraw by late summer.

In a report in April U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan had recommended that the mission be ended, saying Sierra Leone's government should be responsible for the remaining peace efforts.

The U.N. mission has been helping secure peace after U.N. and other outside intervention quelled a vicious 1991-2002 insurgency in the diamond-rich country. A U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal is trying several rebel military commanders on charges stemming from accusations of systematic killings, rapes, enslavement of child soldiers and mutilation with machetes.

The resolution adopted Thursday said the mandate of the U.N. mission "shall be extended for a final period of six months until Dec. 31, 2005."

Once the U.N. force withdraws, it said, "the Sierra Leone security forces shall effectively assume full responsibility for security in the country."

The council urged Sierra Leone's government "to continue its efforts to develop an effective, affordable and sustainable police force, armed forces, penal system and independent judiciary." It also called on Sierra Leone to promote good governance and strengthen measures to combat corruption.

30/6/2005



**Press
Release
SC/8432**

SECURITY COUNCIL EXTENDS SIERRA LEONE MISSION FOR FINAL SIX MONTHS.

UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTING RESOLUTION 1610 (2005)

**Drawdown to Begin Mid-August, Completed by 31 December;
Requests Plan for Integrated UN Presence After Troop Withdrawal**

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for final six months, until the end of 2005, noting with approval the Secretary-General's recommendation that the drawdown should begin in mid-August and be completed by 31 December.

Acting under Chapter VII, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1610 (2005), by which it also asked the Secretary-General to finalize plans for an integrated United Nations system presence in Sierra Leone after UNAMSIL's withdrawal, with the capacity and expertise to coordinate the activities of the agencies, funds and programmes, to cooperate with the donor community, and to continue to support the Government's efforts at peace consolidation and long-term development.

Under a related provision, the Council recalled that the Sierra Leone security forces should effectively assume full responsibility for security in the country after UNAMSIL's withdrawal. It also underlined the importance of providing effective security for the Special Court for Sierra Leone after the Mission's withdrawal, and asked the Secretary-General to make recommendations to the Council on that as soon as possible.

The Council urged the Government to continue its efforts to develop an effective, affordable and sustainable police force, armed forces, penal system and independent judiciary, and to further promote good governance and strengthen mechanisms to tackle corruption. It encouraged donors and UNAMSIL to assist the Government in that regard, as well as in restoring public services in the country.

By a further term of the text, the Council welcomed UNAMSIL's efforts to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct. It asked the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in that regard and to keep the Council informed.

The Council also welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to keep the security, political, humanitarian and human rights situation under close review and to report regularly to the Council, after due consultations with troop-contributing countries and the Government of Sierra Leone.

The meeting, which began at 10:15 a.m., adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Resolution

The full text of resolution 1610 (2005) reads as follows:

“The Security Council,

“Recalling its previous resolutions and the statements of its President concerning the situation in Sierra Leone,

“Affirming the commitment of all States to respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Sierra Leone,

“Emphasizing the importance of the continued support of the United Nations and the international community for the long-term security and development of Sierra Leone,

“Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 26 April 2005 (S/2005/273), and noting with approval his observations in paragraph 65 on the drawdown schedule of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and in paragraphs 63 to 64 on the need for a strong United Nations system presence in Sierra Leone after the withdrawal of UNAMSIL,

“Commending the work of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission and encouraging the Government of Sierra Leone to disseminate widely the Commission’s report and the Government’s response to it,

“Expressing its appreciation for the essential work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, noting its vital contribution to the establishment of the rule of law in Sierra Leone, and in this regard underlining the importance of ensuring that all those indicted by the Court appear before it, in order to strengthen the stability of Sierra Leone and the subregion and to bring an end to impunity, and encouraging all States to cooperate fully with the Court,

“Determining that the situation in Sierra Leone continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

“Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

“1. Decides that the mandate of UNAMSIL shall be extended for a final period of six months until 31 December 2005;

“2. Requests the Secretary-General to finalize the necessary planning for an appropriate integrated United Nations system presence in Sierra Leone, as recommended in paragraphs 63 to 64 of the Secretary-General’s report, with the capacity and expertise to coordinate the activities of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to cooperate with the donor community, and to continue to support the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone at peace consolidation and long-term development, after UNAMSIL has withdrawn;

“3. Encourages UNAMSIL and the United Nations country team in Sierra Leone to continue their close collaboration to ensure a seamless transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, including through the implementation of their joint Transition Plan;

“4. Recalls that the Sierra Leone security forces shall effectively assume full responsibility for security in the country after the withdrawal of UNAMSIL;

“5. *Underlines* also the importance of providing effective security for the Special Court for Sierra Leone after UNAMSIL has withdrawn, and *requests* the Secretary-General to make recommendations on this to the Security Council as soon as possible;

