

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



**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Monday, 11 January 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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Awoko

Monday, 11 January 2010

NEWS

## As Charles Taylor's trial resumes today... Prosecution not satisfied with his evidence

By Betty Milton

The Acting Prosecutor of the Special Court Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara, has told Awoko in an interview that he is satisfied with the cross - examination that the Prosecution has done so far but "I am certainly not satisfied with the evidence of Charles Taylor because his evidence at best has been the historical sketch of Liberia ... they've been quite evasive about addressing matters raised in the indictment and that is what our task is now - is to bring back matters on the indictment to him and getting into specific responses on the issues we raised in the indictment."

Questioned on the length of time that the Prosecution team will need in their cross examination of the accused taking into consideration that Charles Taylor spent four months in his examination in chief, Mr. Kamara said that it will be contingent on the fact of the cooperation of the accused that is if he becomes less evasive and answer questions directly.

He added that if the Prosecution does not have undue intervention by way of motions from the defence to interrupt the smooth flow of the Prosecution they definitely will not stay that long with him - as he was on the stand during his examination in chief.



*Special Court prosecutor John Fitzgerald Kamara*

The Acting Prosecutor further said that the time the witness has used will certainly impact on the end date of the trial. "But it will also be dependent on whether the defence intended to call so many witnesses. Other than that there will be no significant impact because he has been so expansive on trial that there is no need to call so many other witnesses if they can limit their witness list to maybe 10 or 20 people then there will be no impact on the end date."

"In previous cases of the court, defence teams had brought in rebuttal witnesses even though they had finished their case as they were aiming to refute certain evidence brought before the court", the prosecutor said.

Questioned whether the Prosecution will need rebuttal witness as they are claiming that the evidence of Taylor is mainly out of the indictment he said "to bring in a rebuttal witness in a trial takes a lot of consideration and among the considerations is the fact that there has to be something very fresh and it is not something you contemplate on in the beginning. And we have not gone to that point as yet that is an analysis that has to be made after the completion of the defence case. But so far we have been looking into it but there is no decision yet in that regard".

Charles Taylor is a former President of Liberia who was charged by the Special Court of Sierra Leone and he is indicted on 11 counts charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Sierra Leone during the war in the country.

Taylor has been testifying in his defence for 13 weeks and the Prosecution will continue with cross examination today.



The Exclusive  
Monday, 11 January 2010

# Taylor Trial Resume Today



A National Patriotic Front of Liberia militiaman kills an injured fighter from the rival Krahn ethnic group in Monrovia in May 1996

Charles Taylor Resize Large

The Accused, Charles Taylor, has been testifying on cross-examination by the

Prosecution since 10 November 2009. The below are transcript excerpts of some of the

more interesting and compelling moments from the cross so far. These include:

\* Mr. Taylor's claims concerning violence and atrocities in Liberia and Sierra Leone

\* His alleged support for the rebels in Sierra Leone  
*Continued page 2*

## Taylor Trial Resume Today

*From front page*

\* Bribes paid to officials in other countries to buy weapons

\* His alleged use of child soldiers

\* Mr. Taylor as a leader - not sharing the hardships of his soldiers, not being on the front lines

\* Taylor allegedly having personal bank account(s) taking money that should have gone to the Liberian treasury, or by corrupt means; in addition, the use of Citibank in New York as a correspondent bank.

Two Prosecution attorneys have conducted the cross-examination of Mr. Taylor: Brenda Hollis, the Principal Trial Attorney, and Nicholas Koumjian, a Senior Trial Attorney. The trial adjourned on 7 December and will resume on 11 January. When court

resumes, the Prosecution will continue to make use of documents to challenge Mr. Taylor's credibility and show he was not truthful during his direct testimony. The Prosecution's right to do so under the established principles of international law was affirmed by the Judges in their ruling on the use of such materials on 1 December.

In addition, here are a few quotes from the Acting Prosecutor, Joseph Kamara:

\* "Given the length of Mr. Taylor's direct-examination, there are many issues for us to explore. We certainly don't intend to take as long as the 13 weeks the Defence took. But it's important that we fully test Mr. Taylor's stories and account."

\* "We are pleased to have begun our cross in earnest, and to be challenging the Accused with

documents to show he has not been truthful in this courtroom."

\* "We've tested the credibility of Mr. Taylor's claims on a number of fronts, and our cross has only just begun. He challenged us to bring forth evidence of the wealth he accumulated while in power. We were pleased to do this. And throughout our cross we will confront his claim that he was a peacemaker in Sierra Leone. Our evidence shows just the opposite."

\* "We are very pleased with where the trial is now, as we break for the holiday recess. And we're very much looking forward to confronting Mr. Taylor with more material as soon as trial resumes today."

*Also read this story on [www.exclusivepress.net](http://www.exclusivepress.net)*



Premier News  
Monday, 11 January 2010

# Charles Taylor Trial Trial To Restart



Happy New Year, dear readers, and welcome back.

We have one more week to go before former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, returns to the stand at the Special Court for Sierra Leone to restart his cross-examination by prosecutors. He has been testifying in his own defense since July 14, 2009, trying to fend off 11 charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed during Sierra Leone's civil conflict. Mr. Taylor has pleaded not guilty to all charges against him.

As you will see from the post below a detailed overview of Mr. Taylor's defense case under direct examination by his counsel, kindly provided by Jennifer Easterday and Kimberley Punt, trial monitors from U.C. Berkeley War Crimes Studies Center. Mr. Taylor's testimony has been fascinating. Over the course of four months, Mr. Taylor has provided (although not always consistently) a narrative of a regional peacemaker made into a scapegoat by other international powers. He rejects allegations that he was in a position to prevent or punish crimes committed by Sierra Leone's rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front, during Sierra Leone's conflict. He also denies aiding and abetting the rebel group by providing arms and ammunition in exchange for diamonds, which prosecutors allege were brought to him by Sierra Leonean rebel leaders, and rejects the notion that he collaborated with the rebels in a joint criminal enterprise to destabilize Sierra Leone in order to instal a friendly government which would allow greater exploitation of the country's natural resources and mineral wealth.

