

**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:

Tuesday, 1 July 2008

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

Tuesday, 1 July 2008

Special Court marks beginning of end

By Betty Milton

Though the Special Court for Sierra Leone is presently going in The Hague with the trial of the former president of Liberia Charles Taylor, the trial of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) indictees is almost at the end.

This definitely marks the end of the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The case of the three

convicts of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), Alex Tamba Brima aka Gullit, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu aka 55 ended in February this year with the Appeals Chamber upholding the 50, 45 and 50 years sentences that had been passed by the Trial Chambers.

The trial of the two Civil Defence Forces (CDF)

commanders ended in May with the Appeals Chamber, which raised their sentences from the initial 4 and 6 years sentence to 14 and 15 years respectively for the convicts Moinina Fofana and Alieu Kondewa.

Last Tuesday, the last witness of the RUF ended his evidence in chief and cross examination marking the end of the defence case.

The RUF which started its case on the 5th July 2004

saw the prosecution concluding its case on the 2nd August 2006 with 86 witnesses

The defence team of the first accused Issa Sesay used 59 witnesses to build their case

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Special Court marks beginning of end

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among which was former president Tejan Kabbah; the case of the first accused ended on 13th March 2008 after starting on the 3rd March 2007.

The defence for the second accused Morris Kallon will conclude their case with 22 witnesses while the third accused Augustine Gbao used eight (8) witnesses to build his case.

Final trial briefs are due by 29 July 2008 and oral arguments will take place on 4-5 August, prior to the Court's judicial recess.

The Judges will then retire for deliberations. A trial judgment in the case is expected later this year.

With all these trials ending in Freetown this marks a significant step by the Court in completing its mandate.

Awoko

Tuesday, 1 July 2008

For not raising motion earlier...

RUF defence motion dismissed

The motion filed by the defence team of the first accused Issa Sesay and supported by the two other indictees, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was on the 25th June dismissed by the Judges of the Trial Chamber on the grounds that the objection was not raised at the earliest opportunity.

The three judges Benjamin Mutanga Itoe presiding, Pierre Boutet and Bankole Thompson stated that "the objection was not raised (at the) earliest opportunity and that no material prejudice has been caused to the objecting

parties."

The judges ruled that as a result "the application is meretricious and accordingly dismiss the application in its entirety."

The Issa Sesay defence team had earlier filed an application to the chamber requesting the chamber to call a member of the Management Unit to tell the court about their means of giving funds to prosecution witnesses.

They claimed that it affects the "integrity of the RUF trial and the legacy of the Special Court may well have been undermined by the payments or the public

perception of them.

It is imperative thus that the Trial Chamber seeks the truth and restores that which has been damaged."

The prosecution response was that they had an "unfettered discretion" to take all measures deemed necessary for the purpose of the investigation.

After noting the motion by the indictees and the response filed by the prosecution, the judges pointed out that the counsel for the first accused had in the course of their Examination in Chief of witnesses, did exercise that right with some witnesses.

They observed further that counsel for Issa Sesay did not call any such witnesses

nor did they attempt as part of their case to introduce any other such

evidence - neither of these matters nor of any such exhibits.


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
30 June 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Liberia's PRS Forum Ends in Berlin ... Partners Announce Additional Funding

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer, Heritage, The Analyst, The News, New Democrat)

- The media reports that the 2008 Liberia Poverty Reduction Forum has ended in Berlin, Germany with Liberia's partners announcing further financial commitments. In a communiqué, the partners confirmed that their support is about US\$300 million for the first year of the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The African Development Bank and World Bank have also made commitments to provide US\$26m covering the PRS period.
- An Executive Mansion release says the commitments were in response to an appeal by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for budgetary support. The amount represents a build up to previous budgetary support provided by the World Bank, France, and China. Significant resources are expected to be provided through pooled funds for the health and education, and other coordinated sector-wide funding.
- There was also agreement on providing additional grant financing to the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund. The European Commission, Germany and Ireland made new commitments of 73 million euros to the Fund. Closing the forum, President Sirleaf welcomed the support by Liberia's international partners and assured them of government's commitment to implement the PRS.

Opposition Politician Claims Government has Failed, But Bropleh Debunks

(The News, The Inquirer, Public Agenda, Daily Observer, The Monitor, The Heritage)

- The senior political adviser of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), Milton Teahjay says the Liberian government has failed to address the needs of the people and bring relief to them, but Information Minister, Dr. Laurent Bropleh dismissed the claims saying "there's no relevance in the allegation."
- Mr. Teahjay spoke over the weekend during anniversary celebration of the CDC held at Fish Market football pitch at the James Springs Field Airfield. The program was attended by party stalwarts and thousands of supporters. Mr. Teahjay said the Liberian people are suffering under the current government because it has neglected its social responsibility to the masses.
- Mr. Teahjay claimed with three years remaining before the tenure of the government ends, the Johnson-Sirleaf led government was still dismissing people, while at the same time, the President was entrenching her confidantes in government from America. The CDC official then alleged that based on combined statistics from western union and money gram, some US\$13.7 million had been transferred yearly from Liberia by officials of the government to their families and relatives abroad. Meanwhile, Minister Bropleh has described as "strong" the allegations and urged to prove same.

