

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



Flashback to 2001: A Donso militiaman disarms at Njagbwema in Kono District. He receives a certificate – and a new GTZ t-shirt – after handing over his “Kamajor shirt”, which was burnt.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Wednesday, 10 January 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Standard Times
Tuesday, 9 January 2007

Civil society to take on government

BY MOHAMED KONNEH

A three-day social forum will begin in Bo district on Wednesday 10th January 2007. A number of civil society organizations will put forward problems affecting the country and what needs to be done for the development of the country.

The forum, organized by Civil Society Alternative Process (CSAP) will bring together a total of two hundred and fifty participants from various civil society organizations country-wide and resource persons from the sub-regions.

We recall, 2007 is a critical year with the presidential and parliamentary elections due on July 28th.

A number of demands have been highlighted for discussion including a free and fair election, the rampant corruption in the country,

political intimidation, the human right abuses within the mining sector, the child rights bill, death penalty, the libel law under the Public Order Act of 1965, and other issues plaguing the Sierra Leone society. These issues need to be addressed as a way of pushing this country forward.

Civil society over the years has been silent due mainly to political

interference, but the opposition too has a stake in that people would want to know what their plans are and what they have to offer to this country.

Speaking to Standard Times, the collective leadership of CSAP, Mr. Fala

Ensa N'dama said the development of this country has been slow due to weak opposition in parliament, the lack of education and other issues in the

country.

The government, he said has signed a number of international protocols but has not included them into our local laws, stressing that the government must play its part to push the country forward.

Mr. Ensa N'dama said the odds in Sierra Leone society are still affecting the country, noting that crimes like corruption should

wiped out.

The issue of child mining and human right abuses in the mining sector is still a problem the government needs to address, adding that the peace will only hold or be sustained when these issues are addressed.

Standard Times

Tuesday, 9 January 2007

Opinion

Using the Judiciary to Stifle Democracy?

The proponents of the theory of democracy had never imagined that such a beautiful concept would be bastardized and diluted by some leaders especially the African dictators who had acquired political power either ruthlessly or in a manner that could be described as uncivilized. In the event they wanted to continue their grip on political power, either because of the privileges enjoyed in of the office or for fear that they would be pursued by those they have destroyed using their political power while in office. The interpretation of democracy for these leaders is absolutely different contextually and conceptually.

The interpretation of the concept to most leaders is to terrorize the people, misuse the constitution and subject the judiciary to their whims and caprices.

This ugly and undemocratic situation is prevalent in most countries to which Sierra Leone is no exception. However in the true context of the concept it is a government viewed by the people for the people and meant to improve the socio-economic status of the governed and not the reverse.

The historical foundation of democracy could be traced back to the days when the people of Athens were agitating for their rights and freedoms, freedom to be heard, to be seen and to contribute to the governance of the state.

The freedom however was meant to give a true meaning to the existence of humanity on planet earth. Therefore the idea of representing them was borne out of the general concern that their representatives would champion their cause and offer them their least desires. These imaginations were just a misconception and misrepresentation of the thoughts and wishes of the majority of the governed/people/subjects.

Perhaps it would be prudent at this juncture to question the rationale of the proponents of democracy especially when the system of governance has been betrayed and bastardized by some of these leaders.

Some of the questions that the suffering and deprived subjects of these leaders would wish to ask include what punishment was put in place for the abuse of democracy. If there is/are no punishments, then why did these proponents advance a system without putting mechanisms in place that could penal-

ize these so-called democratic leaders?

The argument that a fundamental principle is the ballot box cannot be accepted as the leaders have failed to go by the dictates of the box. Instead they are saying that the strongest should prevail over the weakest. Democracy in no way was established like a football field where two teams fight for supremacy. It is a system that should be evenly and equitably distributed regardless of colour, race, strength and status. John

cratic system of governance.

One would not countenance the conditions of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other donor institutions as their conditions are meant to protect not only their interests but their tax payers' monies loaned out to developing countries and those leaders that are recalcitrant or adverse to change.