Just before the recess last year, prosecutors started their cross-examination, confronting Mr. Taylor with, among other things, a covert bank account kept in his name through which millions of dollars are alleged to have flowed during the time of his presidency. Mr. Taylor denied that the bank account was for personal enrichment but instead was used for covert operations on behalf of the Liberian government. This cross-examination will continue next Monday, and U.C. Berkeley will kindly provide another report for us covering Mr. Taylor's cross-examination once that is complete, too.

Meanwhile, the site has been quiet, but we have not forgotten about the trial.

Alpha arrived in Sierra Leone not long after the court took its early recess. Over the past few weeks, he has been meeting with journalists, students and civil society organizations in the country to get people's thoughts on the Taylor trial to date. We will be posting updates from his trips and what he found out over the coming weeks.

The holidays also got me thinking about the broader context of the trial. Many people who comment on this site identify themselves as Liberians or Sierra Leoneans, and regularly provide such rich analyses and discussions of places, people and background to the trial which enormously enrich the legal narratives emerging from the courtroom each day. I realized that a number of other readers are, like me, not from West Africa but are increasingly fascinated with the discussions, ideas and analyses emerging from readers on the site, and want to learn as much as possible about the context and background of Sierra Leone, Liberia, the conflicts in both countries, and more about Mr. Taylor and his current trial. It struck me that the best people to recommend reading/films/analyses for those of us who are not from the region but who want to deepen our understanding of the issues and events which underpin this trial, would actually be many of the readers and regular commentators on this site who are from Liberia and Sierra Leone. So I now ask a request of you, dear readers: Might you be able to offer us some good reading/viewing recommendations as we wait for the trial to begin?

Good to be back on board with you again and I look forward to our continued conversations throughout 2010.

Best,  
Premier News.



The Democrat  
Monday, 11 January 2010

## The Prosecution's Cross Examination of Charles Taylor Through 7 December 2009

**The Accused, Charles Taylor, has been testifying on cross-examination by the Prosecution since 10 November 2009. Below are transcript excerpts of some of the more interesting and compelling moments from the cross examination so far. These include:**

- Mr. Taylor's claims concerning violence and atrocities in Liberia and Sierra Leone
- His alleged support for the rebels in Sierra Leone
- Bribes paid to officials in other countries to buy weapons
- His alleged use of child soldiers
- Mr. Taylor as a leader – not sharing the hardships of his soldiers, not being on the front lines
- Taylor allegedly having personal bank account(s) taking money that should have gone to the Liberian treasury, or by corrupt means; in addition, the use of Citibank in New York as a correspondent bank.

Two Prosecution attorneys have conducted the cross-examination of Mr. Taylor: Brenda Hollis, the Principal Trial Attorney, and Nicholas Koumjian, a Senior Trial Attorney. The trial adjourned on 7 December and will resume on 11 January. When court resumes, the Prosecution will continue to make use of documents to challenge Mr. Taylor's credibility and show he was not truthful during his direct testimony. The Prosecution's right to do so under the established principles of international law was affirmed by the Judges in their ruling on the use of such materials on 1 December.

In addition, here are a few quotes from the Acting Prosecutor, Joseph Kamara:

- "Given the length of Mr. Taylor's direct-examination, there are many issues for us to explore. We certainly don't intend to take as long as the 13 weeks the Defence took. But it's important that we fully test Mr. Taylor's stories and account."
- "We are pleased to have begun our cross in earnest, and to be challenging the Accused with documents to show he has not been truthful in this courtroom."
- "We've tested the credibility of Mr. Taylor's claims on a number of fronts, and our cross has only just begun. He challenged us to bring forth evidence of the wealth he accumulated while in power. We were pleased to do this. And throughout our cross we will confront his claim that he was a peacemaker in Sierra Leone. Our evidence shows just the opposite."
- "We are very pleased with where the trial is now, as we break for the holiday recess. And we're very much looking forward to confronting Mr. Taylor with more material as soon as trial resumes on January 11."

### Excerpts from Testimony On NOVEMBER 18 and 19

#### **Arrest of journalists:**

The Prosecution contends that these journalists, including the reporter/filmmaker Sorious Samura, were jailed because they were going to reveal illegal and improper practices of Mr. Taylor and the Liberian government. Mr Taylor denied this, and stated they were charged with espionage, that they were going to spread lies, and also that they were part of a plot to kill him with the use of a camera that could issue a laser of some kind that could cause cancer.

Nov 19

Q. And Mr Taylor, in fact during your leadership in Liberia at the same sort of prohibitions were placed on members of the public and members of the media; isn't that correct?

A. Total nonsense.

Q. And the truth of it is, these journalists were put in jail because they were going to investigate things that were really going on in your country; that's truth of it isn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. Totally untrue. Total nonsense.

Q. Things like the lack of good governance in your country?

A. No.

Q. They were going to investigate that, weren't they?

A. Total nonsense, no.

Q. And they were going to investigate the ongoing criminal conduct of your subordinates against civilians in your country; isn't that correct, Mr Taylor?

A. Totally incorrect.

Q. And they were going to investigate your criminal involvement with the RUF and Sierra Leone diamonds; correct, Mr Taylor?

A. That's the essence of your fallacy with your - with my criminal conduct. There was no such criminal conduct on my part, and I was not aware that they were there to investigate such.

Q. And you were not going to permit this, were you, Mr Taylor?

Not from journalists, and not from other individuals?

