

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



Congratulations to Lee Panter (Transport) who returned on Friday from his leave in Thailand a married man. He is pictured here with his new wife, the former Miss Bunnisa Somsart, and his Best Man, Neil Mcfarlane (Security)

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:

Friday, 11 August 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Standard Times
Friday, 11 August 2006

Special Court concludes case in RUF trial

BY A. KALLAY

The prosecution, last Wednesday concluded its case in the trial of 3 former RUF leaders, Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao.

The three accused face an 18 count indictment for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Since the start of the trial in 2004, the court has heard from the prosecution 86 wit-

nesses over 183 trial days.

Following a discussion on the admissibility of certain documents, senior trial Attorney, Peter Harrison told the court that "the prosecution has no further witnesses so the prosecution closes its case."

Issa Sesay and Morris Kallon were indicted in March 2003 and Augustine Gbao was indicted the following month.

Indictments against two other accused former RUF

leader, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, were withdrawn by the prosecutor in December 2003 due to their deaths.

Oral arguments on motions for judgment of acquittal are scheduled to take place on 16 October 2006.

This is the third of ongoing trials in which the prosecution has closed its case.

The other two are currently hearing witnesses for the defence.

Awoko

Friday, 11 August 2006

ODHR-SL calls for abolition of death penalty

The organisation for Development and Human Rights joins Amnesty International and other Human Rights Organisations (ODHR) in the campaign to abolish the death penalty in Sierra Leone.

In a press release yesterday, ODHR pointed out that they fully recognised the fact that “the death penalty is not an abstract issue and the decision to apply it means that men and women in society must be singled out and put to

death in the name of justice”. It noted that, “it is the reality of its use that underlines the urgent need to abolish it”.

It pointed out that the death penalty did not provide protection or benefit to society, but rather a unique punishment, cruel in the extreme and irrevocable.

“Such punishment when applied by systems, which are subject to human prejudice, the result always is that, justice will never be served but perverted,” it noted further.

ODHR-SL maintained

that one of the root causes of the war in Sierra Leone was the imposition of the death penalty as highlighted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, adding that the TRC reports made an imperative recommendation under the protection of Human Rights, “which states that the Commission recommends the abolition of the Death Penalty and the immediate repeal by Parliament of all laws authorizing the use of capital punishment”.

ODHR-SL said they were aware that since 1999,

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ODHR-SL calls for abolition of death penalty

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the government had not carried out execution of prisoners on death row for which ODHR commended the government for. They also stated that they acknowledged government’s efforts to initiate practical and sustainable peace building, human rights and development programmes in the country.

ODHR also argued that

the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibilities in eleven years civil war but shall not be imposing the Death Penalty, served as a benchmark for the government to have taken swift and timely steps towards the removal of death penalty in our national laws.

The organisation stated

that several institutions, such as the TRC, LAWCLA, Sierra Leone Bar Association, Coalition for Justice and Accountability had spoken against the death penalty.

They are now calling on the President and his government to commute the death sentence of all twenty three prisoners on death row to life imprisonment.

The Spectator
Friday, 11 August 2006

ODHR-SL calls on the SLPP led government to abolish the death penalty

The Organization for Development and Human Rights joins Amnesty International and other Human Rights Organization in the campaign to abolish the death penalty in Sierra Leone. We fully recognize the fact that the death penalty is not an abstract issue. The decision to apply it means that men and women in society must be singled out and put to death in the name of justice. It is the reality of its use that underline the urgent need to abolish it. The death penalty does not provide protection or benefit to society, but rather a unique punishment, cruel in the extreme and irrevocable. Such punishment when applied by systems which are subject to human prejudice, the result always is that, justice will never be served but perverted.

ODHR-SL notes with concern, that one of the root causes of the war in Sierra Leone is the imposition of the death penalty as highlighted in the TRC report. No doubt therefore that this report made an imperative recommendation under the protection of Human Rights which states "The commission recommends the abolition of the death penalty and the immediate repeal by parliament of all laws authorizing the use of capital punishment."

We are aware that since 1999, the government has not carried out execution on prisoners on death row for which we highly commend the government of President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. ODHR-SL acknowledges government's efforts to initiate practical and sustainable peace building, human rights and development programmes in the country.

However, considering the existence of the death penalty in our law books still teams-up our country with the retention countries all over the world as others move towards total abolition.

The establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibilities in the decade old civil war but which shall not be imposing the Death Penalty, served as a bench mark for our government

ODHR-SL calls on the SLPP led government to abolish the death penalty

from page 2

to have taken swift and timely steps towards the removal of death penalty in our national laws, a decision we are still waiting on the government to take.

Several institutions have spoken against the Death Penalty; the TRC, LAWCLA (Death Penalty in Sierra Leone Time and Change), LAWYERS, Sierra Leone Bar Association, Coalition for Justice and Accountability etc. regarding the need to abolish it, to which no response from government has not been officially made. ODHR-SL calls on the president, His Excellency Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his government to commute the death sentence of all twenty three prisoners on death row to life imprisonment.

We also urge the government as part of its sustainable peace building, human rights and development initiatives to listen to the several calls for the abolition of the Death Penalty from our law books.

The New Storm

Friday, 11 August 2006

Students Reach High Level for Second Moot Court Competition

For the second edition of the Moot Court competition in International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for students of Sierra Leone, the organiser, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in collaboration with the Special Court for Sierra Leone, was glad to notice an increase of the level of the candidates. "I was impressed by the level of IHL knowledge of the students and their ability to argue the case, compared to the first edition", explained Philippe Stoll, Communication delegate of the ICRC.

An imaginary humanitarian crisis between two countries (Borla and Rubica) was presented to five teams of three students drawn from Fourah Bay College, Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, Njala University and Eastern Polytechnic of Kenema. The teams had to answer questions related to IHL concerning events occurring during that crisis. Is it lawful to attack a power station or a dam? Is an army allowed to use nuclear weapons? Are artillery attacks respecting the principals of proportionality or of distinction?

After extensive arguments and vigorous submissions by students coupled with legally minded questions from the members of the jury, Abdul K. Koroma (Jr), Abdul Rahman Kamara, Nelson Sheku Fofanah, students from the Mass Communication of Fourah Bay College emerged as the winning team. Momoh Thomas Bokarie of Njala University (Freetown) received the award of the best speaker.

The winning team will follow a series of standard training sessions to meet the high requirements of the Pan African stage of the competition in Arusha, Tanzania in November 2006. The winning team of last year and several Sierra Leonean IHL specialists will be involved in this training.

The competition was followed by a large public including relatives of the competitors, students, IHL specialists and members of the Fourth estate.

In collaboration with the Special Court for Sierra Leone, this Second Moot Court Competition was organised by the International Committee of Red Cross within the framework of its mandate to support the efforts of States in disseminating International Humanitarian Law.

The New Citizen
Friday, 11 August 2006

3 Students Win Moot Court Competition

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For di People
Friday, 11 August 2006

EX-FIGHTERS NOW PROMOTERS OF PEACE & JUSTICE

THE PROMOTERS of Peace And Justice was founded on 11 March, 2006 by a group of former detainees who were held in the Central Prisons, Freetown for almost six years and are keen to reconcile with and integrate into the Sierra Leone community and have opened their doors widely to all and sundry who are interested in peace.

The association started with 75 members and has grown to over 100 and there is no discrimination in the PPJ but the membership has vowed to discourage any culture of violence in their rank and file.

We are determined to sweep our ugly past under the carpet, never to think about it again. That is why we do not welcome the frequent allusions to our former factions ie Ruf or Westside when we discuss the

PPJ. We agree that we are from these backgrounds but our present visions lie far, far beyond the ideologies of these groups.

We are not a political group or association we are thinking of development and progress. We want people to give us room where we too can contribute our own quota to the national aspirations of our country's PRSP millennium goals. We are determined to reconcile with our local or national community with the view of fostering and promoting the peace

already achieved.

We have the expressed wish to contribute to the campaign on controlling the use and transfer of small arms with the sole aim of discouraging the proliferation of arms. We are desiring to launch a nation-wide campaign of sensitization on conflict prevention and peace management efforts with other former combatants and we want to plan and implement feasible programmes that help to translate conflict and peace transition to development.

We are cognizant of the need to rehabilitate and re-settle with the commitments of our origin and conscious of the fact that development can only come as a result of human capacity building through skills training and a need for economic empowerment through co-operative fund-raising activities that will lead to social growth and peace.

The PPJ believes in self-respect, hard work, self-reliance, honesty and integrity as the yardstick of assessing our progress and the association is basically operating at three distinct levels:-

Peace campaign by which we share knowledge of hid-

Continued Page 4

PEACE PROMOTERS

From Page 2

den weapons throughout Sierra Leone with the government of Sierra Leone especially Office of National Security and Slansa.