The pillars precisely are the executive, legislative and the judiciary.

The head of the state admin-

sideration was the earth was occupied by groups of uncivilized and backward people with no fore-sight or ability to predict the future. There was no sophisticated technology (ies) and infrastructural development was either minimal or non-existent. The situation was understandable and during those backward years the Romans were emerging as the champions, but not superior to the Greeks/Athens who had welcomed and in the process of testing the suitability of democracy.

“

It is sad to note that the Sierra Leone judiciary is neither promoting democracy nor helping the smooth sail of democracy in the country but a situation whereby it is used to stifle democracy.

What a shame!

”

Locke, a British political philosopher was among those proponents and had argued that it is one of the best forms of governance. Perhaps at the time, Locke never examined the shortfalls and therefore manifested dislike for other forms and systems of governance such as totalitarianism, Aristocracy, and not too late there was the one party system introduced to Sierra Leoneans by the late Siaka P. Stevens and buttressed by another president, late Joseph Saidu Momoh. No wonder Aristotle favoured Aristocratic form of governance, while Plato and his likes fashioned democracy.

Due to an issue of choice contested by these political philosophers the notion of pillars as guidelines was established but no punitive action was suggested as a result of failure to properly implement the demo-

stration is the executive who should protect democracy together with his team of ministers or secretaries, while the legislative is the law making body, formulating and enacting laws that would make the system productive and progressive.

The judiciary is the body expected to interpret these laws and implement them with the aid of state institutions like the police and law enforcement agencies. Unfortunately, the scenario is not only pathetic but disappointing in certain countries to which Sierra Leone is very prominent.

In Sierra Leone, the scenario may not be different to the 15th century period or during the days of Nicolo Machiavella when the judiciary was being used by the executive against the people.

By then the situation may be acceptable as the general con-

What seems to be prevalent in Sierra Leone is that the judiciary is the weapon used by the executive and legislative arms of government to prostitute democracy and abuse the people.

The question that normally disturbs the curious minds is: Is it because most of these judges, including the chief justice, are hired by the executive and are on contract; therefore they should go by the theory of he who pays the piper dictates the tune?

If the above is the theory implemented then the future of the judiciary is bleak for human and national development.

Several matters swaying within the corridors of the judiciary came to mind as this writer struggled to put thoughts together.

It is now the general conclusion that the ruling government with the present judicial system

cannot lose any matter however grave or minimal in the face of the law as the government would always fly high in victory.

The case of the 1991 constitutional manipulation that borders on the vice president appointed as leader of a political party could be cited as an initial matter that was used to test the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. The outcome of that case was even crystal to the most illiterate man in the suburb.

Another case was the Biriwa election involving government manipulation in favour of certain close allies of the president. The outcome of that matter again was an open book for every one to read.

The Hinga Norman versus the executive members of the SLPP is another test case for the judiciary under the chief justiceships of Dr. Ade Renner Thomas.

Again the outcome was an open book. Interestingly when it comes to the opposition, matters keep dragging on and on until the day when Adam and Eve would give birth to their last child...

When such situation develops and continues to impact on the reputation of the judiciary, not positively but negatively, the question is where lies the credibility of the chief justice or the judiciary? Perhaps the chief justice can respond to questions about his credibility regarding the role of the judiciary in the promotion of democracy. If he can't stop it he should be able to tell the nation whether or not it is a pay back time for him to the powers that be as most people are aware of certain roles played in the past that are not compatible or palatable with the present status of whosoever that is holding the position of chief justice in a nation state.

If it is a pay back time, such pay back is now enough for the sake of democracy and effective governance of the state.

It is sad to note that the Sierra Leone judiciary is neither promoting democracy nor helping the smooth sail of democracy in the country but a situation whereby it is used to stifle democracy. What a shame!

For di People
Wednesday, 10 January 2007

Amnesty Presents Protest Letters

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL in Sierra Leone on Tuesday presented 1400 letters of protest to the Attorney-General and minister of Justice, Fred Carew calling for access to justice for rural women in Sierra Leone, at his Guma Building Office at Lamina Sankoh street.