A. Total nonsense. There were so many other journalists from Western governments that had come and gone: CNN, BBC, everybody.

It was their mischief on their part and the criminal conduct that they conducted in Liberia that was proven, that they confessed to and apologise unreservedly. So your assertions are totally unfounded and nonsensical.



Q. And so you found a way to shut down their investigation so they could not further expose your activities. That's the truth of it, isn't it, Mr Taylor?  
A. That's the false of it.

**NOV 18**

[Prosecution quoting from previous testimony of Mr. Taylor]

Mr. Taylor: "Here is an attempt to kill me. And let me just mention, I mean the Sorious report is available, and why it was - I mean, they were arrested, those journalists were arrested. In fact, the camera - we were told that the camera that was supposed to be used for this so-called documentary where they insisted on interviewing me contained some beam or something that fired at me would, over a period of time, lead to cancer that - we were told by a major western intelligence source."

**NOVEMBER 25 2009**

Context: The Prosecution asking Mr. Taylor about the number of murders, killings and rapes during the Liberian civil conflict. NGO estimates of killings during the conflict are in the range of 250,000. Per the below, Mr. Taylor says it was between 5,000 and 7,000.

Q. To your knowledge, you don't know about massive killings of civilians - let me just take that question and break it to down into two - in Liberia during the conflict?

A. Massive? I am not aware of the massive killing of civilians in Liberia.

Q. Sir, how many civilians do you think - I mean, you're the former President of Liberia. You lived

there throughout the conflict. How many civilians do you think were killed, murdered during the civil conflict in Liberia?

A. Now you've asked two questions, Mr Koumjian; how many were killed and how many were murdered. Now which question do you want me to answer; the ones that were killed or those that were murdered?

Q. Those that were murdered. By murdered let me be clear, I mean those that were killed not be accident, not by stray fire. Those that were slaughtered.

A. Well, those that were murdered, I would - from the - and I can only speak frankly to this Court about the NPFL side. I cannot account for the other side. I would put it to, I would say, under 200 that were murdered throughout the entire crisis and most of those people paid for it.

Q. Sir, I'm asking you about all the factions. I'm talking to you about the suffering of the Liberian people. The Liberian people. How many Liberians were killed, civilians? And let me use the word "killed" now. How many Liberians were killed in the civil conflict?

A. I would say - I would put the amount of Liberians that died during the Liberian civil conflict to 5 to 7,000.

Q. Sir, how many Liberian women do you estimate were raped, suffered sexual assault, during the civil conflict in Liberia?

A. I really do not know. I really do not know. I can only speak about the NPFL side. I can speak about the NPFL side and I would put them to a very, very few, and those - and I can put it to a very few because of the number of executions that were done of rape by my soldiers, yes.

Context: Mr. Taylor claiming to be unaware of child soldiers or sexual slavery committed by the RUF rebel group in Sierra Leone.

Q. When were you aware, Mr Taylor, of the use of child soldiers by the RUF?

A. I was not aware of any - that was not amongst the ECOMOG reports that there were child soldiers. No, I was not.

Q. You had never received any information that there were child soldiers among the RUF?

A. No, I had never - I never received any such information, no.

Q. Had you heard about women being abducted and kept basically as sex slaves by the RUF?

A. No, no, I had not. I had not heard about that.

Q. Was that information that would interest you, or these were matters that were outside of your interest?

A. Well, they would be issues that would interest me, but I didn't go out asking questions.

**Mr. Taylor admitted his government paid bribes to officials in the Niger and Serbia to obtain weapons in violation of the UN Weapons ban to Liberia.**

Q. When you say how much you're willing to pay you are talking about bribing officials?

A. That's the whole point of corruption, yes.

Q. How many times have you done that?

A. It depends on - during the war we went through countries, I don't know who was involved but if we wanted to get something done we would do it and we've done it at least I would say once, twice.

Q. What countries were you bribing officials in order to allow arms to pass through those coun-

**Contd. Page 8**

**From Page 3**

tries in violations of the United Nations arms embargo?

A. I talked about the violation. We traversed material through Niger, the Government of Niger didn't know. Simple. We came through Niger a few times, the government knew nothing about it.

Q. .... but in fact the UN panel of experts discovered that you had brought in arms from a company in Serbia without the knowledge of the Serbian government through the use of a false End User Certificate, and I'm sorry I don't have prepared with me right now that country, but I believe it was Niger. Isn't that the truth?

A. That's totally, totally a lie. That's totally false. And because it's on the record I'm sure that we will have to bring the documentation if you say that it's wrong. I informed the Security Council. There was not any discovery. Totally, totally false. And we held fast to that argument about our right to doing so under I think it was Article 50, 51 of the Charter. We did. My government did.

**NOVEMBER 26 2009**

**The Prosecution challenging Mr. Taylor on not having done anything during and immediately after the infamous Freetown invasion of Jan. 6 1999 by rebel forces. The Prosecution alleges Mr. Taylor was supporting the rebels.**

Q. Did your national security adviser advise you that morning the RUF and the AFRC have invaded Freetown?

A. I have just answered that, yes.

Q. Did you receive reports from any means, your national security adviser or otherwise, Sam Bockarie was on the air threatening to burn various parts, embassies, in Freetown?

A. Well, I got a report that Bockarie had made some statements on the air, yeah. I don't remember the exact details, but I did get a report that he had spoken on the BBC.

Q. And what did you, the President point man for peace, do about this while Freetown was literally burning?

A. Nothing. What did you expect me to do except contact other colleagues to find out what was their take on it, what was ECOMOG doing. That's all I could have done.

