

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

**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 of:**

Friday, 10 March 2006

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248

## Table of Contents

### Sierra Leone Media

Government Moves to Extradite Charles Taylor  
*Spectator* Pages 3-4

### International Media

War Crimes - Bringing the Wicked to the Dock  
*Economist* Pages 5-9

FG May Extradite Taylor to Liberia  
*Thisday (Nigeria)* Pages 10-11

Taylor: Obasanjo Begins Extradition Talks With Liberia  
*Daily Independent (Nigeria)* Pages 12-13

FG to Extradite Charles Taylor  
*Daily Champion (Nigeria)* Pages 14-15

UN Troops to Return to West Ivory Coast After Riots  
*Reuters* Pages 16-17

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 28 Feb 2006  
*UNMIL* Pages 18-21

...He can't be prosecuted in Nigeria –F.G.  
*Daily Sun (Nigeria)* Pages 22-23

Spectator  
10 March 2006

# Govt moves to extradite Charles Taylor

**T**HE Federal Government may have decided to extradite former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, to stand trial for war crimes at the United Nations War Crime Tribunal in

Sierra Leone. But while President Olusegun Obasanjo and his Liberian counterpart, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf have been discussing the Taylor issue, the Federal Government Wednesday challenged afresh

the jurisdiction of a Federal High Court, Abuja to hear a suit by two Nigerian businessmen opposing the asylum granted Mr. Taylor in Nigeria. President Obasanjo has always rejected calls to

extradite Mr. Taylor to face trial, although he said this might be considered if an elected government in Liberia asked for it. It is generally believed that President Obasanjo and

*continued page 2*

# Govt. moves to extradite Charles Taylor

Johnson-Sirleaf discusses the matter during her visit to Abuja this weekend. Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr Frank Nweke Jnr. confirmed this that President Obasanjo and Johnson-Sirleaf had been "working jointly to arrive at a decision on Charles Taylor. "Both Presidents are discussing as events unfold, the public will be properly briefed," he said. Nweke said Nigeria had consented to request from the new Liberian President for technical assistance to the West African country ravaged by almost a decade of war. The technical assistance is geared towards reconstructing public utilities which collapsed during the war. Federal Government wants the court to dismiss asylum suit against Taylor. Meanwhile, the Federal Government on Wednesday challenged afresh the jurisdiction of a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja to hear a suit by two Nigerian businessmen opposing the asylum granted by President Olusegun Obasanjo to former Liberian President, Mr Charles Taylor. The two Nigerians are Messrs. Emmanuel Egbuna and David Anyaele. The fresh application brought for the termination of the entire suit was predicated on the provisions of Section 10 of the

National Commission for Refugees etc Act, CAP 244. Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees etc Act provides: "Notwithstanding the provisions of the Customs, Excise and Tariffs (Consolidation) Act, as amended, no proceedings shall be instituted or continued against any person or any member of his family in respect of his unlawful entry into or unlawful presence within Nigeria if such person applies under Section 8 of this Act for the grant of a refugee status, until a decision has been made on the application and where appropriate until such person has had an opportunity of exhausting his right of appeal under that section or, if such person has been granted refugees status. According to Federal Government's lawyer, Chief Wole Aina, "given this provision of the statute, this present action is prohibited. The provision appears to have taken away locus standi (right of action) of the plaintiffs." When one looks further into the Act and the schedules, there are outcome of treaties entered into by countries. The rule of our professional ethics says we should bring to the notice of the court anything that can help it arrive at a just decision." In essence, even if they kill your mother, you don't have to file any case because it appears from the provision of that statute that any action

filed is an abuse of court process." Having been barred by the statute under which they came to court, the court should put an end to it. It is never too late to raise the issue. The court can put an end to an action which is an abuse of court process," he said. Wednesday's request by the Federal Government was described as novel by the plaintiffs. Their counsel, Mr Mutiu Ganiyu, said "the business of the day is to reply to our arguments on their application for stay of proceedings in this case. Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act being referred to is irrelevant." "They are saying that the provision of the section ousts the power of anybody to sue. I disagree." But assuming that Section 10 is targeted at these kind of persons (referring to his clients), then that section is unconstitutional. The rights of the plaintiffs to sue under Sections 6 and 36 of the constitution cannot be ousted by any provision of any statute. Since they have an appeal, they can go to the Court of Appeal and raise that issue," he said. After the conclusion of arguments on the application for stay of proceedings brought by the Federal Government on Wednesday, the high court deferred ruling in the matter till April 13 even as it promised to take a judicial look at the controversial Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act.

## Economist

9 March 2006

### War crimes

#### **Bringing the wicked to the dock**

Mar 9th 2006 | FREETOWN

#### **But does an international search for justice hurt or help the pursuit of peace?**

HITHERTO, the world's worst tyrants have usually managed to avoid being brought to court for their crimes. Some, of course, were killed. Hitler took his own life. But Stalin and Mao died in their beds. Pol Pot, responsible for the slaughter of 2m Cambodians in the 1970s, lived on in Cambodia until his death in 1998. Idi Amin, Uganda's brutal dictator, saw out his days in comfortable exile in Saudi Arabia; Ethiopia's Mengistu Haile Mariam continues to live in Zimbabwe. The list goes on. But with the spread of international justice over the past decade, the noose is tightening. It is now accepted that there can be no immunity for the worst violations of human rights, not even for heads of state.