Welfare of our members through catering for the need of our members, housing, medical etc needs and training and economic empowerment whereby we create facilities for our members to learn skills that will help them become self-sufficient. Perhaps, the major difference in PPJ's strategy to other organisations is that we train, empower and supervise or oversee the operations of the organs of the PPJ.

In terms of raising public awareness, we have endeavoured to go to press through the president of SLAJ, Alhaji IB Kargbo and Mr Paul Kamara. We have networked with DFID, UNDP, Oxfam, Uniosil, CCSL, IRC, National Vision for Sierra Leone and a lot more. We have approached the judiciary through the Chief Justice, the Sierra Leone Police through the IG and most importantly the honourable vice-president Solomon Berewa.

We are faced with constraints and challenges however we most heartily welcome financial and material support from the public whom we strongly believe would like to see us truly reformed, rehabilitated and reintegrated.

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER-

MICHAEL SHIEK KABBA DUMBUYA

Inner City Press

Wednesday, 9 August 2006

<http://www.innercitypress.com/unhq081006.html>

Africa Can Solve Its Own Problems, Ghanaian Minister Tells Inner City Press, On LRA Peace Talks and Kofi Annan's Views

Byline: Matthew Russell Lee at the UN

UNITED NATIONS, August 9 -- Africa is or should be able to solve its own problems, Ghana's Foreign Minister Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo said Wednesday in New York. Former Liberian president Charles Taylor, currently in The Hague on charges of war crimes, should have been tried in Africa, according to Minister Nana, who noted that "it would be anomalous for Milosevic to have been



tried in Freetown." He added that the indictments by the Hague-based International Criminal Court of the top five officials of the Lord's Resistance Army rebels from Uganda should be put on hold pending peace and amnesty talks being held in Juba in South Sudan between the LRA and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni government.

Ghana's Foreign Minister Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and S-G Kofi Annan

Ghana, which holds the presidency of the UN Security Council this month, had scheduled a full day open session on West Africa peace consolidation.

Ghanaian Foreign Minister Nana began by noting that while "events in the Middle East are important, there are other important events in other parts of the world. I think it is just as well that a balance is established to show that the concerns of humanity are not just focused on one region but focused on all parts of the world that need consideration and discussion."

In responding to seven questions from Inner City Press at the conclusion of the afternoon session, ranging from Ivory Coast through Liberia to Uganda and Zimbabwe, Minister Nana sketched out an Afro-centric vision of justice and "peace on the Continent." He expressed hope that diplomatic relations between the world community, specifically the United Kingdom, and the Robert Mugabe government in Zimbabwe can be improved.

Responding to concerns that Mr. Mugabe's appointed mediator and former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa is too close to Mugabe to be seen as independent, and that Kofi Annan erred in deferring to Mr. Mkapa, Minister Nana said, "I prefer to wait and see." He responded similarly when asked about the peace talks with the Lord's Resistance Army. "Talks for peace? That has to be good, right? We must wait to see what happens."

Thursday Kofi Annan's spokesman was asked by Inner City Press to respond to these "wait and see" views. At the televised noon briefing, the spokesman said that the indictments are for the ICC to comment on, but that "the Secretary-General and the UN system do not condone impunity." He stated that countries which are signatories to the ICC's Rome Statute, which included Uganda, must arrest and turn over indictees to the ICC in The Hague. More generally, he stated that "each post-war situation calls for a different solution, drawn up by governments themselves." This appears to apply to the UN's

silence on the offer of a colonel's position in the Congolese army to Peter Karim, who took seven UN peacekeepers hostage for over forty days. The spokesman closed with a reference to the UN's new Peacebuilding Commission, which is focused in part on Burundi.

Turning to The Hague, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno-Ocampo has repeatedly reminded Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where LRA leaders Joseph Kony and Vincent Otti are reportedly staying, of their duties to enforce the ICC's arrest warrants for both men and three other LRA leaders. From Wednesday's statements by Ghanaian minister Nana, it appears clear that Ghana, or its foreign minister at least, has doubts about the indictments. In the sphere of lobbying, some have begun to call for the ICC "to employ Article 53(4) of the Rome Statute, under which the Prosecutor can reconsider a decision at any time based on new facts or information."

Of Charles Taylor, Minister Nana complained that too many "are talking as if he has already been convicted."

In a separate interview Tuesday with the United Kingdom's permanent representative to the UN, Emyr Jones Parry, Inner City Press inquired into reports that the UK is promoting a draft security council resolution to allow the use of force and crossing of borders into the Congo to pursue the LRA and its leadership. Ambassador Jones Parry confirmed that the UK is drafting such a resolution.