**DECEMBER 2 2009**

**Prosecution quoting from a book by former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Harold Cohen, about his visit to see Mr. Taylor, where he indicates Taylor was protected by child soldiers.**

Q. Let's continue:

"On 20 September, in the most interesting experience of the mission, we flew to the northern Cote d'Ivoire airport at Man. There, joined by our ambassador to Abidjan, Kenneth Brown, we boarded four-wheel-drive vehicles and crossed ten miles into Liberia to meet with Charles Taylor. The most striking, and frightening, aspect of Taylor's forest hideaway was the overwhelming presence of heavily armed 14 to 16-year-old boys." Now, that's true, isn't it, Mr Taylor? You have had teen-aged very young boys armed in your forces, correct?

A. That is not correct. That is the very reason why I suggested that this document be brought forward. These are some of the difficulties that we have out there in the international community. In fact, Mr Cohen came into the town of Loguato. Loguato is within a half

kilometre of the border - not even a half kilometre. It's on the border. He talks about it. And what struck me to bring - to ask my counsel to bring this document is that here is Mr Cohen meeting me, and he is saying individuals around, and he comes up specifically with two age groups. Never asked, Why aren't they 19 and 20 or 14 and 15? Mr Cohen has the audacity to specifically state ages of individuals that he's just seen, has never asked a question. I just thought it was stupid.

**DECEMBER 3 2009**

**The Prosecution questioned Mr. Taylor on the kind of leader he is, and about how he did not share the hardships of his soldiers, that he never went to the front lines and was never under fire. Taylor admitted he'd never been on the front lines, but argued that it was false that he never shared the hardships of his soldiers or hadn't been under fire.**

Q. I'm not talking about trained in Sierra Leone. When Thomas Quiwonkpa - first of all, Thomas Quiwonkpa was admired, and in fact, you could even say, would you agree, loved by many of the soldiers under him?

A. Oh, yes, I agree.

Q. And that is because soldiers admire and respect those leaders who share the hardships and risks of combat with them, correct?

A. I would agree.

Q. You are not that kind of leader, correct?

A. Incorrect.

Q. You don't share the hardships of your soldiers, do you?

A. No, but you were talking about soldiers. In the first place, I'm not a soldier; never taken military training. You spoke about soldiers caring for their men; I agree. Now you've put me - I have not, have never been - have never taken military training, so I'm not a soldier.



Q. Mr Taylor, please answer my question. I'll repeat it. You do not share the hardships of your soldiers, do you?

A. Oh, I do. Oh, I do.

Q. You stay behind the lines in your Executive Mansions while you send the young men and women to fight, correct?

A. Totally incorrect.

Q. Have you been to the front line?

A. Totally, totally incorrect.

Q. Have you been to the front line, sir?

A. You don't have to go to the front line. You say I was hiding.

Q. Sir, I asked you a question. Have you been --

A. No, but I'm not going to --

Q. -- to the front line?

A. -- answer your question like that because you made an assertion. Look at your full question. What is your full question [overlapping speakers].

Q. The question, sir, I'll read it again: "Have you been to the front line?"

A. I have not been to any front line. I'm not a soldier, no.

Q. Have you ever been under fire?

A. I have not been on the front line but I was under fire because I was on the ground, yes.

Q. Was that the time that you were found in the bathroom of the Executive Mansion?

A. No, no. I'm talking about during the civil war. Because it was guerilla war, the leader of the NPFL was always under danger because a guerilla unit could infiltrate any area and reach to you. So I was always, always under threat.

Q. That's why you stayed behind several layers of security at all times, correct?

A. As the leader, my protection was - my protection was very important. I must admit, I was very well protected and would have been stupid if I didn't.

Q. Including bringing in foreigners because they weren't likely to do a coup to replace you, correct?

A. No. No, you've got that wrong, Mr Koumjian.

Q. Isn't that why you brought in the Gambians?

A. I brought in the Gambians to help with my security, but not to prevent a coup. The few - the handful of Gambians that came with me - would be foolhardy for anybody to believe that a handful of Gambians could have prevented a coup against me. That would be foolhardy, wouldn't it? That's not what they came

Q. Sir, had you - well, why did they come?

A. They came to help to provide some security. But not to prevent a coup, as your question said.

Q. Sir, now I understand why you wanted them to come. What did you give them in return for them coming? What was the give back to the Gambians to come and serve as your security?

A. Nothing, nothing.

Q. Thank you.

A. We took care of them, gave them housing, food, some subsistence, but nothing more than that.

### DECEMBER 7 2009

Testimony from this day revolved around allegations of a personal bank account of Mr. Taylor in which he was paid money directly from numerous sources. Mr. Taylor had previously challenged the Prosecution to bring forth evidence of the existence of any such accounts. The independent trial monitor site, [www.charlestaylortrial.org](http://www.charlestaylortrial.org), provides a very good summary as well. See: <http://www.charlestaylortrial.org/2009/12/07/personal-bank-account-in-charles-taylors-name-was-a-covert-account-operated-on-behalf-of-the-government-of-liberia-he-says/>

Context: Taylor's denials: Prosecution reminding Mr. Taylor of some of his prior testimony, during direct-examination on 20 July 2009, where Mr. Taylor challenged anyone to bring forth information about bank accounts he had money in.

MR KOUMJIAN:

Q. Mr Taylor, on that line you said:

"Listen, there is something about - I've been using certain terminologies and what I know, you know, the demonisation and they make you look like you are some scum of the earth so they can destroy you. Nonsense. Listen, I am a Pan African revolutionary and I have respect for myself. Look, all this thing to try to make thee look like a scum in order - listen, never. Not Charles Ghankay Taylor. This is all why we have seen this and my record is clear. You know all this thing in the public eye. Charles Taylor stole millions of dollars. He has assets scattered around the world. The same lies and constructs to make you appear worse than human until today and I sit in this Hague today before these honourable judges and I challenge the United Nations, I challenge any human being or organisation in this world - I mean on this planet.