Over 300 Employees Laid-Off At Finance Ministry

(The News, The Informer, The Parrot, National Chronicle, The Heritage)

- The Ministry of Finance has announced that it has laid-off at least 333 of its staff and has retired 45 of its employees for their services to government ranging from 25 to 40 years of national service. Commenting on the laid-off over the weekend in a release, the Ministry said it had

observed that “duplication of functions and overlapping had created a major operational hurdle in achieving its overall goals, occasioned by the prevalence of an appalling lack of capacity across wide segments of the Ministry’s workforce.”

- To address the problem, the Ministry said it is implementing a “major staff Rationalization Exercise across the three operational departments of the Ministry, including Administration, Revenue and Expenditure with immediate effect.” The Ministry explained that the Revenue Department alone had in excess of 1000, employees both in the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs and Exercise which reflect more than two-third of the entire workforce of the Ministry.

Liberia Pledges “Best in Class” Ship Registry

(National Chronicle, Daily Observer, Public Agenda)

- The newly appointed Commissioner of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Binyah Kesselly has been outlining his plans for the Bureau. Speaking with journalists at the weekend, Commissioner Kesselly with the Bureau was working on a strategic plan aimed at depoliticizing the body and to make the maritime industry look more like a commercial entity.
- According to him, the plan would put the BMA in a position to compete with Panama for the world’s number one flagship. “We are eager to step up in the maritime world and take it by storm, understanding fully well that at the Bureau of Maritime Affairs (BMA), we plan and we execute, he said.” The new Maritime Boss said the necessary steps were being taken by his administration to re-register the lost vessels.

New Health Ministry Complex Vandalized

(The News)

- The News newspaper reports that individuals believed to be squatters have vandalized the unfinished Health Ministry Complex in Congo Town. Two annexes, including a residential building for contractors and a clinic in the Health Ministry Complex were unroofed. It was also observed that the interior of the main complex was massively looted. Planks and ceilings were removed and taken away.
- A woman squatter claimed that one of the annexes (residential building) did not belong to the government. She argued that the building was erected by an NGO for internally displaced children through their (squatters’) intervention. “The government has asked us to leave and so it was our right to leave with our property”, the woman said. Another squatter also alleged that it was members of the community who were looting the ceiling of the building because according to her it was made of aluminum. Congo Town Commissioner Mac John Russell confirmed the looting of the complex. He described the act as “criminal and wicked.”

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

President Sirleaf in Egypt For African Union Summit

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt for a two-day African Union (AU) summit which opens today.
- At the summit, President Sirleaf will reiterate her call for Africa to carve out a roadmap for the formation of a union government.
- Another issue scheduled to be brought to the forefront is the political situation in Zimbabwe.
- The African Union Heads-of State are expected to examine the continent’s relationship with the United Nations System as it relates to peace and security on the continent.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

U.S. Congressional Delegation Visits Liberia

- A six-man congressional delegation from the United States House of Representative is in the Country.
- The delegation headed by Representative David Price of North Carolina is from the House Democracy Assistance Commission and is here to hold working sessions with members of the

National Legislature.

- The commission promotes responsive and effect governance and also strengthens democracy in emerging democracies.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

JPC to Present Second Batch of Declassify Documents to TRC

- The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) is expected to present a second batch of declassify documents to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).
- JPC Executive Director, Augustine Toe said the documents would be given to the TRC on Wednesday and are meant to help the TRC re-write the history of Liberia.
- Director Toe said the documents were secured with the help of the US-based Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Centre for Human Rights.
- Late 2007, the JPC and RFK handed over 4000 pages of declassify documents to the TRC.
- The declassify documents highlight human rights violation in Liberia before and during the civil war.

Former Investment Commission Chairman Arrested for Forgery

- The Former Chairman of the National Investment Commission (NIC), Roosevelt Quiah was arrested Saturday on allegations of forgery.
- Mr. Quiah is accused of forging the signature of Lands Mines and Energy Minister, Dr. Eugene Shannon.
- He is expected to appear in court today.

BBC Online

Friday, 27 June 2008

ICC charges DR Congo 'warlords'



Mr Katanga was known as "Simba", meaning lion

Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui are accused of planning and ordering an attack, in which more than 200 villagers were allegedly killed.

Reports say some of the victims were burned to death, and many women were forced to become sex slaves. This is only the second case to be launched by the court, set up in 2002.

The first trial, of another Congolese militia leader, Thomas Lubanga, has been suspended over concerns that evidence was withheld from the defence.

Decision

Mr Lubanga, who was on the other side of the Ituri conflict, may be released over concerns that the defence was denied access to some evidence.

Defence lawyers for Mr Katanga and Mr Ngudjolo have asked judges to suspend the case against them as the prosecution is using the same evidence.

However, the court has decided to go ahead with the hearing, as the proceedings are not as advanced.

A "confirmation of charges" is now set to take place at which evidence will be presented to support the charges, which include war crimes and crimes against humanity. These include murder, sexual slavery, rape, inhumane acts and recruiting child soldiers.

At the end of this process the court will have 60 days in which to decide whether or not to go to trial.

"Over 200 children, women, elderly and civilian men were killed," in the north-eastern village of Bogoro, said Deputy Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

The Ituri conflict, which raged well after a wider peace accord officially ended Congo's 1998-2003 war, pitted foreign-backed militias from the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups against one another.

Mr Katanga headed the Patriotic Forces of Resistance of Ituri (FRPI), while Mr Ngudjolo led the allied Front of Nationalists and Integrationists (FPI) militia.

The ICC, based in The Hague, was set up in 2002 as the world's first permanent war crimes court.

It was designed to end the need for various ad hoc war crimes courts - including the chambers created to deal with war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the genocide in Rwanda.