

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



Liza Gall, Associate Legal Officer in the Registrar's Office, leaves the Special Court today after a year and a week in Freetown.

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 July 2006

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

Local News

Tamba Brima Guillit Under Cross-Examination / *For di People* Page 3

International News

82-day ordeal ends with a 'Welcome home' / *The Star Ledger* Pages 4-5

Charles Taylor's Son Sent Back to Jail / *Newsday* Page 6

Another Major Victory Begg Claim / *The Analyst (Liberia)* Pages 7-8

Activities of Secretary-General in Sierra Leone ... / *UN News* Page 9

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary (July 8) / *UNMIL* Pages 10-11

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary (July 7) / *UNMIL* Pages 12-14

UN Tribunal Rules Rwandan Genocide Sentence too Lenient / *Voice of America* Page 15

Uganda Extends Deadline for Peace / *BBC Online* Pages 16-17

Liberia: Double Sufferings, From war crimes to economic crimes / *Running Africa* Pages 18-20

Balancing Justice With Reconciliation / *The Analyst (Monrovia)* Pages 21-23

For di People
Monday, 7 July 2006

ACCORDING TO his response to questions posed to him by the prosecution, and to the layman's point of view it would seem as if Gullit is innocent of all crimes allegedly committed by his denials.

by SU THORONKA

When asked by the prosecution whether he was at camp Rosus, Gullit denied being there and that small boys were not trained as soldiers while he was in the army. He went further to say in response to questions that children were neither used as slaves during the war nor were women led into forced marriages by soldiers.

third accused

He also denied that the third accused person in their joint trial was responsible for the abduction of women at camp Rosus. As to whether he received a copy of the disciplinary order he denied and said he couldn't tell whether camp Rosus was bombed by a jet.

He however acknowledged the fact that he knew about Eddie town because that was the place he and other Afric captives were assembled and that they were there while SAJ Musa arrived.

Guilt denied using radio communication to contact Musa while in Eddie town and that he was not aware of any operation declared by Collins as operation 'Spare no Soul.' I never ordered soldiers to kill and burn villages in accordance with operation spare no soul he said. Guilt further denied giving orders for the attack on Kukuna on the arrival of 05 but answered in the affirmative that he knew one Alfred Browne who he said fell in love with his cousin.

denied counsel

That he did not send 'Junior Lion' to collect SAJ Musa at Eddie town because he (Gullit) was already detained. He denied counsel for the prosecution that second and third accused persons were appointed in the command structure of SAJ Musa at Eddie town and that SAJ

-Tamba Brima Gullit Under Cross-Examination

Musa's pronouncement during the time they were at Eddie town was to reinstate the army.

common enemy

But he couldn't however tell whether SAJ Musa gave orders to capture towns and villages to secure arms and ammunition. What the witness said he knew for sure was that Musa's aim at that material time was to come to Freetown. "I did not know whether he targeted Ecomog but however the common enemy were the Nigerian soldiers and these were the people SAJ Musa spoke about," he said. Asked by the prosecution whether he is familiar with the word collaborator the witness answered in the affirmative, citing that his sister was arrested and detained because of their relation.

He denied seeing civilians in their midst carrying loads on their heads when moving towards Freetown but that each soldier carried along with him his rifle and magazine. The witness also denied relaying any message to Maskita about the troops movement to Freetown and that he escaped from Maskita after he had ordered his killing.

"I never associated myself with rebels and as a trained soldier, I had no business with rebels," he confessed. He also denied regarding rebels as commanders before the arrival of SAJ Musa at camp Rosus.

other ranks

Brima said he knew that SAJ had fought with superman at Koidu before his arrival at Eddie town but denied having any knowledge of negotiations that took place between SAJ and president Kabbah for the reinstatement of the army. That prior to the 1997 coup he was other ranks officer but that immediately after, he was appointed PLO and member of the Afric council. He however denied being promoted to colonel or brigadier by Johnny Paul Koroma as posed by the prosecution and that he remained in his rank before and after the war.

"I don't know what the Ruf were fighting for, I was not with them and never asked them and was in no way sup-

portive of the Ruf taking power from Kabbah," he said. Guilt said it was in the best interest of every soldier not him alone for the reinstatement of the army. He denied taking blood oath with SAJ Musa for the reinstatement of the SLA.

original coup

He also denied when prosecution put it to him that, SAJ Musa should take command from him because they (Afric) were the original coup plotters. When counsel for the prosecution put it to him that he was responsible for the death of SAJ Musa, the witness denied this and said that if the family of Musa were around the court they would never be happy to hear that.

That it was only Junior Lion who was not a soldier that blamed him for the death of SAJ and that his (Gullit) aim was to return back to the army and not to install the Afric to power. He denied being among the troops that came to Freetown and that he escaped immediately after the death of SAJ Musa.

no access

That he had no access to communication so, he had no business with Maskita. He also disagreed with prosecution that he neither promoted himself nor the second and third accused persons and that he neither ordered the Nigerians to be killed nor the SLPP collaborators.