**More Next Edition**



## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 11 January 2010

### Charles Taylor war crimes trial resumes

By Thijs Bouwknecht



The war crimes trial against former Liberian president Charles Taylor resumes Monday. The prosecution continues its cross-examination before the Special Court for Sierra Leone

(SCSL), in The Hague.

Charles Taylor has been testifying on cross-examination by the prosecution since 10 November 2009. Two prosecution attorneys have conducted the cross-examination of Mr. Taylor: Brenda Hollis and Nicholas Koumjian. The trial adjourned on 7 December.

When court resumes, the prosecutors will continue to make use of documents to challenge Taylor's credibility and show he was not truthful during his direct testimony.

"We're very much looking forward to confronting Mr. Taylor with more material as soon as trial resumes on January 11," says acting Acting Prosecutor, Joseph Kamara. He adds "we are pleased to have begun our cross in earnest, and to be challenging the accused with documents to show he has not been truthful in this courtroom."

Charles Taylor - who has been claiming he had been a peacemaker in West-Africa in the 1990's - has pleaded not guilty to 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Sierra Leone. But Kamara trusts in the court's case. "Throughout our cross we will confront his claim that he was a peacemaker in Sierra Leone. Our evidence shows just the opposite," he says.

"Given the length of Mr. Taylor's direct-examination, there are many issues for us to explore. We certainly don't intend to take as long as the 13 weeks the defence took. But it's important that we fully test Mr. Taylor's stories and account."



## Associated Press

Friday, 8 January 2010

### **Envoy: prosecutions spur release of child soldiers**

By MIKE CORDER

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

THE HAGUE, Netherlands -- The U.N.'s special envoy on child soldiers said Thursday the prosecution of rebel leaders for exploiting children in war is persuading some groups to release underage fighters.

Radhika Coomaraswamy told the International Criminal Court that courts must extend their protection to children used as cannon fodder or sex slaves in conflicts around the globe, and that such cases already are having an effect.

Coomaraswamy was testifying as an expert witness at the trial of alleged warlord Thomas Lubanga, who has pleaded innocent to charges of using child soldiers in a brutal conflict in the eastern Congo region of Ituri in 2002-2003.

Lubanga's trial, which began nearly a year ago, has been hailed as a legal landmark because it is the first by an international court to focus exclusively on child soldiers.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone also has included child soldier charges in some of its prosecutions.

Such court cases have "sent many armed groups to us ... willing to negotiate action plans for the release of children," said Coomaraswamy.

She cited the release earlier Thursday of 3,000 former child soldiers from detention camps in Nepal as an example of former fighters being returned to society.

The children were among nearly 20,000 former Maoist rebels who have lived in the camps since 2006, when they gave up their 10-year armed rebellion to join a peace process and enter mainstream politics.

The United Nations estimates that up to 250,000 child soldiers still fight in more than a dozen countries.

Coomaraswamy urged judges not to differentiate between children forced to fight and those turned into "bush wives" to cook and provide sex to troops.

"The court should see children as a special category, creating a framework that protects their vulnerability," she said. "Any framework for protection of children in wartime and accountability of those who use them ... must include girls."

Coomaraswamy also explained to the three-judge panel why children's fearlessness makes them ideal "cannon fodder" in conflicts from Asia to Africa.

Children under 15 "have an underdeveloped notion of death," Coomaraswamy said. "The lack of the concept of death makes them fearless in battle, often thinking of it as a game and rushing straight into the line of fire."

She said the latest "sad manifestation" of rebel groups exploiting such fearlessness is the use of teenagers as suicide bombers in countries such as Afghanistan.

Prosecutors finished presenting their evidence against Lubanga last year after calling 28 witnesses. Lubanga is expected to begin his defense in coming days.



## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 8 January 2010

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

### International Clips on Liberia

#### **Liberian refugee rape suspect released to parents**

The Arizona Republic Jan. 8, 2010.

"I want to go home," the 13-year-old boy told a juvenile court commissioner. On Thursday morning, she sent him there in the custody of his parents. The boy, whose name is being withheld by the Republic because of his age, is one of four Liberian refugees charged last July with sexual assault, kidnapping and sexual conduct with a minor. Investigators believe the suspects lured an 8-year-old girl to a storage closet at a west Phoenix apartment complex and raped her. Only one of the four still remains in custody; one has already been acquitted. Maricopa County Superior Court Commissioner Shellie Smith ordered the 13-year-old released to house arrest pending his next hearing, which is scheduled for early March. Smith did so on the recommendations of the boy's probation officer and attorneys, but over the objections of prosecutor, Deputy County Attorney Cindi Nannetti. The boy will attend a special school that serves as a transition for children coming out of detention facilities and will be electronically monitored. Furthermore, Smith ordered that he have no unsupervised contact with children younger than 12 and that he not be allowed unsupervised access to computers or cell phones.

### International Clips on West Africa

#### **Guinea**

#### **Interim Guinea junta leader Sekouba Konate 'sick'**

BBC January 8, 2010

Guinean interim junta leader Sekouba Konate is to be flown to Senegal, officials say, amid reports he is sick. He has been in charge of Guinea while Capt Moussa Dadis Camara is recovering in a Moroccan hospital from bullet wounds sustained in a plot to kill him.

If the reports about Gen Konate are confirmed, they would raise further fears of instability in Guinea. The International Criminal Court is to send a prosecutor to investigate a massacre of opposition protesters. Senegal's official APS news agency reports that Senegal has sent a plane to Conakry to pick up Gen Konate. "He is ailing," a source in the presidency told AFP news agency, following similar reports in the local media. "He will be in [the Senegalese capital] Dakar at the beginning of the afternoon." Unnamed officials in **Guinea** have told AP news agency that Gen Konate is being evacuated because he has cirrhosis of the liver but this has not been confirmed.