Serbia's president, Slobodan Milosevic, was indicted for war crimes in 1999 and is likely to be sentenced to life imprisonment when his trial ends later this year. After ten years on the run, Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb army chief held responsible for the Srebrenica massacre, is expected to be arrested any day. In Chile, Augusto Pinochet is finally facing a real possibility of trial 17 years after the end of his dictatorship. Hissène Habré, a ruthless ex-president of Chad, exiled in Senegal for the past 16 years, could soon be extradited to Brussels to face trial for crimes against humanity under Belgium's "universal jurisdiction" law. Polish prosecutors are preparing to bring charges against Wojciech Jaruzelski, their last communist leader. And Saddam Hussein, Iraq's former dictator, faces near-certain execution at the end of his trial before a special tribunal in Baghdad.

Debate has long raged about the best way to deal with gross violations of human rights. Is it more important to punish the perpetrators or to bring an end to the atrocities? Can one, in other words, secure both justice and peace, or are the two naturally antagonistic?

In the 1980s the concept of "truth and reconciliation" began to be the rage, and justice was relegated to the back burner. Truth-telling, perhaps encouraged by amnesties, appeared a good way of revealing the previously suppressed stories of the victims and (much less often) the perpetrators of the covert state-sponsored violence (death squads, "disappearances" and such like) in Latin America. Indeed, the first truth and reconciliation commission was set up not in South Africa, as many still believe, but in Chile, in 1990. Others followed in quick succession in El Salvador, Chad, Haiti, South Africa (1995), Ecuador, Nigeria, Peru, Sierra Leone, South Korea, Uruguay, Timor-Leste, Ghana, Panama, Congo, Liberia and Morocco, the first in the Arab world. Algeria, Afghanistan and Burundi are now considering following suit.

But for many, the idea that genocide, ethnic cleansing, torture and other such horrors should go unpunished became increasingly troubling. Under the principle of national sovereignty, nation states were supposed to have responsibility for enforcing their own criminal justice. But all too often they had shown themselves unwilling or incapable of prosecuting the worst culprits, either because those responsible were still in power, or because they had taken refuge in other countries and were now out of reach. Hence the turn to international justice.

In 1993, the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague became the first international war-crimes tribunal to be set up since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials after the second world war. It was followed a year later by the UN tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha, Tanzania. Like their post-war forebears, the two courts operate exclusively under international law and are staffed by foreign judges. Since then, five other war-crimes tribunals, all with more or less international input, have been—or are being—set up to deal with atrocities in Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Iraq and Afghanistan. Lebanon has now asked the UN for help in setting up a “tribunal of international character” to try the assassins of Rafik Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister who was killed a year ago.

### **What man can do to man**

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, set up jointly by the UN and the Sierra Leonean government in 2002, was the world's first “hybrid” court. Financed by voluntary contributions from UN members, it operates under international law but with a mixture of local and international judges. Based in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, it was also the first modern war-crimes tribunal to be based “in theatre” (ie, in the country where the crimes were committed). Desmond de Silva, the court's chief prosecutor, recounts his first visit to an amputee camp in the town four years ago: “I saw a little girl with no arms saying to her mother: ‘Mummy, when will my arms grow again?’ Nearby was a baby suckling at his mother's breast: neither had any arms. These were sights that said to me: do something. This is evil beyond belief.”

Most conflicts, especially third-world civil ones, are marked by atrocities. But the wanton cruelty of Sierra Leone's 11-year bloodbath was particularly barbaric. Although hacking off limbs became the special trademark of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the main rebel group, all sides were guilty. Child soldiers, some not yet in their teens, would rip open pregnant women's stomachs after taking bets on the sex of the fetus. Women's vaginas were sewn up with fishing line. Mouths were clamped shut with padlocks.

Children were forced to batter their parents to death and then eat their brains. One man was skinned alive before having his flesh picked off and eaten. Another had his heart torn out and stuffed into the mouth of his 87-year-old mother. Thousands were burned alive in their homes. In all, some 50,000-200,000 people were killed (there is no accurate count) and three-quarters of the country's 6m inhabitants were forced to flee their homes. Should such crimes really be forgiven and forgotten?

Charles Taylor, Liberia's ex-president and a notorious warlord, is regarded as one of the greatest villains of the piece. Accused of arming the RUF rebels in exchange for “blood” diamonds, he was indicted three years ago by Sierra Leone's court, but managed to flee into exile in Nigeria after the collapse of his own regime a few months later. Since then, he has been living undisturbed in a seaside villa, courtesy of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Nigerian leader granted him asylum as part of a peace deal brokered by Nigeria, Britain and the United States. But prosecutors claim that Mr Taylor has broken the conditions of that deal by continuing to meddle in politics, in Liberia and wider afield. Both America's Congress and the European Parliament have demanded his transfer to the Special Court.