"I did not communicate with any member of the Ruf and neither had the intention nor did I attack Freetown," he said. That he did not order the killing of anyone who opposed the Afric nor ordered the opening of Pademba Road Prison. He denied having knowledge of an attack on Freetown as his aim was to go to Makeni and that he did not order the setting of fire on vehicles at Fisher lane nor the burning of the CID headquarters. That on the 6 January 1999 he was on his way to Makeni therefore he couldn't tell who occupied state House. He also denied ordering the release of Gibril Massaquoi from Pademba Road Prison but that he saw Massaquoi at Makeni.

Subsequent questions posed by the prosecution in relation to activities that took place in Freetown associated with the witness were denied by him

The Star Ledger

Monday, 10 July 2006

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?/base/news>

82-day ordeal ends with a 'Welcome home'

Scotch Plains man was held in Sierra Leone after taking a photo at U.N. court complex

Freed on the 4th of July, a Scotch Plains man came home last night after being held for months as a suspected spy in Sierra Leone.

"It was truly God's will," Michael Chemidlin said shortly after his plane landed at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York.

As he walked through the international arrivals corridor two of his sons, Andrew and Nathan Chemidlin, were anxiously waiting to welcome him. They leaned over the railing to see him, pressing their faces against the glass and waving when they as they saw his rumpled form pass through the corridor.

While they were able to keep in contact with Chemidlin by telephone, the past few months have been stressful, said Andrew Chemidlin, 31, a Scotch Plains resident and the oldest of Chemidlin's three sons.

"Mentally it was very hard on us," he said. "But it has got to be 100 times worse for him."

Chemidlin was absolved last week of charges he conspired to free Liberia's former president, Charles Taylor, from a United Nations court complex.

The 58-year-old postal worker's ordeal began two days before he was scheduled to return home from what he described as a "religious fact-finding mission." A self-described born-again Christian, Chemidlin was finishing a planned 15-day tour of Liberia, Ghana and Sierra Leone.

At the request of two Sierra Leoneans, Chemidlin snapped a picture of the duo standing in front of the U.N. court complex's guard tower in Freetown, the nation's capital.

The tower housed Taylor, who was being held there pending trial for alleged war crimes. The former warlord is accused of backing rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war. Taylor was transferred to The Hague in the Netherlands last month.

On April 29, one day after Chemidlin took the photo, local authorities arrested and charged him, along with three other locals, on conspiracy offences. The Vietnam veteran, who also spent last year in Iraq with the New Jersey Army National Guard, would spend a total of 21 days in jail.

On May 15 a court ruled he hadn't violated any conspiracy laws and he was freed, but a day later Sierra Leonean authorities rearrested him and this time the charges were espionage.

"At that point I was besides myself," he said last night.

Chemidlin went back to Pademba Road Prison. Fourteen hours of every day was spent locked up in a cell where he sat in the dark, slept on the floor and used "no-flush toilets." At one point he contracted malaria, landing him in a military hospital for a night.

"Every day went from bad to worse," he said.

Throughout the 82-day ordeal Chemidlin maintained his innocence. On July 4, after weeks of delayed hearings, a judge ruled he was innocent and dropped the charges. Chemidlin spent most of last week trying to reclaim the passport he relinquished after his arrest.

Despite what happened, Chemidlin was proud of the trip.

"I don't have any regrets at all," he said. "I went with intent and I would do it again."

Newsday

Friday, 7 July 2006

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,40326.html>

Charles Taylor's son sent back to jail

THE son of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who was arrested in Miami after he stepped off a flight from Trinidad, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to passport fraud charges and was sent back to jail to await trial.

Charles McArthur Emmanuel, also known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr, has been held without bail since he was arrested on March 30 after he arrived on a flight from Trinidad. Prosecutors say he lied about his father's identity on his application for a passport at the United States Embassy in Port-of-Spain.

Emmanuel, a US citizen who was head of Liberia's Anti-Terrorist Unit during his father's presidency, did not speak during the brief hearing yesterday.

His court-appointed lawyer, Miguel Caridad, entered the plea on his behalf.

Emmanuel was arrested on March 30 at the Miami International Airport after arriving on American Airlines flight 1668 from Trinidad. Emmanuel is a United States citizen who was born in Suffolk County, Boston, Massachusetts on February 12, 1977. His birth certificate showed his mother is Beatrice Yolanda Emmanuel, a Trinidadian who is a former girlfriend of Charles Taylor. But his father was unnamed.

In Emmanuel's application dated March 15, 2006, he identified his father as Steven Daniel Smith, date of birth April 6, 1952, and listed Smith's place of birth as St Vincent.

Emmanuel failed to identify Charles Taylor or stepfather Roy Belfast as his father on that application.

