

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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Friday, June 11, 2004

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Terms: **sierra leone; hinga norman reinstates sacked defence team** ([Edit Search](#))

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Africa News June 10, 2004 Thursday

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Africa News

June 10, 2004 Thursday

LENGTH: 387 words

**HEADLINE: Sierra Leone;
Hinga Norman Reinstates Sacked Defence Team**

BYLINE: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks

BODY:

Sam **Hinga Norman, Sierra Leone's** former interior minister who faces eight counts of crimes against humanity, said on Thursday he wanted to rehire the **defence team** he publicly **sacked** at the opening of his trial last week.

For the third time in a week, judges at **Sierra Leone's** UN-backed Special Court were forced to adjourn the trial of **Norman**, who was the head of a pro-government militia group during the country's 10-year civil war.

Many Sierra Leoneans see him as a hero who stopped the advance of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel movement and helped restore democracy. But prosecutors accuse **Norman** of presiding over a "killing frenzy against innocent civilians" as his Civil **Defence** Forces (CDF) slaughtered, raped, burnt and looted their way across the tropical West African country.

Norman, who **sacked** his legal **team** last Thursday and asked to defend himself, is on trial with two other top leaders of the CDF; War Director Moinina Fofana and High Priest Allieu Kondewa, who presided over traditional rituals to initiate new members into the force.

Some trial observers said **Norman's** decision to sack and then rehire his **defence team** looked like a stalling tactic.

Earlier this week the Special Court's three appeal judges - from Cameroon, Canada and **Sierra Leone** - rejected **Norman's** request to defend himself single-handedly. They ordered the court's registrar to appoint standby counsel for the defendant, who was deputy **defence** minister at the time the alleged offences were committed.


Norman had threatened to stay in cell in protest at the judges' decision, but on Thursday he was in the chamber as the court heard that he had rejected the registrar's choice of John Wesley Hull, a British lawyer.

"I expect that my highly esteemed and honourable former (**defence**) **team** unite together and support my decision, despite any concerns they may have," **Norman** wrote to the court in a letter dated 9 June.

One of **Norman's** original lawyers, Sulaiman Texan-Sie, asked the court for an adjournment so that he could consult with other members of the **team**.

The court, which went into the history books as the first international war crimes tribunal to sit U.N.-appointed international judges alongside local judges in the country where the atrocities took place, adjourned until Monday.

LOAD-DATE: June 10, 2004

Source: [News & Business](#) > [News](#) > [News, Most Recent 90 Days \(English, Full Text\)](#)  

Terms: **sierra leone; hinga norman reinstates sacked defence team** ([Edit Search](#))

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Norman Rejects New Lawyer

By Mohamed Mansaray

The first accused of Civil Defence Forces (CDF) indictees of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Samuel Hinga Norman yesterday rejected a new lawyer, John Wesley Hull who sought to represent him at the trial.

The decision came after Mr. Norman sacked members of his former defence team at the official start of the trial on Monday. Addressing the court on the issue yesterday at the temporary Courthouse

New England in Freetown, the Registrar of the Special Court, Robin Vincent said that lawyers were sought both within and outside Sierra Leone to represent the first accused at the trial following the

court's decision on June 8, this year. In consultation with the principal defendants, Mr. Vincent said, they searched for lawyers who have international trial experiences.

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The CDF Kakatuas in court

He informed the court that because of time factor, all the lawyers contacted were not available.

"The principal defendant in consultation with myself then widened the search and in fact identified a very eminent lawyer, Mr. Hull but who has not practiced before the International Criminal Tribunal," the Registrar told the court. He noted however, that the new lawyer is recognized in his own jurisdiction as a highly accomplished trial lawyer. "The gentleman agreed to represent Mr. Norman subject to him coming to Freetown and arrangements have been made for that international counsel to arrive in Freetown on Monday," he said. The Registrar also handed over to the court the Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the new lawyer which was marked Exhibit 3.

When Mr. Norman was asked by Judges of the trial Chamber to comment on the seeking of a new international counsel for him, he responded in the negative

saying: "My Lord, with all due respect to the CV and fine quality of this new counsel, I still hold the view that he (Mr. Hull) is not my choice."