But Mr Obasanjo has said he will not hand Mr Taylor over unless requested to do so by a democratically elected Liberian government. In November, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected Liberia's new president. She may not yet have made the request; in any case, Mr Obasanjo has made no move. African leaders tend to watch each other's backs for fear that it could be their own turn next. But the pressure is building up. In November, the UN Security Council told its peacekeepers in Liberia to arrest and transfer Mr Taylor to the Special Court if he sets foot in the

country. And the United States, hitherto reluctant to upset a valuable ally, has begun to speak out. “We think Obasanjo has an international responsibility and we fully expect him to carry it out,” Condoleezza Rice, the secretary of state, recently told reporters.

If the Special Court does get Mr Taylor, it would be a tremendous coup both for it and for international justice. Mandated to try only “those with the greatest responsibility” for the atrocities, the court has indicted just 13 people (compared with the 162 indicted by the ICTY). The trials of nine of them—three from each of the two main rebel groups and three from the pro-government Civil Defence Force (CDF), in a demonstration of even-handedness—are already well under way. But the four chief culprits are either still at large, like Mr Taylor, or dead, like Foday Sankoh, dreaded leader of the RUF rebels. Their absence has led some critics to question the continued existence of a tribunal which many Sierra Leoneans see as irrelevant to their lives.

The court's decision to try Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, the former CDF leader, has provoked particular anger. Many Sierra Leoneans regard the former government minister, who helped oust a savage rebel junta in 1998, as a national hero. “Surely there has to be a difference between a group of thugs and killers who go round butchering people mindlessly, for no particular reason, and people trying to defend their lives, their homes and their children,” protested Peter Penfold, who was British high commissioner to Sierra Leone in 1997-2000. Mr Norman should never have been indicted, Mr Penfold told the court last month. To such objections, which recur whenever an admired national leader is prosecuted, Mr de Silva is wont to reply: “You can fight on the same side as the angels and nevertheless commit crimes against humanity.” Hence, again, the need for international courts.

Sierra Leone's court is in many ways regarded as a model, with its two-to-one mix of foreign and local judges, ambitious “outreach” (public relations) and victim-protection programmes, tight timetable—it expects to complete its work in under five years as opposed to the Yugoslav tribunal's 17 years—and relatively low budget, less than \$30m a year, a quarter of the ICTY's. Admittedly, the competition is not exactly fierce.

The Yugoslav and Rwandan tribunals, while doing good work, are regarded as slow, costly and remote, while the special tribunals in Cambodia, with its majority of local judges, and in Iraq, where Mr Hussein's trial before an all-Iraqi bench keeps threatening to collapse in chaos, are regarded by many as counter-examples, lacking both impartiality and competence. With results so mixed, it is perhaps not surprising that people have begun questioning the need to finance such tribunals.

### **The court they love to hate**

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is the world's first permanent war-crimes tribunal. It is also the first not to have any direct UN involvement and has faced strong opposition from America. Set up in The Hague in 2002, alongside the ICTY and the UN's International Court of Justice (the much older body which rules on disputes between states), it is designed to provide a fairer, cheaper, and more effective way of dealing with the most serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Last October, it issued its first indictments—against Joseph Kony and four members of his savage Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda. More indictments are expected soon relating to the slaughter in Congo, where war has claimed 4m lives since 1998. The court has also been mandated by the Security Council to investigate the current horrors in Darfur, in western Sudan, and continues to keep watch on developments in five other violence-racked countries, including Côte d'Ivoire and the Central African Republic.

Yet the ICC's reach is limited. Under its statutes, it cannot bring a prosecution unless the accused's country of origin is “genuinely unable or unwilling” to do so. This is a potential minefield: Sudan, for example, insists it is perfectly capable and willing to try those responsible for Darfur and is refusing to co-operate with the court. It may not prosecute crimes committed before its inception in 2002. And it has jurisdiction only over nationals of countries which have ratified its statutes—100 have done so to date—or over those whose crimes were committed in a country which has. The exception to this rule is if the Security Council refers the matter to the ICC, as in the case of Sudan, a non-member. The ICC is further hampered by the refusal of many of the world's worst human-rights violators to sign up to it. Zimbabwe, Cuba, Uzbekistan, North Korea, Syria, Belarus and Saudi Arabia are all non-members. So are the United States, China and Russia, all three veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council and thus able to block any Security Council referrals.

### **Imperfect justice**

The purpose and value of the ICC and the other ad hoc war-crimes tribunals are now, in their turn, coming under scrutiny. Critics complain that they are selective and politicised, deliver only partial justice and perpetuate the bitterness, thus preventing social and ethnic reconstruction. All too often, suggests Dominic McGoldrick, professor of public international law at Liverpool University in Britain, they are seen as an attempt by the West to impose its own concept of justice and morality on the third world.

### **Forgiveness in the offing, with the archbishop's blessing**

Others, however, argue that ending impunity is vital, not only to reduce the victims' anger and resentment, which might otherwise fuel a never-ending cycle of reprisals and counter-reprisals, but also to deter further atrocities. Without justice, says Paul van Zyl of the New York-based International Centre for Transitional Justice, you may be able to bring a temporary stop to the killing, but there can be no sustainable peace.

Does deterrence work? It is easy to point to the apparent failures. Despite Nuremberg, genocide has continued. The creation of the ICTY failed to prevent the massacres in Srebrenica and Kosovo. The indictment of Mr Kony and his henchmen has not stopped the Ugandan killings. And since the referral of Darfur to the ICC, the violence there has got even worse. But to be effective, deterrence has to be credible. It works only when the potential culprits have a reasonable expectation of being apprehended and punished. It is too early to judge what effect the ICC and the other tribunals will have, says Mr van Zyl, but he adds that there is no doubt “that there is a growing trend in the world toward justice for the top dogs.” He believes Mr Taylor's capture would send a very strong signal to other potential tyrants.

