

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



After a voyage of 14 months, and representing two centuries of history, the replica of the slave ship “La Amistad” was welcomed at the Government Wharf in Freetown on Sunday.
See more pictures in today’s *‘Special Court Supplement’*.

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:

Monday, 10 December 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

Local News

Serbian Officials to Visit Special Court / <i>PAO</i>	Page 3
Domestic Violence: When Will Government Start Prosecuting? / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Page 4
Abuses to the Rights of the Child / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Page 5
What to Be Done With the Corrupt Judiciary? / <i>PEEP!</i>	Page 6
Special Court Dismisses Motion / <i>Cotton Tree News</i>	Page 7

International News

New Report Examines First Public Hearing at Khmer Rouge Tribunal / <i>Justice Initiative</i>	Page 8
International Criminal Court Needs Backing / <i>Business Daily</i>	Page 9
Life for Rwanda Church Killings / <i>BBC Online</i>	Page 10
Sierra Leone: UN Presence to Be Scaled Down / <i>The Patriotic Vanguard</i>	Page 11

Special Court Supplement

The Arrival of La Amistad in Freetown in Pictures / <i>PAO</i>	Pages 12-14
--	-------------



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 7 December 2007

Serbian Officials to Visit Special Court

Senior members of the Republic of Serbia judiciary will visit Freetown next week to meet their counterparts at the Special Court for Sierra Leone. During their week-long stay, they will share experiences with their counterparts in Freetown in dealing with the serious crimes which have followed years of conflict in both countries.

The nine-member Serbian delegation will include Mr. Sinisa Vazic, President of the War Crimes Chamber and President of the Belgrade District Court; Mr. Bogdan Stankovic, the Deputy Chief War Crimes Prosecutor of the Republic of Serbia; Ms. Slavica Pekovic, the Co-ordinator of the War Crimes Chamber's Witness and Victim Support Service, and Ms. Jasna Sarcevic-Jankovic, the Outreach Co-ordinator of the War Crimes Prosecutor's office.

Three journalists will accompany the delegation.

During the week, the delegation will meet with Judges, and with Special Court principals from the Registry, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Defence Office. They will also be briefed by senior staff members on the work of the various sections of the Special Court.

They will also meet with senior Sierra Leone Government officials.

The visiting officials will have the opportunity to take part in an Outreach in Waterloo, on the outskirts of the capital, to observe officials of the Special Court interacting with members of the local community. There will also be an Outreach held at a secondary school in Freetown.

#END

The Exclusive
Monday, 10 December 2007

Perspective

Written by: Assaf Rassin Kamara
Atlanta, Georgia
USA

Domestic Violence : When will Government Start Prosecuting ?

The human right representative said recently that the war is over but the abuse against women is still not over yet. She also said that it would be very difficult to get rid of the abuse against women because she can't find people in Sierra Leone that are passionate about putting an end to it. She also ask that the government should take domestic violence seriously to prevent women of being abuse by their partners that sometime leads to death.

Since Sierra Leone has become notorious of men abusing and violating women. This issue has become a very big problem. I don't know why this is happening in our beloved Sierra Leone. I'm kindly asking HE President Ernest Bai Koroma to look into domestic violence seriously because our women have become punching bags by men for far too long and we need to put an end to this epidemic. Women are the backbone to every family and we should appreciate every single one of them. They deserve the right to be treated fairly just like any man in Sierra Leone because it's their constitutional right. Men should start being prosecuted in the court of law and that is why we are governing by laws, so therefore let's use. Also the powers been given to the chief's should be withdrawn from them especially when it comes to domestic violence because they're part of the reason for men to keep abusing and violating women. No disrespect to the chief's but when it comes to the laws and the constitution that govern Sierra Leone am sure they don't know nothing about it, yet still we continue to live by old

traditions. The world is not living in the past or old traditions anymore we are living in the future so please lets start to think about the welfare of our women so that they will be able to live and take care of our kids.

Women should be treated like angels, they're suppose to be adorable, cherish, love, treated with respect and care at all times because of their delicacy. But today my brothers are just not looking at things this way because they are cowards, picking on someone that will make them feel that they're in total control. Don't forget that there is no such thing that is total control. The facts is that you cannot direct you own footsteps even when we think we do, we still stumble and fall, not alone trying to be controlling.