Justice Boutet explained to the indictee that the role of a Standby Counsel is to assist him in the exercise of his right of self-representation.

"They will receive on your behalf all court's documents and present them in the court room during proceedings as well as offering legal advice to you and address the court whenever you request them to do so," the Presiding judge explained.

However, during the afternoon session, Mr. Norman informed the court that his former team should act as a standby in his defence.

Asked to comment on Mr. Norman's change of heart, a member of the team Tejan-Sie who was present in court said that he cannot make any clear-cut statement without consulting other members of the team.

Salone Times

Friday June 11, 2004

Concord Times

Friday June 11, 2004

Norman rejects Special Court lawyer

By Abdul Karim Koroma

Former Kamajor Coordinator and Special Court indictee Sam Hinga Norman yesterday rejected Mr. Hull whom the court wanted to assign to

Norman as his Standby Counsel.

Norman said he was not dumb or maimed which disqualifies him to represent himself in the Court.

"If the bench chooses for me a Standby Counsel they will be responsible for what ever consequences might arise during the course of the trial and this is a miscarriage of justice," he said.

According to him, the issues, which were before the Court, are very serious issues that affect their liberty to go behind bars or regain their freedom.

Trials Chamber judge Bankole Thompson disclosed that is the right of the indictee to represent himself but for the purpose of preserving the courts integrity, the Court wanted to assign a Standby Counsel to him for assistance.

However, Norman announced that he would like his former Defense Team to serve as his Standby Counsel, as Hull was not his choice despite his rich



Hinga Norman

curriculum vitae.

A member of his former Defense Team Banja Tejan-Sie said he would not give an answer on behalf of his, but asked that the matter be adjourned to Monday to enable them hold consultations.

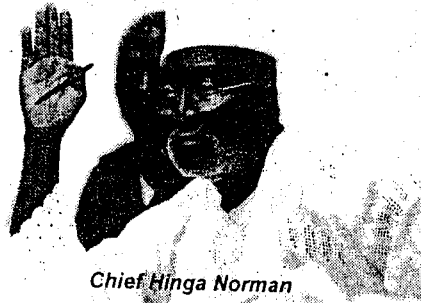
Norman rejects British counsel and goes back to former team

By Samuel John

First accused in the ongoing war crimes tribunal Sam Hinga Norman has again spectacularly done an about turn by going back to the former defence team he publicly sacked a week ago. Chief Norman back tracked after he was handed the bio-data of British Lawyer John Wesley Hull saying "My Lord with all due respect to the fine quality of this counsel,

I still hold the view that he is not my choice." In a letter dated 9th June to the court the former Internal Affairs Minister had said that he "expect(s) that my highly esteemed and honourable former team unite together and support my decision despite any concerns they may have." He went on, "If however any of my former team member is not in accord with the above, I ask to be notified forthwith by the Principal defendant so that I may proceed with further

instructions as to the composition of my team of legal assistance." Chief Norman who apparently did not at first understand the issue of the court having to appoint a standby lawyer for him had argued saying "I cannot be perceived to be insane, unable to choose for myself or mute, unable to speak and choose for myself." He added "the exercise of self-defence, self-representation, self-appearance is only with the qualification that I am



Chief Hinga Norman

not called to the bar and so I am not a lawyer, but that does not bar me from choosing a lawyer of my choice." Canadian born Justice Pierre Boutet took time again to explain to him the criteria of having a standby lawyer, which includes the assistance in preparation of his case during the trial phase and also to receive on his behalf

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all court documents presented during the trial. Justice Boutet further explained that the standby lawyer will also offer legal advice and will address the court whenever Chief Norman requests them to do so. The ex-minister countered again saying "My Lord I want to understand that if the Bench chooses for me they

would be held responsible for any consequences which I may found myself being found guilty by a defence being chosen for me, which I believe is a serious miscarriage of justice." This forced Presiding Judge Benjamin Itoe to further explain that "you were clearly granted by this chamber the right of self-representation." adding that, "the whole

concept of a standby counsel is to protect the right of the accused" if anything may arise which he may not understand at any point in time during the judicial process. Accepting the decision after the break, during which further clarifications had been made to him by the standby counsel, Chief

Norman said, "I happen to be a far junior member of the Bench, a Justice of the Peace and I want to thank your Lordship for

giving me so much opportunity. Whenever it pleases your Lordship... I am ready." A member of the sacked

legal team Sulaiman Texan-Sie asked the court for an adjournment so that he could consult with the other members of the team.