But what about the lower-level perpetrators—the middle-ranking officers who simply follow orders out of fear for their own lives, or the child soldiers, dragged from their homes, brutalised and forced to commit atrocities often under the influence of drugs or alcohol? Should they, too, be held accountable? Here some kind of truth-telling mechanism, backed up by traditional methods of mediation and reconciliation, might be appropriate, argues Kenneth Roth, head of Human Rights Watch, another New York-based lobby. Aimed only at the worst culprits, international justice is at best a blunt instrument. But he is adamant that blanket amnesties are generally counter-productive, except (a big exception) when used as a temporary expedient to bring warring parties to the negotiating table, with the possibility of being “undone” once peace is restored.

In Sierra Leone, Mr Roth points out, the amnesty negotiated as part of the 1999 Lomé peace agreement with the rebels did not prevent the resumption of atrocities a few months later and was



therefore annulled. In war-torn northern Uganda, a five-year-old government amnesty, while successful in bringing thousands of middle- and low-ranking rebels in from the bush, has failed to get Mr Kony and his pals to lay down their arms.

Prosecution is by no means necessarily an impediment to peace, Mr Roth insists; the absence of any amnesty provision in the Dayton peace agreement on Bosnia, for example, did not stop Mr Milosevic from signing up to it (because he never dreamt that he, himself, would be prosecuted). Nor did it prevent Afghanistan's warring parties from reaching a peace agreement in Bonn. Furthermore, he says, the amnesties that have been introduced in the past are beginning to be unpicked in the courts, as in Chile in 2003, or annulled outright, as in Argentina the same year. It is now generally accepted that, under international law, amnesties can never apply to gross violations of humanitarian law.

### **Truth, reconciliation and punishment**

Even South Africa's lauded truth and reconciliation process, presided over by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, provided no automatic amnesty. Under the slogan "revealing is healing", perpetrators were invited to confess to crimes committed under the three decades of apartheid, and apply for an amnesty. But if their misdeeds were deemed too heinous, amnesty could be denied. More than 7,000 applications were accepted, but 5,400 were turned down. In addition, those who refused to confess remained liable to prosecution. For a long time, it looked as if no charges would ever be brought. But now South Africa has announced that it is ready to prosecute five people (no names yet given), with 15 more likely to follow.

Reconciliation and punitive justice are both necessary in the view of Messrs Roth and van Zyl. Far from being antagonistic, the two approaches complement one another. Much depends on local circumstances. Sometimes, as in South Africa, it is better to start with truth and reconciliation, and prosecute later. At other times, as in Iraq, prosecution comes first, and truth and reconciliation may follow when or if the violence ends. Sierra Leone is the only country that has set up a truth and reconciliation commission and a war-crimes court at the same time. Locals grumble, but the wounded little country's bold experiment could set a trend.

## Thisday (Nigeria)

9 March 2006

### **FG May Extradite Taylor to Liberia**

From Josephine Lohor and Lilian Okenwa in Abuja, 03.09.2006

Former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, who has been declared wanted by a special United Nations court to answer charges on crimes against humanity allegedly committed during his regime, may soon be repatriated back to his country to face justice.

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Frank Nweke (jnr), who gave the hint yesterday, said President Olusegun Obasanjo and the new President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, were already in talks on Taylor's possible extradition to Liberia.

Nweke who, however, refused to take questions on the issue, said that "the government of Liberia and government of Nigeria are working jointly to arrive at a decision on the Charles Taylor issue. The two presidents have been discussing. Discussions are on-going. As events unfold, you will be properly briefed".

The United States government has been in the forefront of the move to have the former Liberian leader repatriated to answer war crime charges, but the Federal Government has insisted it would only do so upon return of democracy to Liberia and also at the request of that country's government.

Speaking further on the relationship between Nigeria and Liberia, Nweke stated that at the request of Sirleaf, Nigeria would assist that country with facts on how it had successfully implemented reforms in Nigeria.

Nigeria, he added, would also provide more doctors through the Technical Aid Corps, while sending experts who would formulate short and medium term plans for reconstruction and development and the reactivating of the Nigeria-Liberia Joint Commission.

Nweke said that all these efforts were aimed at helping to consolidate peace in Liberia, help the new government get back on its feet and boost the economy of the West African sub-region.

President Obasanjo who, two weeks ago met with Taylor at the Presidential Lounge of the Lagos airport also met last week with the new Liberian President who was in Nigeria to attend the memorial lecture held in honour of the late Major General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua.

Sirleaf had shortly after taking office in Liberia, and while responding to requests made by rights bodies that Taylor be tried without delay in Sierra Leone, said that what was upper most in her agenda was not seeking the extradition of Taylor but reconstructing her country that had been bugged with years of war.

Taylor who is being accused of backing the notorious RUF rebels in the civil war in Sierra Leone in the 1990s civil war stepped down as rebels threatened to seize the capital of Liberia, Monrovia, just as his leaving Liberia was the fall-out of a deal struck by African countries led by Nigeria.