“6. *Urges* the Government of Sierra Leone to continue its efforts to develop an effective, affordable and sustainable police force, armed forces, penal system and independent judiciary, and further to promote good governance and strengthen mechanisms to tackle corruption, and *encourages* donors and UNAMSIL, in accordance with its mandate, to assist the Government in this regard, as well as in restoring public services throughout the country;

“7. *Encourages* the United Nations missions in the region to continue their efforts towards enhancing inter-mission cooperation, especially in the prevention of movements of arms and combatants across borders and in the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes;

“8. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by UNAMSIL to implement the Secretary-General’s zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action, including the conduct of pre-deployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure that such acts are properly investigated and punished in cases involving their personnel;

“9. *Welcomes* the Secretary-General’s intention to keep the security, political, humanitarian and human rights situation in Sierra Leone under close review and to report regularly to the Council, after due consultations with troop-contributing countries and the Government of Sierra Leone;

“10. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.”

Background

The Security Council had before it the twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (document S/2005/273), which states that the generally calm political and security situation in Sierra Leone has allowed for further progress to be made towards consolidating peace in the country. With the support of UNAMSIL and development partners, the Government of Sierra Leone has advanced towards accomplishing the benchmarks for stabilization in the country and for the withdrawal of the residual UNAMSIL presence. In particular, the Sierra Leone armed forces and police have both continued to build up their capacities to ensure effective responsibility for the security of the country.

It has been encouraging to note that there have been no security incidents requiring UNAMSIL support since the Mission handed over primary responsibility for security throughout the country to the Government in September 2004. Also, with regard to the benchmarks, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has now consolidated its deployment throughout Liberia, including in the areas bordering Sierra Leone. This, coupled with the continued deployment of UNAMSIL in the eastern Province, has contributed to an improvement in security in the border areas of the country. It is the general view that currently Sierra Leone is not facing any significant external security threats.

The situation in Sierra Leone remains fragile, however, and much remains to be done to address the underlying causes of the conflict in the country, in order to attain durable stability and long-term national recovery. The strengthening of the security sector needs special, long-term attention. Despite assistance from donors, the Sierra Leone armed forces and police are still experiencing serious equipment shortfalls and full deployment of the police in the provinces has yet to be attained. In addition, the Government needs to take further steps towards the restoration of the rule of law, including by implementing a comprehensive reform of the penal and judicial systems and building the capacity of an

independent and impartial judiciary, which will effectively contribute to peace consolidation and the protection of human rights.

Progress made in the area of the protection of human rights, with the assistance of UNAMSIL and other partners, needs to be built on, including through the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission. The Government should be encouraged to follow up on implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which submitted its report in October 2004. Continuous monitoring of the human rights situation and reporting of violations will be a crucial element in consolidating peace in Sierra Leone. Meanwhile, electoral reform issues should be urgently addressed if the 2007 elections are to be free and fair and held in accordance with international standards. At the same time, the work of the Special Court has proceeded satisfactorily.

The economic recovery in the country in the post-conflict period has been limited, and the living standards of the majority of the population remain poor. Poverty, including massive youth unemployment, and public discontent over slow progress made by the Government in the fight against corruption and the improvement of management of State revenues, are issues that urgently need to be addressed in order to sustain stability.

The further stabilization of the situation in Liberia has had a positive impact on the overall situation in the subregion. However, developments in the country before the October elections and during the period leading to the inauguration of the new Government in January 2006 will need to be monitored carefully with regard to any possible spillover effects on Sierra Leone. It is hoped that progress will be made in Côte d'Ivoire towards the full and unconditional implementation of the Pretoria Agreement of 7 April. Clearly, a continuation of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire or instability in Guinea could have a destabilizing effect on the subregion, including Sierra Leone.

Having carefully assessed the situation, the Secretary-General believes that the outstanding challenges in ensuring peace consolidation would be best addressed by the Government with the support of United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as bilateral donors, which are most suited for post-conflict capacity-building. Therefore, an adjustment in the strategy of the United Nations involvement in Sierra Leone is warranted, and he recommends that the Council extend the UNAMSIL's mandate for a final period of six months, until the end of 2005. The Government should make full use of the unique window of opportunity provided by the continuing presence of UNAMSIL to further consolidate the security sector, in order to ensure effective security throughout the country, supported by the timely provision of the required assistance, and to address other outstanding challenges.

The Secretary-General also recommends that the drawdown of the UNAMSIL presence commence in mid-August 2005 and be essentially completed by 31 December 2005. However, the last infantry battalion and air assets should remain fully operational until the end of November, by which time the results of the elections in Liberia will be known. In order to allow for the timely planning and logistical preparations for an orderly withdrawal of UNAMSIL, an early decision of the Council would be essential. Furthermore, should a serious threat in the subregional or internal security situation in Sierra Leone arise in the coming months, the Secretary-General will revert to the Council with appropriate recommendations, including the possibility of adjustments in the schedule of the Mission's withdrawal.

The Council also had before it a 29 June letter from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone (document S/2005/419).