I want you to understand that we are here today because women are the ones that paid the ultimate price. There are so many reasons why we should love our women and treat them with respect. They are the ones that lift us up when we fall in love with them and thinking that there is nothing better than falling in love with a woman. Yes it is a beautiful thing to know and experience. Even when we do cheat on them, they give us chance after chance but yet still we always find a way to mess things up for them. In most cases they turned around and blame themselves for the things we do, because women are very emotional. We are mistaking that as weakness. These women try so hard to make things work even when they've been abused or violated by their men, yet still they find a way to put smile on their faces not to show that they're hurting.

We let our ego and pride take control of our emotions and thinking that women don't have any right to opinion but to keep quiet and do what you want. When you are in a relationship remember there is no more you or I any more, it becomes to we and us. We are in the 21st century for Christ sake. I think we are the reason for our women to be disobedient these days because we as men never try to ask ourselves what is it that we're doing that is not right. Until we find time to do that then we will realize that we are the problem most of the times. We always take our women for granted. The most beautiful thing in this world is bringing a new life to this world and that shows the strength of a woman. We always fail to understand what women had to go through during that nine (9) months period. I bet you, none of us want to go through that and for the same reason we should be more appreciative, more respectful and much love to our women. We are not showing any affection not alone love to our women all we care about is our sexual pleasure and that is not the only thing love is about. We love our mothers so much that we can never allow anybody what so ever to disrespect them not alone lay hands on them. Same way so we should treat our women, they deserve more than that. Please, guys lets start to think about the future of our children and ask ourselves if this is the legacy we want to pass on to them. Some of you have already done that because you do abuse and violate your women in frnt of them and making them thinking that it's ok to do that to women.

The Exclusive

Monday, 10 December 2007

HUMAN RIGHTS

Abuses to the Rights of the Child

By Nana Kofi Sarpong

The 11 years brutal war in Sierra Leone left an ugly trail of street children. Even when the war ended in 2002, there are still multiplying numbers of children wallowing in the streets.

Most of the children abandoned on the streets of Freetown and elsewhere in the hinterland have reached school going age. Unfortunately, however, these children are parading the streets, without going to school.

The irony is that these children are encouraged to engage in petty trading as typhoon abuses to the convention on the rights of the child. The convention on the rights of the child that came into force in 1984 sets guidelines for the protection of the rights of children below the ages of eighteen years.

The rights enshrined in the convention apply equally to all children, without regard to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other status. Again, the provisions of the Convention apply to three main areas of children's rights. Survival, development and protection. Yet the "pellucid" portrait of good numbers of street children in Sierra Leone suggests that their survival, development and protection are seriously abused by their parents.

Most of the children contend that they are being pushed to the streets to fend for themselves through petty trading. The other class of street children are those talking care of by foster parents. These children as well are forced into petty trading, becoming bread winners in the homes.

In so doing, they are lurking in the streets - all day long - selling wares and abandoning education. In the past, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs in concert with other international NGOs strived to stifle the growing number of street children, making provisions for the survival, development and protection of children who suffered the surfeit of the senseless war. Such provisions are seen lately as a "blip on the screen." Simply put, both war affected children and those with parents have crammed the streets again.

The effect of the multiplying number of street children has something to do with violent crime. Overcrowded streets in Freetown have become no-go-areas in recent times as crime rate has increased, with marauding pick-pocketers and drug addicts who attack pedestrians as well as traders indiscriminately.

Most of the attackers are street children who are now prone to violent crime. Striking poverty has been a glaring factor of the multiplying numbers of street children in Sierra Leone. Which is why, the international community still needs to pay attention to the poverty - stricken country to help avert the continual stream of the abuses to the convention on the rights of the child in this part of the globe.

PEEP!

Monday, 10 December 2007

WHAT'S TO BE DONE WITH THE CORRUPT JUDICIARY?

three levels of judges; cocaine smugglers buy their freedom; and what happened to 100,000 bucks for Fast Track Courts?

Corruption and Favouritism in the Judiciary are at their height under Chief Justice Ade Renner-Thomas.

There are currently three tiers of judges; those paid most Le30 million a month by the DFID supported **Justice Sector Development Project**, those topped up from donor countries at around Le12 million a month and 'the rest' who earn roughly 3 million leones.

hand picked his friends

Our investigations long ago revealed that Ade Renner-Thomas personally hand picked his close friends to enjoy the JSDP bonanza.