Soldiers and Police are not rivals

Awoko

Friday June 11, 2004

Norman holds special court trial at bay

BY THEOPHILUS S. GBENDU

The much-talked about Special Court trials are yet to commence in practical terms as one of the principal indicttees, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman's motion for self defense, has seemingly

ceased the court's progress.

It could be noted that on June 3rd 2004 when the trials were scheduled to commence in earnest, chief Norman dropped a his entire defense team and optioned to defend himself.

This turbulent bombshell was dropped at a time when the trial chamber had wanted to embark on the trial proper, by summoning the first set of prosecution witnesses to make their testimonies against the

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accused persons.

Considering the complexity of the self defense issue the trial chamber was left with no alternative but to adjourned to matter to June 8, 2004 at which time a ruling was supposed to be given on the issue.

The June 8th ruling was by all indications not in the favour of chief Norman.

The trial chamber made it explicitly clear that while it is the right of the accused to ask for self defense, that right would only be granted with a standby defense team appointed by the court for the accused person.

Chief Norman's reaction was one of defiance as he made it known that while he respects the decision of the trial chamber, he still thinks his right to self defense was fundamental to the idea of justice.

He further stated that because of that, he would stay out of the trial proceedings and let the court take whatever decision for him.

The trial chamber was at this juncture ceased again and hence the adjournment

of the matter to Thursday June 10, 2004.

The Thursday proceeding was held as scheduled but there was nothing to write home about as the two parties (Chief Norman and the trial chamber) were at variance with each other.

The chamber on its part maintained that because of the legal complications involved in the issue, and taking into consideration the seriousness of the crimes, it will be of advantage if a stand-by defense team including members of the former defense team, is assigned to same.

While chief Norman does not seem to be totally opposed to the issue of a standing defense team, he

is insisting that it is he and not the court that has the sole right to choose members of such a team.

The chamber is however insisting on the point that, since chief Norman had earlier choose and sacked his defense team, it is no longer the right of the accused to choose a second team.

No way forward was reached on the issue and the matter was therefore adjourned to Monday June 14th 2004 at which time the chamber is expected to deliver a second ruling on the issue.

It remains to be seen when the chief will yield to the Monday ruling, but what is clear is that the trial will only commence in earnest when the parties reach an agreement.

Standard Times

Friday, June 11, 2004

Special Court



Finds New Lawyer For Hinga Norman

Arrangement is been made by the Special Court to secure an international lawyer for Mr. Sam Hinga Norman, a week after dismissing his three local lawyers and told the court he would be defending himself. A suggestion the court outrightly rejected.

This new twist came as a result of a letter he reportedly wrote to the Judges, and which was recorded as exhibit 2, indicating that he was prepared to accept a standby lawyer, but warned the lawyer should of his choice and be ready to serve his interest.

Against this background however, Norman is reported to have climb down on his initial decision and according to the Principal Defender of the court, he has been giving authority by Hinga Norman to immediately contact

all members of his former defence team to continue defending him.

Independent Observer

Friday June 11, 2004

HOW CAN TERENCE TERRY RESCUE CHARLES TAYLOR?

As the activities of the Special Court gather momentum and after the Appeals Chamber ruled that the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, was answerable before the Special Court to answer to charges listed in the indictment of the Special Court, one man whose role in defending Charles Taylor has become a yeoman's task is Freetown Lawyer, Terrence Terry. The New Citizen caught up with Mr. Terry to find out what hopes he has to get his client, Charles Taylor off the hook, taking into consideration the Appeals Chamber ruling.

Charles Taylor, according to the Special Court, remains an indictee even though he is at the moment resident in Nigeria as guest of the Nigerian government.

Can Charles Taylor hold out, would he eventually appear in the Special Court in Freetown?

The New Citizen succeeded in putting down Lawyer Terrence Terry to answer to questions that are of interest to members of the public.

Below, we publish the contents of the interview granted by Terrence Terry to the New Citizen.