The letters were sent from 32 countries worldwide, some urging the government to provide legal aid to women and punish chiefs when they illegally make judgement on domestic violence cases.

Carew said bills are based on sponsoring ministries and subject to the approval of cabinet and that government is making steady progress towards the incorporation of the convention which was ratified in 1988 into our domestic laws.

Awoko

Wednesday 10 January 2007

Attorney General replies Amnesty International

The Attorney General and Justice Minister, Fred Carew after receiving hundreds of letters from women's and human rights groups all over the world for alleged inaction over their calls for women's access to justice in Sierra Leone, has stated government's position on the issue.

He told the Amnesty International representative, who went with the letters that "the Attorney General's

Office does not initiate legislation but Amnesty and any other human rights groups should engage the Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs which deals with women's issues get them to understand their concerns and at that level develop a bill."

He said, "the Ministry in turn would send this to cabinet and if cabinet approves then they in turn would then send it to me for drafting, adding that after which he would then

send it to parliament and "if it goes through all the stages then the bill becomes a law."

He revealed that with regards to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), "government is making steady progress towards the incorporation of the Convention which was ratified in 1988 into domestic law."

Mr Carew also catalogued judicial and

administrative institutions which he said had been created to prevent all forms of human rights violations.

He pointed out that the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights was set up by an act of parliament to ensure that specific attention was given to matters of human rights violations as recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

He also pointed out that the Parliamentary Committee on

Human Rights oversaw matters relating to the promotion and protection of human rights and that, "it is currently working on the incorporation of CEDAW into Sierra Leone's law."

The Attorney General and Justice Minister said in this regard, "Government and partners undertook a series of sensitization activities on gender discriminatory laws at national and local levels."

Mr Carew also pointed out that the registration of customary marriage and divorce, domestic violence and devolution of estates were draft bills already submitted to the Law Reform Commission, and that his office was in the process of regularizing them for publication and eventual enactment.

He also related that the Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police was set up in 2003 to specifically handle cases of rape, other sexual offences and domestic violence.

Star Radio (Liberia)

Tuesday, 9 January 2007

<http://www.starradio.org.lr/latest-news/taylors-former-officials-form-association-want-us-6m.html>

Taylor's former officials form association, want US\$6m

Written by Joey Kennedy

Tuesday, 09 January 2007

The Association for the Legal Defense of former President Charles Taylor says it needs six million dollars to defend the indicted former President.

The Executive Director of the association told Star Radio the money would be used to defend Mr. Taylor in the current allegation against him.

Mr. John Richardson said the association has launched an appeal to lovers of justice to assist in raising the amount.

Mr. Richardson spoke at the opening of the offices for the defense team of Mr. Charles Taylor in Sinkor, Monrovia.

Mr. Taylor is currently being detained in The Hague on eleven-count charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The former Liberian leader is being detained for his role in the crisis in Sierra Leone.

United Nations  Nations Unies
United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 9 Jan. 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

01/08/2007 16:45:38

Pressure grows on key Liberian official to step down

Monrovia_ (dpa) _ Pressure grew Monday on the beleaguered speaker of Liberia's parliament, Edwin Melvin Snowe, the country's third most important elected official, to resign his post to avoid being impeached. The calls for his resignation were somewhat weakened amid claims by two legislators that they received 5,000 dollars each to sign a resolution to impeach the speaker. But the required two-thirds - more than 42 of 64 - members of the lower house have already signed the resolution to remove Snowe from office, according to a representative from Bong County, George Mulbah, Snowe's former National Patriotic Party colleague. Snowe faces impeachment by January 15 if he does not resign willingly.

International Clips on West Africa

01/09/2007 06:36:58

UK Class Action Starts Over Toxic Waste Dumped In Africa

Lagos, Jan 09, 2007 (Vanguard/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Lawyers will today begin preparing the ground for one of the largest class actions heard in the UK over 400 tonnes of allegedly highly toxic waste dumped in the Ivory Coast from a cargo ship chartered by a London-based company.