"Nicholas Browne Marke, Eku Roberts and others did not go through Parliamentary scrutiny. The former SLPP government endorsed Renner-Thomas' nominees because they felt they could rely on them and they would be loyal to them".

Their situation is ambiguous now that, as Ade Renner-Thomas didn't quite expect, the SLPP lost the elections.

equal pay for equal work

The 'three tier' judicial system has exacerbated disaffection in the judiciary.

"After all, all judges do the same work - shouldn't they receive the same pay?"

We are also investigating the mysterious acquittals of several drug dealers or their release on bail by compliant judges.

Two such cases involved a Nigerian and Gambian given bail who subsequently fled the country.

We are investigating credible reports that pay-offs were made to judges in these cases.

Fast Track money?

Meanwhile questions are being asked over the fate of \$100,000 donated for creation of Fast Track Courts

to clear up the backlog of criminal cases.

only two appointed

3 judges, 3 magistrates, 40 police and 40 prison officers were supposed to be seconded to the scheme to clear up long delayed cases. They were supposed to be paid in dollar equivalent. So far only 2 policemen have been appointed. **(TO BE CONTINUED)**



Cotton Tree News

Friday, 7 December 2007

Special Court Dismisses Motion

Written by Ndeamoh Mansaray

The Special Court's Trial Chamber One dismissed the motion for withdrawal of Justice Bankole Thompson from the Revolutionary United Front case. The RUF defense team filed the motion requesting the voluntary withdrawal or disqualification of Justice Thompson by the chamber. The Defense said Justice Thompson was biased in acquitting the indictees of the Former Civil Defense Forces of all the count charges made against them. It added that statements made by Justice Thompson at the trial suggested that the indictees of the RUF were already guilty of the accusations made against them.

But the Prosecution said the defense took the judge's statements out of context. In his ruling, Presiding Judge, Justice Benjamin Itoe said the statute of the court provided that a Judge who had witnessed proceedings of other matters before the court should not be disqualified. He said Justice Thompson had witnessed two of the cases and was therefore well informed with the evidences of those matters.

Meanwhile, the Trial Chamber has given leave for an application for appeal for both parties. Their applications were granted by the chamber. The court will resume on the ninth of January.

Justice Initiative

Friday, 7 December 2007

New Report Examines First Public Hearing at Khmer Rouge Tribunal

New York, December 7, 2007. A 13-page report released today by the Open Society Justice Initiative describes and assesses several recent developments at the Extraordinary Chambers in Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), the court established to try surviving leaders of the Khmer Rouge. The report is available here <http://www.justiceinitiative.org/db/resource2?res_id=103986>.

The developments described in the report include several major steps for the fledgling court, including:

The ECCC's first public hearing, on the pretrial detention of Kaing Guek Eav (also known as Duch), who commanded the infamous Khmer Rouge torture center, Toul Sleng;

- The arrest of Khieu Samphan, who served as head of state during the Khmer Rouge era, following his release from hospital;
- The arrest, filing of charges against, and detention of Khmer Rouge couple Ieng Sary and Ieng Thirith, the first married couple to be charged before a contemporary war crimes court; and
- The appeal by Nuon Chea, the second most senior Khmer Rouge official after Pol Pot, of his order of provisional detention.

Describing the first public hearing of the ECCC, the Justice Initiative reports that "the court handled all matters professionally and the historic initial hearing went off with no major hitches. . . .Outside the ECCC's courtroom entrance on the first morning of the hearing, people waited in long lines in the hot Cambodian sun for a chance to observe the hearing in person."

In addition, the report addresses some of the court's pressing challenges. Regarding the ECCC's anticipated 2008 fundraising drive

- which is the subject of a separate Justice Initiative report available here <http://www.justiceinitiative.org/db/resource2?res_id=103943>
- the Justice Initiative renews its recommendation that states condition further funding on the ECCC's adoption of effective measures to address concerns that include:
- Inadequate transparency, particularly regarding hearings on provisional detention and appeals hearings, which are presumptively closed to the public;
- Administrative divisions and corruption allegations, translation backlogs, human resource management issues, and failure to begin renovations needed to ready the principal courtroom for trial proceedings.

Business Daily

Monday, 10 December 2007

International criminal court needs backing

Written by Ban Ki-Moon

Ban Ki -Moon

December 10, 2007: Last July marked the fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Next July, we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute.