On March 30, 2006, a special agent interviewed Armando Armandariz, Consul General, US Embassy in Port-of-Spain. The Consul General stated that Emmanuel's false statements were not known to his office. He said had the nature of Chuckie's family account been known, a consular officer would not have approved his application for a passport and further investigation would have been conducted.

Travel records revealed that on July 31, 2003, Chuckie travelled on Liberian passport No 002858 from Paris, France to Trinidad through Dulles International Airport in Loudoun County, Virginia. He arrived on Air France, flight No 028 and departed for Trinidad on BWIA flight.

On March 30, 2006, Chuckie boarded American Airlines flight 1668 from Trinidad and landed in Florida where he was arrested.

The Analyst (Liberia)

Friday, 7 July 2006

Another Major Victory Begs Claim

THE FORMER PRESIDENT of Liberia, Charles Taylor, was on the morning of June 20 transferred to the custody of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, The Netherlands. That transfer was inevitable given the tumbling of events over one another during the last two months.

The transfer itself would not have been a surprise to many thereby opening itself up to various interpretations and sparking off suspicions of international intrigue and conspiracy save for the immediate preceding event: it was announced by the Special Court that the trial was about to enter a pre-trial stage. Instead, the transfer came 24 hours of that stage. Since then, allegations have been flying in the face of victory hoots from Washington, London, New York, and capitals of some of African and European countries.

FEW OR AT least two of these victory hoots especially caught our attention and raised within us the need to call attention to equally essential areas of international cooperation and collaboration. We refer here to international cooperation and collaboration that are basic to the consolidation of the peace and the reconciliation that UN and international stakeholders are convinced is an important step forward for justice and accountability that will contribute to stability in West Africa after decades of civil conflict. The two victory hoots of interest came from the U.S. government and the Secretary General of the UN Security Council, Kofi Annan.

SAYS U.S. STATE Department Deputy Spokesman Adam Ereli in a recent: "Charles Taylor's arrest and trial is the result of years of support for democracy and diplomatic efforts by the US and our international partners." Ereli then proceeded to reveal how the US authored Resolution 1638 that authorized the arrest of Taylor by UNMIL and subsequently worked to ensure the adoption of Resolution 1688 on June 16 which authorized the Special Court to be able to hold Taylor's trial in The Hague. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, for his part, called the transfer of Taylor to The Hague to face trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity a victory against impunity. A UN release quoted him as saying that he is confident that Charles Taylor's trial will mark a further victory in the struggle to end impunity and will contribute to reconciliation in Liberia and the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia and in Sierra Leone.

THESE ARE FINE appraisals of Taylor's transfer and the events leading up to it notwithstanding counter appraisals that say Taylor was kidnapped and that his transfer without recourse to his lawyers and family members is a graphic demonstration of the beginning of international conspiracy to deny him fair and transparent trial. But because they are adjudged "fine" should not make them ends in themselves. That is the point we intend to strike home here. While we agree the trial of Taylor does not only set the stage for the eradication of bad governance and criminal impunity in the region, we are convinced that several more coordinated steps need to be taken inside Sierra Leone and especially Liberia in order to solidify what the international community seems convinced is an achievement against injustice and impunity.

WHEN WE SAY several more coordinated steps, we speak of the synchronization and training of measures being taken on concrete and achievable objectives in order to ensure security in the subregion. We have no information on the security status of Sierra Leone four years after the successful cessation of hostilities and the holding of elections. But what is obtaining in Liberia

vis-à-vis the restoration of security, even for IDPs and returnees who are voluntarily returning to their places of origin, is a nightmare. In most cities across Liberia, criminals move about freely at night and sometimes in broad day light without hindrance from security men, brandishing machetes and other dangerous weapons with which they subject large communities to curfew, hack up their victims, and extorting valuables from them.

ALL OF THIS is happening even though the security-personnel-to-square mile ratio for Liberia had increased twenty-folds since UNMIL took charge of security from the ECOWAS vanguard force, ECOMIL, on October 1, 2003. Despite the fact that personnel of the large and better equipped UNMIL peacekeeping force duck-sit at well-decorated and barricaded checkpoints and at facilities belonging to UN agencies, foreign missions, and the government of Liberia while the communities and highways of the nation grow increasingly insecure, major international players seem convinced that the mere transfer and trial of Charles Taylor in The Hague will guarantee peace and reconciliation. More than that, they seem contented, the transfer will discourage impunity in Liberia and Sierra Leone and stabilize the subregion. This is being over simplistic besides being typical of mockery of the reality. There certainly is no way the international community can turn a blind eye on the "peace-time" violence and mayhem being visited upon Liberians who have decided to throw the ugly past behind them and restore their lives and expect to get a favorable turn of events from the fallacy that Taylor's trial, in itself, can guarantee a brighter future.