#### **Ivory Coast**

#### **DJ Table Of Ivorian Cocoa Purchases To Jan 3 Per Company**

ABIDJAN, Jan 08, 2010 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) -- The following table shows industry data of cocoa purchases per company from October 1 to January 3, the first thirteen weeks of the 2009-10 season, seen by Dow Jones Newswires Friday. Companies marked with an asterisk are companies processing cocoa beans locally into semifinished cocoa products. All figures are in metric tons; the first column shows purchases in the period from December 28-January 3 and the second column the cumulative total for the season, the third column the purchases to the end of the



same week in the previous season, and the fourth, the percentage change between the two cumulative figures. Those companies not included in the third and fourth columns were, for the majority, not yet exporting during the 08-09 season. The total at the bottom of the Cum 08-09 column is the cumulative for the season up to that point, including all companies exporting that year, not just those exporting again this year and hence listed.

## **Local Media – Newspaper**

### **Cabinet Reshuffle...Taylor Ex-Officials Set for Inclusion**

(Liberian Express, Liberian Journal, New Vision, New Democrat, Public Agenda, The Parrot, The News)

- [SIC] President Sirleaf is said to be contemplating a major overhaul of her Government to include opposition politicians favouring mainly the National Patriotic Party of former President Charles Taylor.
- Although the President has set no deadline for the much-anticipated reshuffle, Executive Mansion sources say key executives of the NPP are being scrutinized for their possible appointment to the cabinet and other strategic posts.
- Observers however say the President's inclusion of Taylor's former officials in Government is unlikely to be welcomed by the international community that is pressing for assets freeze in keeping with a UN resolution.
- Meanwhile, the Executive Mansion says the ongoing performance review of Government Ministers is not only intended to improve the performance of Cabinet Ministers and accelerate implementation of the country's development agenda, it is also meant to improve efficiency in Government.

### **Government Issues Ultimatum for Ministers to Declare Assets**

(New Democrat)

- Government has issued a one-week ultimatum for all government officials to declare their assets.
- Deputy Information Minister for Public Affairs, Norris Tweah quotes President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as calling on members of the judiciary to cooperate with the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission and declare their assets.
- Minister Tweah further quotes the President as terming the declaration as a major step towards the fight against corruption.

### **UN Deputy Envoy Affirms Support for Implementation of PRS Strategy**

(The News, Public Agenda, The Inquirer and The Informer)

- The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Recovery and Governance and Resident Coordinator of the UN system in Liberia, Mr. Moustapha Soumaré, has presented a consignment of agriculture implements and computers valued at US\$55,000 to two development organizations and the Bangladesh – Liberia Friendship Centre in Ganta, Nimba County.
- The organizations include the Bain Clan Development Council and the Ideal Domah Town Project.
- Making the presentation, Mr. Soumaré said "the presentation of the farming implements is an affirmation of the long standing aim of the United Nations to support member states, to become self-sufficient in food production".
- He commended the Bangladeshi contingent in the county for supporting local development initiatives which he said are intended "to empower the local communities.
- Mr. Soumaré said the farming implements and computers were funded under the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund through the generosity of the Japanese government.

### **Suspended Information Minister to Be Charged...Indictment Soon**

(The News)

- [SIC] Barely 48 hours after he disparaged the draft audit report linking him to defrauding the Government of over US\$200,000, there are reports that Government is contemplating drawing up formal charges against suspended Information Minister Laurence Bropleh.
- A source said a decision will be made to charge Dr. Bropleh in the coming days.
- The source said the police investigation and the audit report points the fact that Government would soon release and indictment on the suspended Minister.

### **Government Negotiates US\$1.6 Billion Contract With Indonesian Company**

(The Informer)

- The Government of Liberia says it is negotiating for over US\$1.6 billion contract with an Indonesian company in the palm oil sector.
- GoldenVeroleum is one of the biggest investors in the oil palm industry in the world which is interested in investing in the South-eastern region of Liberia.
- According to Deputy Information Minister for Public Affairs Norris Tweah, the oil palm company currently has a delegation in Liberia holding discussions on its investment interest in the country.
- The government says if the contract is finalized, hundreds of jobs would be created for the people in the South-eastern region.

### **Women Group Threatens Mass Protest to Force Gender Minister to Resign**

(New Vision)

- The ECOWAS Civil Society Women of Liberia have threatened to rally thousands of women to stage a peaceful protest at the Gender Ministry to compel Minister Varbah Gayflor to resign.
- The ECOWAS women argued that Minister Gayflor must be held liable for the alleged misapplication of US\$22,000 at the Ministry and be prosecuted.
- The group's president Oretha Dennis said their advocacy is in line with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's zero tolerance on corruption.
- But the Gender Ministry has persistently dismissed corruption allegations levied against Minister Gayflor.

### **Senator Nyenabo Says TRC Act "Illegal"**

(Daily Observer and The Inquirer)

- Former President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate and Grand Gedeh County Senior Senator, Isaac W. Nyenabo has for the first time reacted to the final report and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).
- In his reaction, Nyenabo said the act that brought the commission into being is unconstitutional, thereby making the commission's recommendations unenforceable and illegal.
- The TRC was enacted in June 2005 by the unicameral National Transitional Legislative Assembly during the era of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) chaired by Charles Gyude Bryant.
- But the Grand Gedeh County Senator, who is listed among a host of former warlords and alleged financiers of the bloody Liberian civil war said he will present a bill to the Liberian Senate for the amendment of the TRC Act as soon as the Legislature resumes duty this month.