The origins of the International Criminal Court lie with the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda. These courts, established by the Security Council, pioneered the enforcement of international humanitarian law and the development of international criminal justice.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia followed the lead of the original Tribunals and brought a measure of justice and closure to the victims of unspeakable crimes.



At the Dayton peace talks in 1995, Slobodan Milosevic could not have believed that just a few years later he would be held accountable before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

More recently, Khmer Rouge leaders such as Kaing Guek Eav, known as Duch, Ieng Sary, former Foreign Minister, and Khieu Samphan, former Head of State of the Democratic Kampuchea regime, were taken into the custody of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.

And of course Charles Taylor is getting ready to stand trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone early next year. The success of these courts fed a growing sense among the international community that a more permanent forum to address the most egregious atrocities was needed.

The International Criminal Court emerged as the answer. Unlike ad hoc tribunals of all kinds, the International Criminal Court is a permanent institution.

Already, in the relatively short period of its existence, the Court has established itself as the centrepiece of our system of international criminal justice. But the single most important determinant of success for any international tribunal is co-operation. Co-operation from States, co-operation from the United Nations and other international organisations, co-operation from civil society and the NGO community, and co-operation from victims, witnesses and other individuals.

Co-operation that results in financial support and political backing, and which flows from expressions of support in public, as well as behind closed doors. And it is co-operation that will determine the effectiveness of the International Criminal Court, and the success of the Trust Fund for Victims that was also established under the Rome Statute.

Ban Ki-Moon Is United Nations Secretary -General.

BBC Online

Monday, 10 December 2007

Life for Rwanda church killings

A Rwandan former regional official has been sentenced to life in prison by a UN-backed court over the 1994 killing of hundreds of people in a church.

A UN-backed tribunal found that Francois Karera had encouraged soldiers to kill hundreds of ethnic Tutsis as they sought shelter.

Karera, who was arrested in Kenya in 2001, was convicted on three counts over the genocide but acquitted on one.



Some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered in just 100 days.

"In sentencing Karera... the chamber took into account in particular his position of authority and the number of victims who were killed at Ntarama church," said a statement from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Tanzania.

The ICTR is supposed to finish its work by the end of 2008.

It has sentenced 30 genocide ringleaders and cleared five suspects.

The Patriotic Vanguard

Monday, 10 December 2007

Sierra Leone: UN presence to be scaled down

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon(photo) has proposed replacing the current United Nations operation in Sierra Leone, when it completes its mandate next September, with a leaner integrated office to assist the West African nation in consolidating peace.



In his latest report on the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), Mr. Ban recommends that the current operation be extended for a final period of nine months so that it can continue to assist the Government in supporting the local elections scheduled for next year and in strengthening State institutions. “During this period, UNIOSIL would take steps to progressively reduce its strength with a view to completing its mandate by September 2008,” Mr. Ban writes, adding that he intends to submit proposals concerning the drawdown of the mission, as well as the mandate, structure and strength of the successor office, to the Security Council next April.

He notes UNIOSIL continues to help the Government consolidate peace and address a myriad of challenges related to good governance, security, human rights and development. In particular, he recalls the significant role the mission played in presidential and parliamentary elections held on 11 August, which led to the swearing in of President Ernest Bai Koroma, as well as in strengthening the security sector and promoting human rights. But Sierra Leone, working to rebuild after a brutal, 11-year conflict, continues to face “daunting challenges,” says Mr. Ban, drawing attention to widespread poverty, worsening unemployment and rising food prices. “A viable economy that can generate employment and sustainable public revenues has yet to be created.”

He also notes this summer’s elections highlighted “deep-seated political tensions and cleavages” among the population along ethnic and geographical lines, warning that these have the potential to escalate in the run-up to next year’s local elections. In addition, the holding of the local elections will require UN assistance given that the National Electoral Commission does not have the required capacity to conduct them.

While drawing attention to the progress made in the country’s armed forces and police, the Secretary-General states that both institutions are plagued by logistical deficiencies and inadequate funding from the Government. “Given the ongoing political tensions and lack of economic progress, there is a risk that the fragile peace could unravel if those issues are not addressed on a priority basis,” he stresses.

Special Court Supplement
The Arrival of La Amistad in Freetown
Sunday, 9 December 2007