But the resolve by the government to protect Taylor came to the fore again yesterday as it said that the former Liberian leader remained shielded from court proceedings in accordance with the provisions of section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act, 1990.

That was the argument raised by Mr. Olu Aina, counsel to the Federal Government, at the resumed hearing in a suit brought by two Nigerians seeking the extradition of the ex-warlord to Sierra Leone to answer charges on war crime against humanity allegedly committed during his regime in Liberia.

The government, therefore, prayed the court to halt proceeding pending the determination of the appeal filed challenging an earlier ruling that it had jurisdiction to entertain the case.

Two Nigerians namely, David Anyegbule and Emmanuel Egbuna, who both lost their arms in the war in Liberia during the reign of Taylor as Liberian President instituted the case against the Federal Government.

At the resumed hearing of the suit, Aina, in addition to his earlier submission before the court, told Justice Adah that under the provisions of section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act, 1999, the plaintiffs had no locus standi to challenge Taylor's Asylum.

However, counsel to the plaintiffs, Mutiu Ganiyu, differed and in his response asked the court to disregard the argument of Aina, saying that David and Emmanuel have the fundamental right to approach the court to challenge the decision of the government granting Taylor Asylum in Nigeria.

Quoting copiously from the relevant section, Aina said: "Notwithstanding the provisions of the Customs, Excise and Tariff, etc., (Consolidation) Act, as amended, no proceedings shall be instituted or continued against any person or any member of his family in respect of his unlawful entry into or unlawful presence within Nigeria if such person applies under section 8 of this Act for the grant of a refugee status, until a decision has been made on the application and, where appropriate until such person has had an opportunity of exhausting his right of appeal under that section or if such person has been granted refugee status.

But Ganiyu opposed the argument of Aina, rather, he asked the court to continue with the proceedings in the interest of justice and in order not to allow Taylor to escape justice at the war tribunal in Sierra Leone.

According to Ganiyu, the tribunal, where Taylor was supposed to face trial for alleged killings and violation of human rights would soon round off sitting as it has a time limit within which to hear such cases.

Ganiyu further said that Taylor would escape justice if proceedings aimed at revoking his asylum in Nigeria were suspended.

Justice Adah fixed ruling on the application for stay of proceedings to April 13 and said that section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act cited by Aina would be a matter for consideration in the ruling.

## Daily Independent (Nigeria)

9 March 2006

### **Taylor: Obasanjo Begins Extradition Talks With Liberia**

By Rotimi Fadeyi  
Chesa Chesa (Abuja) and  
Bassey Inyang (Calabar)

President Olusegun Obasanjo has begun talks with the Liberian Government on the extradition of former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, back to his country to face war crime charges.

This follows the formal request for his extradition made at the weekend by Liberian President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, exclusively reported on Tuesday by Daily Independent.

Information and National Orientation Minister, Frank Nweke, confirmed the development to reporters in Abuja on Wednesday when he said both Obasanjo and Johnson-Sirleaf have been “working jointly to arrive at a decision on the Charles Taylor issue”.

He declined giving further details, saying instead that as soon as there is more to reveal to the press, he would not hesitate to do so.

“Both presidents are discussing. Discussions are on-going and as events unfold, you will be properly briefed”, was his reply to further questions from journalists.

Taylor was on the verge of being ousted by invading rebels in 2003 but was granted asylum by Nigeria under a deal brokered by African leaders and the United States.

The agreement is that if a democratically elected government assumes power in Liberia and requests his extradition, Nigeria would oblige, a condition Obasanjo has stuck to.

The President travelled to Calabar last week where he held closed-door talks with Taylor, apparently to brief him on the latest development and to prepare his mind to end his exile in Nigeria.

Nigeria has also consented to another request from Johnson-Sirleaf for technical assistance to help rebuild infrastructure which collapsed during the war that ravaged Liberia.

Nweke confirmed that Obasanjo has dispatched his Special Assistant on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Amina Ibrahim and Minister of State for Finance, Nenadi Usman, to discuss with Liberian officials towards fine-tuning the details which will involve the evolution of short and medium term development plans for the country.

Nigeria’s intervention is to help Liberia recover from years of civil war and to stabilise democracy, he explained.

However, the government on Wednesday said Taylor is shielded from court proceedings in accordance with Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act, 1990.

It took this position even as Justice Stephen Jonah Adah of a Federal High Court in Abuja will on April 13 decide whether or not to suspend proceedings in a case filed by two Nigerians challenging the asylum granted Taylor.

The government is asking the court to halt the hearing pending the determination of the appeal challenging the ruling that the court has jurisdiction to entertain the matter

David Anyegbule and Emmanuel Egbuna, who both lost their arms in the war in Liberia during the reign of Taylor, instituted the case against the Federal Government.

At the resumed hearing on Wednesday, government counsel, Oluwole Aina, in addition to his earlier submission, told Adah that the Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act has removed the locus standi (legal right) of the plaintiffs to challenge Taylor's asylum.

But counsel to the plaintiffs, Mutiu Ganiyu, asked the court to disregard the argument of Aina. He said Anyegbule and Egbuna have the fundamental right to approach the court to challenge the decision of the government granting the asylum.