Local Media – Newspapers

Lawmakers to Decide Speaker Snowe's Fate on 15 January

(The Analyst, New Vision, Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The Liberian Diaspora, The Informer, The News, Heritage and New Democrat)

- A resolution by some members of the House of Representatives to remove Speaker Edwin Snowe from office is expected to be presented to the House Plenary on Tuesday, 15 January for discussion. The lawmakers will be sitting for the first on Tuesday after a three-month break.
- Those leading the campaign to remove the Speaker claimed that an overwhelming majority of the membership of the House are in support of the resolution.
- Meanwhile, Representative Saah Gbollie, one of two lawmakers who claimed to have received US\$5,000 each to execute a resolution to remove the Speaker, contradicted himself at a news conference yesterday when he called for the resignation of Mr. Snowe in order to avoid "disgrace".

NEC Qualifies 7 Candidates for Nimba By-Election

(The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, Daily Observer and Heritage)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) has qualified seven candidates to contest the electoral district #6 Nimba County By-elections slated for February 6.
- According to the NEC, those who are qualified to contest the By-elections are: Evans V. Koah of the Unity Party, Paul Tuazama of the Liberia Action Party, Larry Yonqoi of the Liberty Party and J. Gondeh Nenwah of the National Patriotic Party. Others are: Darius Dahn of the New Deal Movement, Peter Wonokay, an independent candidate and Moses Nuwan also an independent candidate.

Nigerian Officer and Others Arrested for Drugs Trafficking

(New Democrat)

- [sic:] A ghetto drugs raid ended in the arrest of an UNMIL Nigerian soldier, along with an officer of the Ministry of Finance. The Drugs Enforcement Agency (DEA) conducted the raid in connection with drugs trafficking.
- DEA Executive Director Colonel, James Jaddeh, told journalists on Monday that the three, Isaac Oreokar, Jerry Randall and Hassan Kemokai of UNMIL, City Police and the Finance Ministry respectively were among 17 suspects picked up at the notorious "Banana Island" ghetto located on Ashmun Street in Monrovia.

Government Removes Cocopa Management

(Daily Observer)

- The Government has removed the management of the Cocopa Rubber Plantation due to continued insecurity which the plantation and surrounding communities have experienced since January last year. According to Agriculture Minister Dr. Chris Toe, the plantation would be temporarily closed until an interim management team is set up following a review of the agreement between the government and the Liberia Company (LIBCO) concerning the operation of the far.

U.S. Warns Liberian Asylees

(The Analyst and New Vision)

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has announced that any Liberian asylee traveling to Liberia without first requesting for and receiving an advance parole will automatically lose his or her asylum status in the U.S.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

President Sirleaf Returns to State Coffers Unused Travel Allowances

- According to Presidential Press Secretary, Mr. Cyrus Badio President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf returned to Government coffers more than US\$19,000, representing leftovers from her foreign trips over the last three months. He said that the money was returned to the Ministry of Finance along with a detailed report and receipts covering the trips in keeping with her policy of accountability and transparency.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

River Gee County Lawmaker Canvasses Support to Unseat House Speaker

- River Gee County Representative Elijah Sieh said that 42 members of the House of Representatives have signed a "Resolution" to remove House Speaker Edwin Snowe and added that no money was needed to be given to Lawmakers who are already willing to remove the Speaker.
- Representative Sieh said that Speaker Snowe's unilateral decision to present a resolution to the Chinese Ambassador and putting a Lebanese national on a Legislative trip to Qatar were factors responsible for the campaign to remove the Speaker.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Opposition Party Disturbed by Corruption Allegation against Ruling Party

- The opposition Liberty Party said that it was disturbed by the persistent pattern of bribery allegation against the ruling Unity Party and named the reported allotment of US\$5,000 to some Lawmakers by the Executive Mansion to remove House Speaker Edwin Snowe as case in point.
- The Party's Chairman, Mr. Israel Akinsayah said that such alleged outside influence undermines democracy and the independence of the Legislature and called on the Party's Legislative Caucus to be judicious in the matter because the action was designed to subvert the political stability of the State.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Former Minister Asks Current Minister not to Shy away from Cultures