On another matter before the Security Council, the request to remove the sanction on the trade in Liberian diamonds, Minister Nana noted that ECOWAS has called for a lifting of all sanctions with economic impacts, by implication including the diamond sanctions. Mr. Nana said, "if as we see a responsible and accountable government is beginning to put its feet down in Monrovia, there's every reason to assist that process by enabling them to have access to more and more money to do the work they need to do to consolidate peace in their country."

The Security Council is also actively seized of the situation in Ivory Coast in the run-up to the elections now scheduled for October 31. Inner City Press asked Minister Nana if he expects that deadline to be met. Mr. Nana responded that "increasingly most of us have recognized that may not be feasible," but that the need to maintain momentum should "guide all actors in the Ivorian drama." Asked to respond to Laurent Gbagbo's recent statement that he will remain in power even if elections are further delayed, Minister Nana said he is "not in a position to comment on the Constitutional propriety either way."

During Wednesday's open Council session, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan spoke of the competing needs for reconciliation and for strengthening the rule of law. Wednesday Inner City Press asked Mr. Annan's spokesman to prioritize these two. The spokesman's response noted that "the Secretary-General and the UN system do not condone impunity" and that "justice must be served without delay." In the tinted glass building on Manhattan's East River bank, the statements are straightforward. Out in zones of conflict, particularly out of the media's spotlight like the deal in East Congo with Peter Karim, the messages get lost. Nor, some note, has peace as yet resulted.

United Nations

Thursday, 10 August 2006

Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General (Excerpt)

The following is a near-verbatim transcript of today's noon briefing by Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General.

-SNIP-

Question: The Foreign Minister of Ghana also yesterday indicated that, in response to questions about the Charles Taylor trial, that, in the future, it's his view, and he said of many on the continent, that such trials should take place in Africa and not elsewhere. I don't know if the Secretary-General has a view on that.

Spokesman: Each case is different. The Secretary-General had made his views known on Charles Taylor, as had a number of leaders in the region. I think the important fact is that Mr. Taylor is in custody and will face justice.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 10 August 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

COTE D IVOIRE: Rebels refuse to prolong President Gbagbo's mandate, suspend disarmament talks

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

BOUAKE, 9 Aug 2006 (IRIN) - Cote d'Ivoire's faltering peace process appeared to be in trouble again after rebels who control the northern half of the country rejected a unilateral decision by President Laurent Gbagbo to remain in office if peace-sealing elections failed to be held. "There will never be any question for the (rebel) New Forces of accepting any extension of Laurent Gbagbo's mandate," rebel leader Guillaume Soro said at a press conference held in the rebel stronghold of Bouake.

Security Council Calls for Wide-Ranging Steps to Ensure Lasting Peace in Region

Aug 09, 2006 (UN News Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --The disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, an end to the threat from the illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons, and much stronger national institutions and civil society groups are just some of the necessary steps that West Africa must take if peace is to consolidate across the region, the Security Council said today. In a statement read out by Nana Akufo-Addo, Foreign Minister of Ghana, Council President for August, the 15-member body underlined the importance of the United Nations' new Peacebuilding Commission in helping countries emerging from conflict to achieve lasting peace and stability.

ICRC Holds 2nd Moot Court Competition

By Abu Bakarr Kargbo

Aug 08, 2006 (Standard Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with the support of the Special Court in Sierra Leone will be organizing the second Sierra Leone student competition in international humanitarian law. The event, according to ICRC's communication delegate Philippe Stoll, is aimed at promoting international humanitarian law in general and with Sierra Leone's academic circles in particular.

Local Media – Newspaper

Family of Murdered Presidential Guard Demand Explanation

(Daily Observer and The Analyst)

- The family and relatives of Emmanuel Williams, the bodyguard of Special Security Services (SSS) Director Chris Massaquoi who was shot and killed recently during an alleged assassination attempt on Mr. Massaquoi, have demanded explanation from the authorities.
- An aunt to the late Williams, Doris Morton, said that Col. Massaquoi had failed to visit Williams' family to console them or explain the circumstances of his death.

UNMIL Will React Vigorously Says UN Envoy

(New Vision)

- UNMIL will react vigorously to any instance of violence that threatens the security of Liberia, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss said over the weekend when he dedicated the newly renovated University of Liberia auditorium.
- Mr. Doss said that the international community had invested heavily in the restoration of peace to Liberia and UNMIL would not allow detractors to destroy the process of healing the country.