WE SAY THIS because we have no doubt that the increased level of criminality in Liberia today is not unrelated to the failure of the DDRR programme initiated and run by UNMIL and the unfortunate failure of UNMIL to put into place remedial measures to hold in check the criminality that was bound to surge as the direct result of that failure. It is therefore our conviction that in order to consolidate the victory being claimed by the US government and the United Nations over Taylor's transfer, they must win the victory over criminality that is seriously undermining the peace process and the eventual achievement of stability in the subregion. It is this victory that commandeered the attention of the moment and that begs claim. Ignoring it and hoping exclusively in Taylor's trial and transfer is like building a sand castle, which Liberians abhor most.

United Nations

Friday, 7 July 2006

Activities of Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, 2 - 3 July

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan arrived in Sierra Leone from the Gambia on Sunday, 2 July.

On Monday morning, he met with the senior officials of the United Nations Office in the country and held a town hall meeting with local staff. He also visited Camp Solar, which houses the more than 200 Mongolian peacekeeping troops who protect the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He thanked them for their dedicated, exemplary service so far from their home, adding that they could be the vanguard of increased Mongolian participation in United Nations peacekeeping.

The Secretary-General also met with the country's President, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, and assured him that, while the United Nations peacekeeping mission has closed down, the United Nations remains dedicated to working in Sierra Leone. Among other things, he said that the United Nations stands ready to assist Sierra Leone on elections.

The Secretary-General then went to see the Special Court, where he was briefed by Registrar Lovemore G. Munlo, SC; the President of the Court, Justice George Gelaga-King; the Acting Prosecutor, Christopher Staker; and other senior officials on the Court's work and its completion strategy. He also visited the detention centre that houses suspects.

He had lunch with Victor da Silva Angelo, Executive Representative for the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the mission's senior staff.

Before departing, Mr. Annan held a press conference.

In a separate programme on Monday, Nane Annan visited a centre for vulnerable girls, most of them street children or child sex workers, many having suffered violence and sexual abuse at home or on the streets. The centre, supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Irish non-governmental organization GOAL, provides shelter, food, health care, counselling, family tracing and mediation, education and skills training, including HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Mrs. Annan acknowledged the girls as role models for others to come forward and learn new skills to develop themselves. She encouraged them to continue their education, "because that is the most important thing you can have, to become stronger and more confident and to help you achieve your dreams", she said.

The Secretary-General's delegation departed later on Monday for Liberia.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 8 July 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

[There were no relevant stories on Liberia in the international media today]

International Clips on West Africa

Lack of Trust Hampers Ivorian Peace Efforts

By John Kaninda

Johannesburg, Jul 07, 2006 (Business Day/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --UNITED Nations (UN) Secretary-General Kofi Annan's first visit to war-torn Cote d'Ivoire has highlighted how a lack of trust among Ivorian leaders is still hampering the implementation of the country's peace agreements. Annan held talks with Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo and rebel leader Guillaume Soro on Wednesday. Also at the talks were President Thabo Mbeki, his Nigerian counterpart Olusegun Obasanjo, Ivorian Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny and opposition leader Alassane Ouattara.

Annan Praises Bintumani Hotel Services

By Samuel Harding

Freetown, Jul 07, 2006 (Concord Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --"Thank you for your warm and kind reception. We have been very well looked after by your staff and Management," Mrs. Nane Annan signed the Bintumani BUCG Hotel register on July 2nd while checking out. Upon arrival at the hotel, the UN Secretary General greeted Ms. Dong Wen, General Manager of the hotel in Chinese and was laid to their room by top management officials. Bintumani officials say Mr. Annan and wife heartily ate 'dumpling', a traditional Chinese food meant for very important visitors. The UN Scribe also said 'thank you' in Chinese after eating.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

President Urges Finance Ministry to Work with other Ministries

- During her visit to the Ministry of Finance yesterday, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf urged the Ministry to work along with other government ministries and agencies to ensure that government programs proceed satisfactorily. She said that it was vital that resources be made available to meet government's obligations to its people in the areas of education, health, road rehabilitation and the payment of salaries.
- In response, Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh said her Ministry was working diligently to ensure that government's targeted development programs were achieved and called on ministries and agencies to work along with her ministry to ensure transparency and accountability.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

U.S. Embassy Funds Community Self-Help Projects

- Under its Ambassador Self-Help Fund, the United States Embassy in Monrovia yesterday granted US\$69,000 to 15 self-help projects in 9 counties, including Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Nimba, Bong, and Bomi.
- Speaking at the signing ceremony for the grants, Ambassador Donald Booth said that it was difficult to select 15 out of 150 proposals which had been submitted for consideration, adding that the ability to respond quickly was important to help communities realize their much needed projects.
- The recipients commended Ambassador Booth for the assistance and assured that the projects would be fully implemented.
- On behalf of Lawmakers who attended the ceremony, Montserrado County Representative Dusty Wolokollie assured the U.S. Embassy that the grants would be used appropriately.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

U.S. Lawmakers Arrive in Liberia Today

- A delegation of the U.S. Congress will arrive in Liberia today and will hold talks with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the National Legislature and members of the Liberian government.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