NEW CITIZEN:

Tell me Mr. Terry what are your honest views about the judgment of the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on the immunity motion which was delivered on the 31st of May, 2004?

TERRENCE TERRY

Frankly speaking, it is a well written and reasoned judgment. The 3 judges namely, Justices Ayoola, Gelaga King and Winter put a lot of research into the final product and for that they ought to be applauded. Of course, we should not expect less from Justice Ayoola who as a one time Supreme Court Judge of Nigeria was a leading judicial craftsman in resolving complex legal problems in a number of judgments delivered by him as a Supreme Court Judge of Nigeria; and the same is true of him when he assumed the office of Chief Justice of the Gambia. There is our own Justice Gelaga King who in no small measure has spearheaded leading judgments in Sierra Leone and I am sure he must have played his own part. Judge Winter who is the third judge I understand from good authority hails from Austria and is equally highly respected in international legal circles.

However, the judgment I venture to suggest is not totally different from other judgments in its style, presentation and content. I hope I will be forgiven as I say to you that the judgment has its strong and weak points and as we progress in this interview, I hope I will be able to illustrate my thinking in this regard. Let me first of all see whether I can rise to the occasion by giving one example. I believe that in milestone appellate decisions there is usually one motivating idea, which is found to prevail over all others. To identify this may be useful, for it may throw light on the utility or proper scope of a principle. Indeed, the centerpiece in this case is whether President Taylor at the time when the indictment was issued against his person was immunised from prosecution, and the landmark decision in this regard is the celebrated case involving the Democratic Republic of Congo v. Belgium. Indeed, it is the practice of Appellate Courts and the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone is one such court; and if its judgment must mean anything at all it must look widely and carefully for precedence and treat with respect judgments coming from sister tribunals, but more so from the International Court of Justice in matters which touch and concern International Law. But alas, I regret to state that the analysis of the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone of the celebrated case of the Demo-



TERRENCE TERRY

cratic Republic of Congo v. Belgium was with respect not only superficial, but failed to logically apply the ratio decidendi to the instant Taylor case. If they had done just that, the outcome would have been different.

NEW CITIZEN:

Mr. Terry my reading of the judgment of the 31st of May, 2004 revealed certain objections which were highlighted by the Prosecution. Can you recall them for the benefit of our readers?

TERRENCE TERRY

I do recall the 3 (three) objections highlighted by the Prosecution which touch and concern entertaining the said motion of the 23rd of July, 2003 before Mr. Taylor had surrendered to OR otherwise being brought to the custody of the Special Court.

Essentially the Appeals Chamber took the position that they raised procedural and conceptual questions about the relationship between immunity and jurisdiction. In that connection, the Prosecution relied on 3 submissions namely, (i) That the application does not raise a jurisdictional issue; (ii) That the application is premature as the accused has not made an initial appearance; and (iii) That the applicant does not have standing to bring the motion in any event as he is not before the Court.

From a technical point of view, the Appeals Chamber took the line that an accused who has not made an initial appearance before the Special Court cannot bring a preliminary motion in terms of Rule 72 (A), not a motion under Rule 73 of the Rules and in a normal case, such application may be held premature and accordingly struck out. However, it went on to state that this case is not in the normal course. It then emphasized that to insist that an incumbent Head of State must first submit himself to incarceration before he can raise the question of this immunity not only runs counter, in a substantial manner, to the whole purpose of the concept of sovereign immunity, but would also assume, without considering the merits, issues of exceptions to the concept that properly fall to be determined after delving into the merits of the claim to immunity. The Appeals Chamber also emphasized that although the present Applicant is no longer an incumbent Head of State, a statement of general principles must embrace situations in which an Applicant remains an incumbent Head of State. The Appeals Chamber in the final analysis however proceeded to exercise its inherent power and discretion to permit the Applicant to make this application notwithstanding the fact that he has not made an initial appearance. To this end, that aspect of the first and second preliminary objections were accordingly rejected.

To that extent, I submit that these were the minor preliminary arguments, which were held in Mr. Taylor's

favour when the judgment is carefully understood.

NEW CITIZEN:

Mr. Terry can you now proceed to address on the indictment and the Warrant of Arrest against the person of Ex-President Charles Taylor which as a layman constitute the centerpiece of the motion of the 23rd of July, 2003 which was forwarded to the Appeals Chamber for determination under Rule 72(E) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone?