### **Civil Society Organizations Poised to Stage March to Demand Passage of Crucial Bills Stalled At National Legislature**

(The Informer and Daily Observer)

- Civil society, human rights and pro-democracy organizations as well as professional associations, including women, students, among others on Monday, January 11, 2010 are expected to stage a peaceful march to the 52nd Legislature for a speedy passage of three bills crucial to the effective planning and conduct of the 2011 general and presidential elections.
- The Secretary General of the National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations of Liberia (NACCSOL), Benjamin Tarnue, said the peaceful march is intended to urge the Legislature to



consider the prompt passage of the act setting a New Threshold for Electoral Constituencies in Liberia, the Act defining Local Government Structures (Boundary Harmonization) and the Joint Resolution of the National Legislature calling for a national referendum to amend certain provisions of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia.

- He added that failure to pass the bills will result in a call for the legislators to leave the House.

### **Local Media – Star Radio** *(culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

#### **Women Group Threatens Mass Protest to Force Gender Minister to Resign**

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas, Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)*

#### **Government Begins Executive Mansion Renovation Soon**

- The Liberian Government has again announced that it would begin renovation of the Executive Mansion this year.
- Deputy Information Minister for Public Affairs Norris Tweah did not say exactly when the renovation would begin but said it will cost around US\$30 million.
- Minister Tweah said government has already identified the source of the funding to carry out the renovation.
- The Executive Mansion was gutted by fire during the Independence Day celebrations on July 26, 2006.
- Shortly after the incident, government announced an ambitious plan to renovate the structure but the lack of funding stalled the process.
- At the same time, government has announced the resumption of China Union's activities in the country following a temporary break due to financial crisis.
- China Union is to explore the Western Cluster of Liberia with a US\$2.6 billion investment.

*(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)*

#### **Government Assures Guthrie Workers Of Severance Pay**

- Deputy Agriculture Minister Boakai Sirleaf has assured workers of the Guthrie Rubber Plantation they would get their severance pay.
- Minister Sirleaf said the workers will be paid their severance benefits in four instalments.
- The Deputy Agriculture Minister cautioned the workers to be law abiding as the company tries to rescue them from poverty.

#### **Opposition Politician Wants Older Generation Consulted**

- Liberian politician Dr. Togba Nah-Tipoteh says the country can make no progress without seeking the advice of its older generation.
- Dr. Tipoteh said seeking the advice of the elderly will help correct the mistakes of the past and move the country forward.
- The Liberian opposition politician made the statement when he donated assorted clothing and footwear to the elderly through the Liberia Association of Retired Persons.

### **Radio Veritas** *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

#### **Government Negotiates US\$1.6 Billion Contract With Indonesian Company**

#### **PPCC Workers Decry Delay Investigation In The Keith Jubah Murder Case**

- Reports say concerns are mounting among employees of the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) over the delay in the investigation into the brutal murder of Keith Jubah.
- Mr. Keith Jubah, executive director of the PPCC was brutally murdered on November 1 last year by unknown persons on the Morris' Farm on the Monrovia-Kakata highway.
- Authorities at the Justice Ministry according to the reports have reserved comments saying that Justice Minister Christiana Tah has just returned to the country and will speak on the status of the investigation.
- The government has already charged 10 persons with murder in connection to the death of Keith Jubah and has forwarded them to court.

### **Truth FM** *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

#### **Government Extends Assets Declaration deadline**

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## Star Radio (Liberia)

Saturday, 9 January 2010

### **Another Support for controversial TRC report**

Written by Julius Kanubah

Residents of district-number-seven in Montserrado County have voted for the full implementation of the TRC report.

The residents voted fifty-six for, six against and two abstentions during a meeting with Representative Thomas Fallah on Saturday.

In their vote, they mandated Representative Thomas Fallah to channel their decision to the plenary of the House.

The Montserrado district-seven residents said the vote would pave the way for the prosecution and punishment of key perpetrators of the civil war.

They warned Representative Fallah that he risks impeachment if he does not heed to their decision.

Representative Fallah later told reporters the vote by his people would be taken seriously.

During the meeting in the Paynesville suburb of Redlight, Representative Fallah presented his annual report focusing on his successes, pitfalls and challenges.



## The Guardian

Sunday, 10 January 2010

### Liberia's amputee footballers: from civil war to African champions

Their injuries are a painful reminder of a bitter conflict, but this football team is bringing pride to the country



*An amputee football match in Monrovia, Liberia. Photograph: Glenna Gordon*

Before they play, they pray. A dozen men, all missing a limb, lean on crutches and bow their heads. Shouts from a nearby football match and the sound of cars passing on the road beside us fill the air. The coach mutters

an "amen" and the men lift their heads and begin warming-up. They move on their crutches with grace, dribbling around cones at pace, using the inside and outside of the foot.

A premier league team – the Invincible Eleven, for whom Liberia's most famous footballer, George Weah, formerly of Milan and Chelsea, used to play – are training on this patch of sandy scrubland by the side of a main road. But the handful of passers-by who stop and watch are more interested in the men on crutches who call themselves the champions of Africa.

On Christmas Eve 1989, Charles Taylor launched a rebellion in northern Liberia. This tiny country of three million facing the Atlantic on Africa's west coast had been ruled by one of the world's more bizarre dictators, Samuel Doe, who had come to power in a coup at the age of 28. Despite banning political parties, closing down the free press and stealing tens of millions from the state, Doe received full backing from the United States who saw him as sufficiently anti-communist to deserve their support. The fear of another "red" state in Africa prompted the US to back some brutal dictators, Doe included.

Within six months Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) was laying siege to the capital, Monrovia. Civil war racked the country for the next seven years. More than a dozen peace accords were signed and ignored until elections were held in 1997. Taylor threatened to go back to war if he didn't win. His slogan, "He killed my Ma, he killed my Pa, but I'll vote for him", summed up the fear he had spread throughout the country.