Aina asked Adah to stay proceedings pending the determination of the appeal challenging the judge's ruling that the Federal High Court has the jurisdiction to entertain the case.

The judge fixed ruling on stay of proceeding for April 13 when Section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act cited by Aina would be considered.

In the mean time, the usual light presence of security operatives and policemen around Taylor has been replaced with scores of heavily armed mobile policemen and other security agents.

They keep vigil outside the gates of his residence close to the headquarters of the NNS Victory in Calabar.

## Daily Champion (Nigeria)

9 March 2006

### **FG to Extradite Charles Taylor**

By Lere Ojedokun  
Abuja

TOP-level bilateral discussions between Nigeria and Liberia have begun to facilitate possible extradition of former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, to his country.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Frank Nweke, Jnr., who dropped the hint in Abuja yesterday, said President Olusegun Obasanjo and his Liberian counterpart, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, may reach a compromise on the issue soon.

President Obasanjo had on February 26 held talks with Mr. Taylor at the Presidential Lounge of the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Ikeja, Lagos.

Also at the talks which lasted about 30 minutes behind closed doors was Cross River State governor, Mr. Donald Duke.

"The government of Liberia and government of Nigeria are working jointly to arrive at a decision on Charles Taylor issue. "The two presidents have been discussing. Discussions are on going. As events unfold you will be properly briefed", Nweke revealed.

The minister told State House correspondents, after the weekly Federal Executive Council (FEC), that the extradition of the former leader was one of the issues extensively discussed last weekend when President Johnson - Sirleaf visited Nigeria.

Although Mr. Nweke declined further comments on the issue, he however, explained that the Liberian government had made requests to the Federal Government seeking assistance on its post-war reconstruction, particularly in the areas of technical support, secondment of medical personnel as well as infrastructure development.

Aside, he stated that the country requested for the reactivation of the Nigeria- Liberia Commission, noting that President Obasanjo had already sent the Minister of State for Finance, Mrs. Nenadi Usman and his Senior Special Assistant on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Hajia Amina Ibrahim who have held discussions with the Liberian government officials on these requests.

"Based on the recent visit, she has made specific requests to expand the current programme in which Nigeria sends doctors to help them in their hospitals. They've also asked that they want to benefit in the Technical Aid Scheme (TAC). They also ask that Nigeria should second experts to them, to join the Liberian team for a short period of time in the formulation of short and medium terms programmes", the minister added.

Daily Champion recalls that Taylor, an ex-warlord, who has been in Nigeria on asylum since August 2003, is quartered in Calabar, Cross River State. He is wanted by the international community to answer charges of war crimes against humanity at the United Nations Crime Tribunal in Sierra Leone.

The United States of America (USA) has been in the vanguard of clamour for the hand over of the former Liberian leader, but the Federal Government has insisted that it would only yield him after the return of democracy to the war- torn West African country, at the request of the new Liberian government.

Only last November, the country elected Mrs. Ellen Johnson- Sirleaf as its new post- war president alongside a new parliament.

## Reuters

9 March 2006

### **UN troops to return to west Ivory Coast after riots**

By Peter Murphy

ABIDJAN, March 9 (Reuters) - U.N. troops who fled when rioting mobs attacked their bases in the west of war-divided Ivory Coast in January are preparing to return to the volatile region, the mission's top peacekeeper said on Thursday.

Bangladeshi troops abandoned four bases at the height of anti-U.N. riots across the government-controlled south after shooting dead five youths who tried to steal weapons from a U.N. base in the western town of Guiglo.

Local youths and militia looted the offices of U.N. and other international aid agencies when they left, causing more than \$3 million of damage and leaving thousands of refugees in nearby camps without supplies or assistance.

General Abdoulaye Fall, the mission's chief peacekeeper, said U.N. troops from nearby Benin who were already working in the country would be transferred to the western bases, though he would not say if peacekeeping numbers there would be increased.

"Preparation is continuing for the redeployment of the positions previously occupied by the U.N. in (the west)," Fall, from Senegal, told reporters during a news conference at the U.N. mission headquarters in the economic capital Abidjan.

"We need to be there to accompany the peace process, to provide assistance to the government for the (disarmament) programme and the electoral process," he said.

The leader of a powerful Guiglo-based militia, Maho Glofiei, has said he is opposed to U.N. troops returning but has called on aid workers to come back to the region.

The riots erupted when several thousand "Young Patriot" youths loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo took to the streets in protest at what they said was meddling by foreign mediators. The mediators are overseeing implementation of a U.N. plan pushing for reunification and elections by the end of October.

The protesters hurled rocks and petrol bombs at U.N. bases and attacked their vehicles until riot leaders called off the protests after four days.

Ivory Coast has been divided into a rebel-held north and government south since a 2002-03 civil war which grew out of a failed coup against Gbagbo.

A three-year old peace process has been bogged down by political deadlock and on-off violence but analysts have been encouraged by progress achieved in recent weeks by a new prime minister tasked with carrying out the demands of the U.N. plan.

The new premier, central banker Charles Konan Banny, managed to bring Gbagbo and rebel leader Guillaume Soro together for historic face to face peace talks in the capital Yamoussoukro last week, together with leaders of the main opposition parties.



Soro has since announced he will take up his ministerial post in a recently installed reconciliation government and the independent electoral commission has begun its work after a months-long dispute over its political composition was resolved.