UNMIL Nigerian Contingent Awards Medals to Deserving Personnel

- An UNMIL press release issued in Monrovia yesterday said that Battalions 8, 9 and Signal Regiment 3 of the Nigerian Contingent of UNMIL will today be decorated with medals for their services to the Mission.
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss who will decorate the soldiers will also be the guest of honor at the ceremony while the Chief of Defense Staff of the Nigerian Army, General Martin Luther Agwai, will head the Nigerian delegation to the ceremony.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Police Handout Cellular Phones to Help Fight Armed Robbery

- The Liberian National Police yesterday distributed cellular phones to some communities in Monrovia, a gesture which the LNP's Acting Inspector-General Alfred Karlay said would assist residents in their fight against robbery. He said the phones would be used to call specific numbers other than the usual 911 emergency number.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Circuit Court Urges Judges to Work Professionally

- Speaking at the end of the May Term of Court, Grand Gedeh County Circuit Court Judge Roger Nile has called on lawyers in the County to execute their duties professionally. He said that lawyers in the county betray the confidence of their clients by lying and boycotting court hearings, adding that the lawyers perform poorly to the detriment of the judicial system.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 7 July 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Indian Gov't Boosts Light Project, Donates 3 Electrical Generators, 50 Streetlights

Jul 06, 2006 (The Analyst/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --The Government of the Republic of India has boosted the government of Liberia's electrification project, known as the Emergency Power Project (EPP). The Indian Government donated additional two electrical generators and 50 street lights. The EPP program targets Monrovia and its environs. The donation was made Monday. Each of the generators has the capacity of 44 kilo watts, and the Indian government's Ambassador accredited to the Ivory Coast and **Liberia**, Mr. Khatua, the donation was a manifestation of the great importance the government and people of India attach to the reconstruction of war-torn Liberia.

International Clips on West Africa

AP July 06, 2006

Ivory Coast "mini-summit" sets new peace process deadlines, postpones election decision

By SERME LASSINA

YAMOUSSOUKRO, Ivory Coast _ Warring factions in Ivory Coast agreed to a later deadline for militia disarmament and a plan for a long-awaited citizen identification program, but the "mini-summit" with the U.N. secretary-general and others put off a decision on whether to delay elections. Meanwhile, the U.S. ambassador to Ivory Coast set off Thursday on a weeklong tour of northern rebel-controlled territory in an attempt to "engage all groups in the process of peace and reconciliation," according to a statement by Ambassador Aubrey Hooks' office.

VOA 06 July 2006

Ivorians Express Disappointment after Annan Visit

By Franz Wild, Abidjan

People from several sides of Ivory Coast's conflict are disappointed at the results of a meeting between the government and rebels that was chaired by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan. Franz Wild reports for VOA from Abidjan that highly politicized Ivorian newspapers said the meeting did not produce enough assurances presidential elections would be possible by the end of October, as scheduled.

Local Media – Newspapers

Speaker Snowe Apologizes to Colleagues for Unilateral Action

(Daily Observer, The News, New Democrat and Heritage)

- According to correspondents covering the National Legislature, House of Representatives Speaker Edwin Snowe yesterday apologized to his colleagues for linking them to a letter he had written to Taiwanese Ambassador Patrick Chang in Banjul, The Gambia, seeking to re-establish diplomatic relations between Liberia and Taiwan.
- Speaker Snowe said that he remained supportive of constitutional provisions empowering the President of Liberia to determine the foreign policy of Liberia.
- Maryland County Representative Dr. Bhofal Chambers, Lofa County Representative Varforay Kamara and Nimba County Representatives Worlea-Saywah Donnah and Nohn Rebecca Kidau had petitioned the plenary of the National Legislature to investigate Mr. Snowe's letter to the Taiwanese Ambassador.

Transitional Government Chairman Dragged to Truth Commission

(Heritage)

- Mr. Melvin Page, the legal representative of parents of students of the Early Learning Foundation School in Monrovia complained to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the former Chairman of National Transitional Government of Liberia Gyude Bryant, former Justice Minister Kabineh Ja'neh and former Liberian National Police Director Chris Massaquoi allegedly violated the rights of students of the school when armed men raided the school's campus in October 2004 on the orders of the three men.

Ghana Pledges Assistance to Liberian Army

(The Inquirer)

- Ghana Military Academy Commandant Maj.-Gen. A.K. Abdulai said that the Government of Ghana was ready to assist the Government of Liberia in its effort to restructure the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).
- Speaking when he paid a courtesy call on Defense Minister Browne Samukai in Monrovia yesterday, Maj.-Gen. Abdulai added that his Academy was undertaking different activities including training which it could avail to the AFL. He said that Sierra Leonean and other governments in West Africa send their military personnel to the Academy.
- Minister Samukai lauded Ghanaians for their support over the years and promised to convey to Commander-In-Chief President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf the news of the training opportunities at the Ghana Military Academy.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

Speaker Snowe Apologizes to Colleagues for Unilateral Action

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Transitional Government Chairman Dragged to Truth Commission