Taylor supported a rebellion in neighbouring Sierra Leone, eager to capture its abundant diamond mines. But his interference in other West African countries led to his downfall. Guinea's president, Lansana Conté, backed a new Liberian rebel group, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (Lurd), and by 2003 Lurd had surrounded Monrovia. Taylor flew to exile in Nigeria before being arrested in 2006 and taken into the custody of the UN. He is now on trial in The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Sierra Leone.

Part of Taylor's legacy is the thousands of young men in both Sierra Leone and Liberia who are missing limbs. His Sierra Leonean rebels used to chop off arms and legs of men who refused to sign up. In Liberia the amputees tended to be people wounded in battle who couldn't find a doctor in time to save their limb.

Outside every shopping centre in Monrovia, a crumbling city with pockets of affluence, there are amputees begging for change. One of them is Prince Chea, although he'd prefer it if you call him Samuel Eto'o. "I play almost like him," he says with a touch of modesty. Like so many Liberian teenagers, "Eto'o" had dreamed of becoming a professional footballer but he lost his right leg when he was hit by a mortar in 2001. He has no job and little chance of ever finding one. But he still has football. "People know me now," he says.

Eto'o plays centre-forward in Liberia's national side, which won the second All-African Amputee Football Championship in 2008. The team had been runners-up the year before in Sierra Leone, where five nations competed for the title. Although 2009's World Cup was cancelled – funding for amputee football across the world is still hard to come by – Eto'o's dreams of becoming a football star are still very much alive.

Victory in 2008 – they beat Sierra Leone in the final in Monrovia – has also helped to change attitudes among the wider public. After the war Liberia's amputees tended to be shunned. With no public transport system in the capital people rely on a small number of battered yellow taxis to get around. Taxi drivers, however, used to ignore amputees, leaving them with long, painful journeys on crutches.

"They think that we are the men who destroyed the country," says Eric Myers, the federation's vice-president.

Some of those in the Liberian team are indeed veterans of the civil wars. Myers himself fought for Taylor's NPFL. He lost his leg in "an active battle", as he describes it with a smile. "We were not many, maybe 15," he says. His group was caught in an ambush and Myers was on the wrong side. At least 10 bullets hit his leg, from the thigh down to the ankle. It was several days before he was able to find a doctor, by which time many of the bullet wounds had become infected.

Playing amputee football had been "like psychological counselling", he says. "Before we played most of us never accepted our condition. Now we accept it."

Others in the team were civilians caught up in the war. Samuel Eastman, the secretary general of the Liberia Amputee Football Federation, lost his right leg in 1992. His school was in the town of Gbarna, which at the time was Charles Taylor's base.

Eastman heard the rumbling of a plane overhead. Seconds later, it bombed the nearby water plant. His cousin worked there and went to survey the damage. Eastman went with him. They were placing the wounded in a Red Cross jeep when another explosion went off. His right leg, shredded with shrapnel, had to be amputated. "You have to accept it and move on," he says with a shrug.

Eastman has no problem playing in the same team as former rebels. The past is the past, he argues. "If we can come together," he says of his team-mates who fought, "then the whole country can come together."

**Liberia is a country on the mend**, although progress can be painfully slow. Hand-painted signs are daubed across walls encouraging citizens to pay tax. "Good Taxpayers are Nation Builders", reads one. "Pay your Taxes. Let us All Commit to Building a Better Liberia", implores another.

Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a Harvard-trained former World Bank employee and now Africa's first female head of state, has been feted in the west as one of the continent's most visionary leaders. Back home opinions of "Ma Ellen", as she is known, are more nuanced. Her rule has brought a



measure of stability and democracy to a country ruled by guns for so long. But allegations of corruption are common and citizens point to the lack of basics such as electricity and water to suggest not enough has been done.

Sirleaf was also forced to apologise to the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission for her previous support of Taylor, having once helped to finance his rebels. The Commission's recent report recommended she be banned from politics for 30 years, although parliament is unlikely ever to enforce the sanctions.

She is likely to stand for re-election in 2011 when her opponent could be Weah. He stood against her in 2005, winning the first round but losing the run-off. He currently lives in Florida, where he is studying at university, but the political party he stood for is keen for him to return. Weah remains popular in Liberia, not just among football fans. During a time when Liberia tended to be in the news because of war and brutality, Weah's goal-scoring exploits at Milan were responsible for the country's few positive mentions in the international media.

The amputee team hope to have the same effect. Their warm-up has finished and a training match is about to start. Eto'o lines up on one side while two other global stars are on the opposition. Everyone calls Festus Harrison Kaká. Unlike his team-mates, Kaká has been playing on one leg for most of his life – he lost his left leg when he was two. He won the player of the tournament award at the All African Championships and it's not hard to see why. Kaká's movement is by far the most graceful in the team. Running at pace towards the corner, he suddenly plants one crutch in the sand and swings 270 degrees, taking the ball with him. The defender trips over his own crutches and Kaká steams towards goal.

And then there is Drogba. Moses Koli, as his mother called him, was one of Taylor's child soldiers. He signed up when he was 14 after "the enemy" destroyed his village. Drogba is short, no more than five foot, but he puffs out his chest when he talks about the war.

"I was a soldier. I used to go to the front line." He killed "plenty of people", he says. "It was not good but you have to." Like Myers, Drogba was injured in battle. A doctor could have patched his leg up but it would have been several weeks before he could get to one. He doesn't have any regrets though. He just says "It's what happened."

His team-mates call him Drogba because he scores goals. "I will score two today," he says just before the match starts. Five minutes later, he taps one in from a yard out. A few minutes after that he pokes home a cross.

Drogba swings on his crutches in an elaborate celebration, then looks over at me with a "told-you-so" grin on his face as his team-mates – both former rebels and former victims – hop over to embrace him.