- In his contribution to a radio talk show yesterday, former Information Minister Joe Mulbah called on Information Minister-designate, Rev. Dr. Laurence Bropleh not to shy away from being a member of Liberia's culture because as Information, Culture Affairs and Tourism Minister, Dr. Bropleh must be a member of the Country's cultural societies.
- Mr. Mulbah said that Radio Veritas committed no errors in reporting Minister Bropleh's response to a reporter's question about his initiation into Liberia's culture and whether he would join the traditional "Poro Society."
- Meanwhile the Managing Editor of *The Inquirer* newspaper, Mr. Philip Wesseh and Political Analyst Kpekpayease Duako defended Radio Veritas and said that the story was reported professionally.

Criminal Court Convicts Killer of United States Military Expert

- The Criminal Court-A in Monrovia yesterday convicted 22-year-old Maskada Kona for killing former American military official, Mr. John Auffrey in 2003 in Monrovia after Jurors voted 10 to two in favor of the ruling. Final arguments in the case were witnessed by several high-profile persons including Justice Minister Frances Johnson-Morris and United States Ambassador, Mr. Donald Booth.

Star Radio *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Rights Campaigner Wants House Committee to Probe Bribery Allegation

- In an interview, Human Rights Campaigner, Cllr. Dempster Brown called on House Speaker Edwin Snowe to set up a committee to probe the reported bribery at the National Legislature as bribery constituted a felony of the third degree and punishable by a jail sentence of three years.

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

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Tuesday, 9 January 2007

Monument Unveiled In Honour of Liberia's Former President Taylor

Monument to former Liberian president and war crimes indictee Charles Taylor's was unveiled Tuesday in Monrovia by associates of the former president.

The monument was unveiled by the Association for the Defence of Charles Taylor headed by the former Public Works Minister in the Taylor regime, John. T. Richardson.

The unveiling process at the association's headquarters in the eastern Monrovia suburb of Sinkor Tuesday was attended by several of Taylor's former associates of war crimes.

Speaking during the ceremony, former public works minister Richardson, who was also a commander in Taylor's defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), said the monument stood testimony for all Liberians who are subjected to unjustifiable persecution.

Taylor is now in The Hague, Netherlands, awaiting trial on 11 counts of war crimes charges and crimes against humanity for his role in the decade-long Sierra Leone war, considered one of the most brutal civil wars on the African continent.

Globeandmail.com (Canada)

Opinion

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20070110.wcomment0110/BNStory/International/home>

Justice was in free fall at Saddam's execution

PAYAM AKHAVAN

Special to Globe and Mail Update

How did the promise of a historic trial against Saddam Hussein disintegrate into a deeply flawed legal process, followed by the equally flawed spectacle of a hasty sectarian execution?

Why did the United States abandon the potent internationalist legacy of the Nuremberg Trials that it once championed? A brief history of this failed promise of justice demonstrates that the outcome could have been different, that the Iraqi people deserved a more befitting vindication of their suffering under Saddam Hussein's tyranny.

In March of 2003, shortly before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, I advised the Iraqi opposition to call for the establishment of a United Nations tribunal in anticipation of Saddam Hussein's eventual capture. After the use of poison gas in the notorious 1988 al-Anfal genocidal campaign against the Kurds, bringing him to justice before an international court had become a focus of the human-rights community. But in 1988, the Iraqi dictator was deemed to be a useful bulwark against a Khomeinist Iran, and even after his defeat in Kuwait during the 1991 war in the Persian Gulf, when he could have been overthrown, he was considered by political realists as the only leader capable of preventing the ethnic fragmentation of Iraq.

The international prosecution of Saddam Hussein had been a platform of the exiled Iraqi National Congress for some years, and their receptivity to my proposal was, therefore, not surprising. More remarkable was the strong U.S. opposition to any talk of an international tribunal.