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

President Names New Chief Medical Officer of Liberia

- An Executive Mansion press statement said that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has appointed Dr. Bernice Dahn as the new Chief Medical Officer of Liberia and Deputy Health and Social Welfare Minister for Administration, replacing Dr. Benson Bah who had been dismissed for financial impropriety.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Labor Ministry Plans National Labor Conference

- In an interview yesterday, Labor Minister Samuel Kofi Woods announced that plans were underway to hold a national labor conference to review the Labor Laws of Liberia because there were many laws on the books that act against the interest of common people. He said that some institutions used such laws in the past to escape their responsibilities at the workplace.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Man Found Dead in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County

- The Star Radio correspondent in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County has reported that the body of 18-year-old Moses Paye was found dead near the city suburb of Johnsonville after the deceased had gone missing. The body was found with wounds including a cut on the neck.

Voice of America

Monday, 7 July 2006

UN Tribunal Rules Rwandan Genocide Sentence Too Lenient

A U.N. appeals court has ruled the 30-year sentence of a former Rwandan mayor for his part in the country's genocide is too lenient and has ordered him jailed for life.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda says Sylvestre Gacumbitsi, former mayor of Rusumo, played a central role in the country's 1994 genocide by planning and encouraging murder, rape and extermination.

In a separate ruling, the appeals panel reduced by 15 years the sentence for former Lieutenant Samuel Imanishimwe. It dismissed his earlier conviction of genocide but upheld convictions for murder, imprisonment, torture and extermination.

More than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in the central African country in 100 days in 1994.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha, Tanzania, was formed to try cases against the suspected leaders of the genocide.

Twenty-eight people have been tried since the court was established in 1994.

President Paul Kagame has criticized the court, saying it is not trying enough cases, is employing people allegedly implicated in the genocide, and is spending too much money.

BBC Online
Monday, 10 July 2006

Uganda extends deadline for peace

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has extended a deadline for a peace deal with the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.

Talks due to begin on Wednesday were to conclude at the end of July, but Mr. Museveni has now given until mid-September for an agreement.

The government has also appealed for rebel leader Joseph Kony to participate so progress is as swift as possible.

The talks between the government and rebels are considered northern Uganda's best chance for peace in years.

"These extra weeks are to give the LRA time to consult," Uganda's spokesman on the talks Captain Paddy Ankunda told Reuters news agency.

President Museveni has already said that he will ignore international warrants for the arrest of the rebels from the International Criminal Court, on war crimes charges.

The president argues that the United Nations had failed to play its part in attacking the rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo, when they had the opportunity.

At the weekend, the LRA welcomed an amnesty offer from President Museveni if the insurgency in the north is ended.

LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti said he was speaking on behalf of Mr Kony.

Chance for peace

The talks are scheduled to take place on 12 July in the southern Sudanese town of Juba, and will be mediated by the south Sudan regional government.



Uganda rebel leader Joseph Kony calls himself a freedom fighter

“ It would be totally wrong to encourage African devils to continue killing fellow Africans in the name of freedom

”

Beau Garcon, Bujumbura

Should amnesty be offered?

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

First permanent court to try individuals for genocide, war crimes and other human rights violations
Rome Statute set up in July 1998, when 120 countries adopted the treaty
Came into force in April 2002 after ratification by 60 countries
Uganda and DR Congo investigations began in 2004

Q&A: International

In a recent BBC interview, Mr. Kony denied the LRA had carried out atrocities, particularly on children.

Criminal Court

Thousands have died in the two-decade conflict between rebels and the government, and some two million have been forced to flee their homes.

The ICC has stressed that Mr. Kony and other indictees remain wanted men and should be arrested.

The US has also expressed its concerns about the amnesty offer.

"The United States respects Uganda's decision on this matter, but we believe those who have committed atrocities in this long-standing insurgency should be held accountable for their deeds," the US embassy in Kampala said.

Mr. Museveni says his government would not have re-opened negotiations with Mr Kony if it had "reliable partners" in the region and the world.

Several previous attempts to hold peace talks have failed.

Running Africa

Monday, 10 July 2006

Liberia: Double Sufferings, From war crimes to economic crimes

A News Analysis

By Thomas Kai Toteh

“Warlords, war criminals,” the people cried during the war and are still crying. Warlords and war criminals are people who gave guns to the children and grown-ups to fight the civil war that resulted to the death of over 200, 000 people. Some people say those who helped to plan the war are also warlords. The main warlord and war criminal was arrested and is currently being held in The Hague in Netherlands awaiting trial.

The world’s organization is not holding him for the deaths, destruction, and sufferings his war brought upon the people of Liberia. They are holding him for expanding his war to a neighboring country, Sierra Leone. The expansion of his war caused thousands of Sierra Leonean children to lose their arms, legs, and some parts of their bodies-thousand others died.