United Nations



Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 9 March 2006

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

#### **Liberia wants justice over Taylor, but after talks: Sirleaf**

PARIS, March 9, 2006 (AFP) - Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said Thursday that her predecessor, former warlord Charles Taylor, would be brought to justice -- but only after negotiations with Nigeria, where he is in exile. "Justice will have to extend to former president Charles Taylor," said Sirleaf in Paris, two months after taking office from an interim post-Taylor administration.

#### **Liberia makes overtures for Taylor's extradition**

MONROVIA, March 9, 2006 (AFP) - Liberian authorities have set in motion a process to extradite former warlord Charles Taylor who has been indicted by an international war crimes court, sources close to the ex-ruler said Thursday. Sande Johnson, a Liberian former lawmaker and close ally of Taylor, who is exiled in Nigeria, told AFP that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has formally requested the extradition of Taylor to Liberia before he is handed over to the UN-backed Special Court in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

"President Sirleaf gave the formal request to President Olusegun Obasanjo when she went for an official visit to Nigeria recently," Sande Johnson, who is still in frequent contact with Taylor, told AFP.

#### **FG May Extradite Taylor to Liberia**

**From Josephine Lohor and Lilian Okenwa in Abuja, 03.09.2006**

Former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, who has been declared wanted by a special United Nations court to answer charges on crimes against humanity allegedly committed during his regime, may soon be repatriated back to his country to face justice. The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Frank Nweke (jnr), who gave the hint yesterday, said President Olusegun Obasanjo and the new President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, were already in talks on Taylor's possible extradition to Liberia.

03/08/2006 16:20:58

#### **Sirleaf receives French support in effort to rebuild war-battered Liberia**

By JENNY BARCHFIELD, Associated Press Writer

PARIS\_France pledged Wednesday to help rebuild Liberia and vowed to restore diplomatic ties with the West African country scarred by years of war, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said. President Jacques Chirac hosted Sirleaf, Africa's first woman president, for what he called a "perfectly symbolic" meeting timed for International Women's Day, according to the French leader's office.

03/08/2006 16:51:37

## **Officials: Liberia to get first ever female police chief soon**

By JONATHAN PAYE-LAYLEH, Associated Press Writer

MONROVIA, Liberia\_Liberian officials said Wednesday this tiny West African nation will soon have its first ever female national police chief, charged with helping secure order in a volatile country ripped apart by a quarter century of coups and war. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf appointed Beatrice Munah Sieh to the post last month. Sieh must be confirmed by the Senate before she can take up the post, but she is expected to pass confirmation hearings with no problem.

## **Annan says world ready for female UN chief as women's day marked**

UNITED NATIONS, March 8, 2006 (AFP) - UN chief Kofi Annan said the world is ready for a female secretary general of the United Nations as women across the globe Wednesday marked International Women's Day with calls for greater political power. Women's rights activists pointed to successes like the rise of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of **Liberia** as Africa's first elected woman head of state, the Unprecedented victory in Chile of President Michelle Bachelet and Germany's First-ever woman chancellor Angela Merkel.

### **International Clips on West Africa**

#### **UPDATE 2-Ivorian rebel leader says to return to government**

**ABIDJAN**, March 7 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast rebel leader Guillaume Soro will resume his place in the transitional government next week, his New Forces movement said on Tuesday.

### **Local Media – Newspapers**

#### **President Solicits European Investment and Liberia's Stolen Funds**

*(Daily Observer, The News and Liberian Express)*

- During her ongoing week-long visit to Europe, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf invited European investors in Brussels to exploit the enormous investment potentials in Liberia. In Switzerland, President Johnson-Sirleaf requested the Swiss authorities to help repatriate any funds from illicit origins that had fled the Liberia.

#### **Rights Groups Oppose Former Justice Minister's Confirmation as High Court Judge**

*(Daily Observer)*

- In a letter to the Senate Committee on Judiciary dated 6 March, five leading human rights and pro-democracy organizations in Liberia opposed the confirmation of former Justice Minister Kabineh Ja'neh as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court based on his stewardship and conduct while serving as Justice Minister.

#### **Executive Mansion Denies Former Lawmaker's Claim**

*(The News)*

- The Executive Mansion yesterday described as erroneous claims by former Bomi County Lawmaker Sando Johnson that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had made an official request for Nigeria to hand over exiled former President Charles Taylor.

#### **UNMIL Assures Gbarpolu County Citizens of Security Protection and Support**

*(Liberian Express)*

- During a recent assessment visit to Gbarpolu County in Northwestern Liberia, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss assured the citizens in the area

that in addition to continuous security protection, UNMIL was working with the government of Liberia and other international partners to meet their basic needs.

### **Government to Lease Power Generators to Meet Electricity Restoration Deadline**

*(Liberian Express)*

- Plans are underway by the Liberian government to lease four giant-sized diesel generators from the Republic of Ghana to meet the deadline for the restoration of electricity to Monrovia, Liberia Electricity Corporation's (LEC) Managing Director Harry Yuan said recently.