The United States had been a long-time champion of international justice, from the Nuremberg Nazi prosecutions, to the Yugoslav and Rwanda tribunals in the 1990s. But when the International Criminal Court was established in 1998, the mere hypothetical prospect that U.S. forces could one day face prosecutions resulted in strong American opposition to this fledgling institution. Global justice was acceptable, so long as it did not threaten U.S. freedom of action. This superpower exceptionalism became even stronger in the post-9/11 survivalist world.

But in Iraq, the need for control and selective prosecution served immediate interests, not least in the months leading to the invasion in March of 2003. In November of 2002, General Nizar al-Khazraji who was in exile in Denmark, was charged by Danish prosecutors for war crimes after he was implicated by refugees in the 1988 poison-gas attacks against the Kurds. On March 16, 2003, just days before the invasion, he suddenly disappeared outside his home. Some time later, he ended up at U.S. Central Command in Qatar, together with another exiled general, Najib Sahli, who was also under investigation in Denmark. The need for military intelligence and potential successors to Saddam Hussein trumped concerns for justice.

Still, when the coalition forces prevailed in the war, there was an opportunity to reconsider. At that time, I had suggested that a UN tribunal sitting in Baghdad would be an important bridge between the coalition provisional authority and the UN, a way of mending the diplomatic rift created by invading Iraq in violation of the UN Charter.

A mixed court, with both UN- and Iraqi-appointed judges (like the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone that Canada has supported) could effectively combine a sense of local participation and ownership with international legitimacy and expertise. Instead, the U.S.-led occupation authority established a solely national Iraqi special tribunal, which later became the supreme Iraqi criminal tribunal that prosecuted Saddam Hussein. The ostensible argument was that despite years of Baathist autocracy, the Iraqi judiciary was fully capable of doing justice without UN interference. This appeal to homegrown justice masked U.S. control of the investigations and trials from behind the scenes. Upon Saddam Hussein's capture in December of 2003, when U.S. triumphalism was at its apogee, President George W. Bush called him a "disgusting tyrant who deserves the ultimate justice," endorsing his execution from the outset.

The lynching of the former Iraqi dictator is not justice. It is a lost opportunity. What could have been a historical trial of one of the worst tyrants in recent history, a turning point in Iraq's transition to the rule of law, was squandered by hubris and political opportunism and reduced to a spectacle of vengeance. Even those who support the death penalty would agree that it should not be administered after a trial that is widely considered as deeply flawed, not least because of repeated political interference and serious due process violations.

Surely, there was ample evidence to convict Saddam Hussein without such irregularities tarnishing the trial. The greatest tragedy is that he was executed while he was standing trial for the al-Anfal campaign of genocide against the Kurds. His conviction and execution for the killing of 148 people in the village of Dujail is but an insignificant portion of his vast crimes against the Iraqi people. How can the suffering of his thousands be properly vindicated when he was not called to account for these crimes? How can the historical truth be fully established when he took all the dark secrets to his grave? Could there have been an interest in making sure that he did not speak about the cordial relationship he had with earlier U.S. administrations during the Iran-Iraq war?

The legacy of justice, Nuremberg teaches us, is about the fairness of the trial, about staying the hand of vengeance, and not about hanging evil dictators. To the extent that justice is part of national reconciliation, about putting the past behind and building a common future, Saddam Hussein's execution was viewed by many as sectarian vengeance, exacerbating the deepening Shia-Sunni violence rather than heralding a new democratic beginning.

Consider the controversial footage of his execution when he is being taunted by the name of radical Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose increasing influence and propensity for religious violence has shattered any remaining illusions about a peaceful democratic Iraq in the foreseeable future.

The supreme irony is that without the multilateral legitimacy of a UN tribunal, in the anti-U.S. and anti-British phantasm of many in the Middle East, a largely forgotten and humiliated Saddam Hussein has now been transformed from a criminal to a martyr.

Payam Akhavan is a professor of international law at McGill University and a former UN war crimes prosecutor at The Hague.