Thousands of Liberians marched during UN’s Kofi Annan’s visit to Liberia to petition him for the establishment of a war crimes court in Liberia. The protesters said there are too many warlords and war criminals in Liberia. “Not Charles Taylor alone, there are a bunch of them,” some protesters who wore black clothes and carried symbolic coffins chanted.

The UN boss said war crimes court is outside the Accra’s agreement, but if the government chooses it later, UN may honor her request. He then restored protesters’ hope by saying that even though Truth and Reconciliation Commission is in place, those who bear the greatest weight of atrocities in Liberia must be held accountable. The protesters dispersed and went to their various homes. They are now waiting for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to get in a full gear for business.

The day Truth and Reconciliation Commission gets into real business, all of the people who did some wrongs to other people during the civil war suppose to come forward to tell the truth and ask for forgiveness and acceptance. But not everyone will be forgiven and accepted. This is the reason why the protesters were calling for a war crimes court-that’s why the UN’s boss said those who bear the greatest weight will not go free regardless of their status in society.

While the war was fighting the people were starving. Children were starving to death and bullets and bombs put the toll up to thousands. The United Nations intervened and set up a transitional government to pave the way for disarmament and elections.

At the same time, UN, rich nations, NGOs, and some rich individuals came to the aid of the Liberian people with donations in cash, materials, and food. But with all these donations, the people were still starving as if they were under the rule of guns. Civil servants’ pay stopped abruptly.

The caretaker government told the people, “Be patience because this is a transitional period.” While the people were patient, some caretaker government officials were buying houses in America. They were ridding fabulous cars and their houses filled with lights and their bellies filled.

This kind of attitude reminded Liberians of the anti-social personality disorder that lived with past regimes. Anti-personality disorder is defined as a chronic behavior that manipulates and exploits or violates the rights of others to the extent that they are subjected to abject poverty.

Economic Crimes-

Activities such as exploitation of natural resources, corruption and misappropriation of funds from banks gravely affect the economic wellbeing of the people. The consequences of these activities include hunger, starvation, diseases and deaths. Those who are charged with the responsibility to regulate the fair distribution of natural resources, taxes, and all other revenues are the perpetrators of these ill-fated activities in Liberia.

As the result of public outcry against the wildly growing depravity in Liberia, Economic Community of West African States (ECWAS), set up a team of investigators to look into what it referred to as “Economic Crimes.” The result of the report was not a surprise to Liberians, for they knew a very few people in the higher echelons of government had the nation’s treasury in their pockets. Rampant corruption in Liberia manifests itself in various forms: The poor infrastructure of a country 159 years old, 80 percent illiteracy rate, and child labor-to supplement meager incomes, practically tell it all.

However, the six-man ECWAS team final report has identified several government officials who, during the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG) tenure, robbed Liberian people of millions of US dollars. Identifying these alleged crooks and recommending their prosecution and complete refunds of the funds they allegedly stole set a good precedent in the fight against corruption in Liberia.

At the top of the list are Chairman Gyude Bryant, Vice Chairman Wesley Johnson; Finance minister, Lusine Kamara; Minister of Commerce and Industry, Samuel Wlue; deputy minister of Finance for administration, Tugbe Doe; and head of fraud investigation at the Ministry of Finance, Albert Quaye.

In spite of the fact that some government officials, past and present are still unearthed in the fight against corruption, those who are brought to light must have their day in court to answer to the charges of corruption. In compliance with Section 1 of Executive Order No. 2 of 2003, any official of government who causes loss of revenue to the government of Liberia shall “be removed from office and prosecuted for the offence of felony in the third degree.”

Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson administration inherited two years salary arrears for civil servants from the LNTG of Gyude Bryant. President Sirleaf, during the election campaign joined Liberians to denounce the indescribable level of misappropriation in public sector. She vowed to rally with the Liberian people to dislodge the culture of corruption in Liberia, which Liberians said is one of the main causes of their poverty.

However, following pressure from Liberians during the 150 days of her government, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has realized that a bunch of her officials are “old wine in a new bottle.” The president carried out a major shake-up in mid-June amid civil servants’ demand for salary increment. The president is arguing that civil servants’ US \$150 monthly pay demand is impossible. Those dismissed for alleged corruption have not been charged.

Liberian past governments were noted for comprising with corrupt officials. At some points government officials dismissed for corruption were later rehired and sent to different ministries or agencies. Most people seeking government jobs and positions in Liberia do so, not for the service to their country or the salaries, but they do so for the “Get rich quick” scheme.

Private sectors have been exploiting the corrupt practices in the public sector over the years. Business entities had dubbed government of billions of dollars over the years by collaborating with some government officials and tax collectors.

Most Liberians believe that the fight against economic crimes is more complex than the fight against war crimes. Liberians are imbued with this anti-social disorder-it would need a very committed leadership with a resolve, backed by the people, and independent pro-social movements, free press, and advocates of transparency to solidified the fight against this age-old corruption phenomenon in Liberia.