Senate Discusses National Budget Today

(The Inquirer and Heritage)

- The Senate yesterday failed to commence debating the budget due to technical reasons but resolved to begin the discussions today.

Lawmaker Criticizes UNMIL

(Daily Observer)

- A member of the House of Representatives, Mariama Jallabah, said on Tuesday that UNMIL was playing a "low profile" in curbing the spate of armed robberies. She described the development as troubling pointing out that UNMIL was reneging on its promise to protect Liberians and other residents.

Political Party Threatens Legal Action against President

(The Monitor)

- Opposition Congress for Democratic Change Assistant Secretary-General Acarous Gray told *The Monitor* yesterday he would institute legal action against President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf if she enlisted members of the ruling party as presidential guards as she had promised. He said that such a move would set a dangerous precedent.

President Wants County Superintendents to Submit Development Proposals

(Daily Observer and Heritage)

- Addressing the first National Superintendent Council's meeting in Harbel, Margibi County recently, President Johnson-Sirleaf called on Superintendents of Liberia's 15 Counties to draw up a development agenda for the counties, a press release said yesterday.

UNMIL Takes Step to Repossess Rubber Plantation

(Liberian Express)

- In support of government's decision to repossess the Guthrie Rubber Plantation, which has been under the control of former combatants, UNMIL Pakistani Contingent is currently building a camp at the plantation to which includes facilities to house the Liberian National Police and an UNMIL-formed police unit.

Swiss Government Donates to UNHCR

(The News)

- The Government of Switzerland recently donated 37 trucks and other transport equipment to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR to boost the repatriation and resettlement of Liberians. A consultant, Peter Haussener made the donation on behalf of the Swiss government to UNHCR Country Representative Mengesha Kebede.

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

Indian Information Group Donates Computers to Foreign Ministry

- Presenting a set of 12 computers donated by Inlot Technology, an Indian company to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday, Liberia's Ambassador to France, McKinley Thomas noted that the donation is to assist the Ministry perform its tasks without hindrances.
- Ambassador Thomas added that the company has established strong ties with the business community in Liberia and described it as a true partner in progress. He recounted that the company donated US\$25,000 in the past to foster investment in the country. Foreign Minister George Wallace lauded the company for the donation and for its continual assistance to the Liberia National Lotteries.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Police Crave for Prisons in Lofa County

- Lofa County Acting Police Commander Maj. Rufus Kortie said that the lack of prison cells in the county paralyzes the execution of law in the county to the effect that prisoners constantly break jails.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

President Entreats Liberian Women to Prioritize Education

- Launching in Monrovia yesterday of a local nongovernmental organization, Purpose Foundation, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf entreated young Liberian women to prioritize education to enable them fit in the new Liberia. Madame Mary Broh, Coordinator for Special Projects in the Office of the President who spoke on behalf of President Johnson-Sirleaf said that the President would announce a special budget for the education of under-privileged women in the country.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Lawmakers Want Senate Finance Committee Replaced

- Some members of the House of Senate yesterday called for the replacement of members of the Senate Standing Committee on Ways, Means and Finance because they were inefficient. The House's Plenary on Tuesday voted to hold a special hearing on the national budget yesterday but called off the exercise due to the failure of the committee to submit its findings on the budget.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Ghanaian Industrialists to Hold Trade Fair in Liberia

- According to a press statement issued in Monrovia yesterday, the Ghanaian Embassy said that the Association of Ghana Industries has expressed interest in holding a Trade Fair in Liberia. The statement added that the Association's Business Development Manager John Adraki has arrived in Liberia to work out modalities for the Fair planned for late September and early October this year.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Lagos State First Lady Donates to Liberian Orphanages

- Lagos State First Lady Chief Oluremi Pimibu has donated a consignment of food, books, clothing and toys to 5 orphanages in fulfillment of a promise she made to the orphanages when she visited Liberia two months ago. Presenting the items on behalf of Chief Pimibu, the Nigerian Embassy Deputy Head of Mission Folu Ogumbumwo urged the beneficiaries to ensure the items reach the needy children. The orphanages commended the donor and assured her that the children would benefit from the gifts.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Lawmaker Calls for Legislation for Motor Road Users to pay Tolls

- In an interview yesterday, Bong County Representative George Mulbah suggested the need for some laws which would compel motorists to contribute towards the maintenance of roads in the country by paying highway tolls. He added that local leaders could use fees collected from the tolls to repair roads.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

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.