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

#### **Liberian Leader Holds Talks with French Counterpart**

- An Executive Mansion statement issued in Monrovia said that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has held talks with French President Jacques Chirac, focusing on France's support to the reconstruction processes of Liberia. She had earlier visited Belgium and Switzerland while en route to France.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

#### **UNMIL Chief Reiterates Policy of Zero Tolerance on Sexual Abuse**

- Speaking at a ceremony to present medals to the Ukrainian Aviation Unit UNMIL, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss said that United Nations personnel owed a fundamental duty of care for Liberians by respecting the Secretary-General's policy of zero tolerance of sexual abuse and exploitation and appealed to the mission's staff to uphold the ideals of the UN

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

#### **Police Arrest Suspects of Armed Robbery at Supreme Court Judge's Home**

- In an interview, Deputy Police Inspector Alfred Karlay said that the police had arrested 15 suspected armed robbers who raided the home of Supreme Court Associate Justice Emmanuel Wreh and retrieved his Grand Cherokee jeep the robbers had stolen. However, he said that the police was yet to recover the weapons the robbers used to carry out the act.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

#### **President Entreats Europe-Based Liberians to Return Home**

- In a meeting with Liberians based in France, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf called on her compatriots in France and other parts of Europe to return home to contribute to the rebuilding process which required the efforts of all Liberians.
- Federation of Liberians in Europe President Alvin Morris urged government to upgrade the diplomatic missions and consider the issuance of new passports because the current passports were being held by criminals.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

#### **Humanitarian Group Reunifies Liberian Children with Parents**

- A press release issued in Monrovia yesterday said that 10 Liberian children separated from their families due to the civil war, have been reunited through the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross which has reportedly reunited over 2,000 children since the end of the civil war.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

#### **Police to Apprehend Lawyer of Alleged Russian Gang Rapists**

- Addressing a news conference in Monrovia yesterday, Liberian National Police (LNP) Women and Children Section Head, Col. Asatu Bah-Kenneth said that the LNP was preparing to arrest Cllr. Joseph Nagbe if he fails to produce in court the Russians accused of rape.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

**ELBS RADIO** *(News monitored yesterday at 19:00 pm)***Government Procurement House Constitutes Task Force to Recover Public Property**

- General Services Agency Director General Willard Russell said that the entity had constituted a task force to retrieve public assets, including vehicles from former officials of government. He added that the task force would collaborate with the Ministry of Justice during the exercise.

**STAR RADIO** *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)***Rubber Plantation Wants UNMIL Protection against Thieves**

- Cocopa Rubber Plantation Company Administrative Manager George Lobo has called on the government and UNMIL to protect the plantation against thieves using guns to steal. He said this was causing the entity a deficit of 30 tons of rubber monthly.

*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. Jeddi Armah at [armahj@un.org](mailto:armahj@un.org).*

## Daily Sun (Nigeria)

9 March 2006

### **... He can't be prosecuted in Nigeria –F.G**

By Godwin TSA, Abuja

Thursday, March 9, 2006

The Federal Government Wednesday told a Federal High Court that section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act, Cap 244, Laws of the Federation, 1990 conferred absolute immunity on former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, against legal proceedings while in the country.

Counsel from the office of the Attorney General of the Federation, Mr. Wole Aina, canvassed this position while urging the court to throw out the suit by two Nigerians, Emmanuel Egbuna and David Anyaele, challenging the legality of the asylum granted to the former Liberian warlord by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Federal Government is also asking the court to stay proceedings in the matter pending the hearing and determination of its appeal, which is challenging the ruling of the court to the effect that the plaintiffs have the locus standi to file the action against Taylor.

Aina, who referred the court to the provisions of section 10 of the National Commission for Refugees Act, Cap 244, 1990, pointed out that the intention of the statute was to prohibit people from taking issues of this nature to court, while urging the court to discontinue with the proceedings in view of this law.

The section in reference reads: “Notwithstanding the provisions of the Customs, Excise and Tariff etc (Consolidation) Act, as amended, no proceedings shall be instituted against any person or any member of his family in respect of his unlawful entry into or unlawful presence within Nigeria;

a. If such person applies under section 8 of this Act for the grant of a refugee status, until a decision has been made on the application and where appropriate, until such a person has an opportunity of exhausting his right of appeal under that section or

b. If such person has been granted refugee status.

However, counsel to the plaintiffs, Mutiu Ganiyu, urged the court to disregard the law as it violates the rights of his clients under sections 6 and 36 of the 1999 Constitution, adding that the Act is totally irrelevant in the case before the court.

Ganiyu further told the court that any statute that tried to tie the hands of the court especially in the exercise of fundamental human rights, is null and void.

In opposing the application for stay of proceedings, Ganiyu referred the court to a litany of legal authorities, while urging the court to look at the genuineness of the issues canvassed in such an application.

According to him, “The court is not expected to fold its judicial arms because the issue of jurisdiction has been raised, but should look at the genuineness of the issue.”

Describing the action of Federal Government as an attempt to buy time, he said his clients have informed the court of the dangers or the risk they stand to suffer if proceedings are further delayed in this matter.

He told the court that the International Tribunal in Liberia is a task force whose jurisdiction and time is specific, adding that if further proceedings are stayed, "Taylor would be using the machinery of the country's judiciary to escape justice," while urging the court to refuse the application.

Justice Stephen Adah, the trial judge, has fixed ruling for April 13, 2006.