The Analyst (Monrovia)

Friday, 7 July 2006

Balancing Justice With Reconciliation

Discussions that culminated into the Accra Peace Agreement ended with the general consensus that the way back to sanity and peace involves in that order, cessation of hostilities, transitional government for disarmament and creation of enabling political environment, elections, and concomitantly, reconciliation and reconstruction. But a few vocal Liberians seem not to appreciate the outcome of the first four steps and they are afraid that the reconciliation and reconstruction processes may crash land.

This group is not only expecting "so much too soon in reconstruction" but it is also seeking to reverse the Accra consensus by calling for the establishment of a war crime tribunal to address past impunity. Such advocates, though, seem unlikely to succeed. The Analyst Staff Writer has been finding out, based on her recent interview with IRIN, where President Sirleaf stands on the issue of justice and reconciliation in an era of reconstruction and high public expectation

President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf said her administration intends to pursue the peace path set three years ago by stakeholders in the Liberian peace process in Accra.

In stead of seeking to right the wrongs of the past by opting for the early establishment of a war crimes tribunal for Liberia, she told the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) recently, Liberians needed to subscribe to a two-step process that will seek to balance reconciliation and justice.

She said even though her administration supported the transfer of former President Charles Taylor to The Hague because it afforded Liberians the opportunity to rebuild their country, the establishment of a criminal court in Liberia now would undermine the process of reconciliation which she said is very crucial to the reconstruction agenda of her administration.

"We are trying to find a balance between justice on the one hand, and reconciliation on the other," she said, indicating that the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was not intended to undermining justice.

She said the path being currently pursued by her administration was overwhelmingly endorsed by Liberians at a forum provided by the international community to craft the way forward and that therefore it would be a betrayal of trust of the people to seek to punish past crimes as some advocates were suggesting.

"You know, we discussed this during the peace talks in Accra [Ghana]. Thousands and thousands of young people, many of them children as young as 10 years old, were forced into violence. They were drugged, they were put on alcohol, and they did bad things. We said, what are we going to do? Take these young people to a war crimes tribunal? What we agreed was, as a first step, we need to put in place the process of contrition and forgiveness. We can have these young people face their accusers, have them say they are sorry and try to have them make a new life. When these accusers say they want more than forgiveness, they want justice, the TRC must recommend justice for them.

Then, we can talk about who should face a court. So it's a two-step thing. But our first step is to find the means to rehabilitate those who were conscripted into war," President Sirleaf said when it was put to her that controversy seems to surround the establishment of the TRC.

She said this did not mean that the quest of some Liberians for justice would be dashed by her administration.

What it meant, she said, was that the government intended to go systematically by first reforming the judicial system both structurally and incentive wise before attempting to address past impunity, if need be, through the legal system.

"We are getting some help but it is not enough. Our entire judicial system has broken down because of the many years of lawlessness, indiscipline and warfare.

We need more training to get more qualified judges. We need infrastructural reforms We had so many interim governments, and they passed so many laws, that some of them are duplicating each other, while others are contradicting each other," she said.

She said notwithstanding the high public expectation for the restoration of basic social services in the absence of firm international financial support, her administration managed to achieve much in a relatively short time and is making efforts to achieve more for the Liberian people.

According to her, Liberia has to take primary responsibility for its own reform agenda but that the resources available to the government were limited.

"We have to attract the private sector to get jobs to our people that will enable us to raise the government revenue, but to do that we have to build infrastructure Anyway, we are putting together a broad development agenda," she revealed.

Besides, she said, her administration has set its financial house in order quite a bit, cancelled more than eighty contracts and agreements, met the qualification for the general system of preferences, AGOA [African Growth and Opportunity Act], encouraged Exim Bank to reopen its facilities in Liberia, and concluded a code of conduct which is on its way to the Legislature.

But she noted that there was still much to be considered in light of past mistakes. As the result of lessons learnt from this, she said, her administration, which is now considering some 20 proposals on investment, was being very careful in giving out a concession and making sure it benefit the local community.

These successes asides, she said, her government was facing a number of obstacles in the area of infrastructural development including lights, the water, and the roads, the absence of which she said would undermine government's bargaining position.

"Companies can't operate without those things. And even though we have commitments from our partners, it takes time to turn commitments into cash," the Liberian Chief Executive said.

Meanwhile President Sirleaf said she has yet to obtain the cooperation of the main opposition party, CDC, despite initiatives she has taken.

"But we are still trying to find the means to improve the relationship with the leadership of the main opposition," she said without further comment.

Whether she succeeds in her policy of balancing justice with reconciliation the next six years or not, according to her, depended on the extent to which the Liberian people are willing to help the process of reconciliation and reconstruction work in the face of inadequate funding and fluttering security.

But analysts say that level of willingness depends on how the Sirleaf Administration, through adherence to accountability and transparency, responds to public anxiety and aspirations.

The question some critics are asking is, "Will she succeed indulging wrong doers in the name of reconciliation while putting justice on the backburner?" The answer may not come for months, even years