TERRENCE TERRY

As regard the indictment, the Appeals Chamber relied heavily on the amicus curiae briefs and buttressed their reasoning for holding the indictment to have been validly issued based on the provision of Section 29 of the statute of the Special Court Agreement 2002 (Ratification) Act 2002 which states that the existence of an immunity procedural rule attaching to the official capacity of any person shall not be a bar to the arrest and delivery of that person into the custody of the Special Court and strenuously argued that the Special Court for Sierra Leone is the type of International Criminal Court contemplated under one of the four exceptions in the celebrated case of Democratic Republic of Congo v. Belgium.

In a nutshell, the Appeals Chamber held that the official positions of the Applicant as an incumbent Head of State at the time when these criminal proceedings were initiated against him is not a bar to his prosecution by this Court, and that the Applicant was and is subject to criminal proceedings before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. On this issue, I do recall that during the oral arguments the prosecution relied heavily on the fact that the then one time Prime Minister of Rwanda, Jean Kabanga was charged and sentenced to imprisonment. But I drew a distinction between that case and Mr. Taylor's case. I made the distinction that in the case of Jean Kabanga's trial, he pleaded guilty and he never raised the question of immunity before the ICTR. This is in sharp contrast to Mr. Taylor's case who still remains to be brought before the Special Court for Sierra Leone if at all they can secure the co-operation of a third party state where he is presently residing namely the Republic of Nigeria. In addition and most importantly Mr. Taylor's case at the first opportunity, he raised the question of immunity against criminal prosecution, which is accorded to Heads of State under customary international law and buttressed his reasoning on the decision in the celebrated case of the Democratic Republic of Congo v. Belgium variously referred to as the Yerodia case. This decision was a majority decision delivered by the International Court of Justice and until it is set aside by that very court, the principles enunciated in that case remain valid, unimpeachable and ought to have been given the respect it deserve from the Special court for Sierra Leone.

The second case relied upon by the Prosecution to substantiate their claim that the position of a Head of State or a high Government official is no bar to prosecution was their reference to the Milosevic case. However, I drew the distinction between Milosevic case and Mr. Taylor's case. In the Milosevic case, I submitted that he was being tried in a neutral state namely in the Hague for offences allegedly committed in his own country. On the other hand, in Mr. Taylor's case, he has already been charged on a 17 count indictment in the Republic of Sierra Leone which is not a neutral state for offences allegedly been committed in Sierra Leone. And the Special Court Agreement 2002 (Ratification) Act 2002 gives so much powers to the prosecutor who proceeded to seek an Ex-parte Order in circumstances wherein the

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HOW CAN TERRENCE TERRY RESCUE CHARLES TAYLOR?

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Act did not spell out that he had to establish a prima facie case before the indictment was confirmed

It should be noted however that the invitation to the Amicus Curiae was issued by the Appeals Chamber. It is a known fact that the position taken by the Amicus Curiae particularly Philippe Sands, QC. and Professor Diane Orentlicher are well known in the light of their writings and publications. As was submitted by me during the hearing of the motion on the 31st of October 2003, I made the point that both Philippe Sands Q.C. and Professor Diane Orentlicher rather coincidentally arrived at more or less the same conclusions. Indeed, there are other known scholars and professors who hold contrary views in this area of the law but were never invited to make a presentation before the Appeals Chamber which would have given it a balanced view on the prevailing state of the law.

As far as the views expressed by the Secretary General of the African Bar Association, Femi Falana, is concerned, the less said about them the better.

As regards the Warrant of Arrest, what is however of moment is what Justice Ayoola precisely stated at page 25 lines 19 to 21 of the judgment and I quote inter alia: **"It must be observed that a Warrant of Arrest transmitted by one Country to another is not self-executing."**

In this respect mention by the Appeals Chamber that it was not the business of the Applicant but of the Republic of Ghana to have raised the issue of unlawful service of the warrant in Ghana begs the issue when it asserted that the Special Court was not the proper forum to do so without it descending into particulars on the proper forum it had in mind. If indeed, the Appeals Chamber had in mind the International Court of Justice, they only need to be reminded that Sierra Leone unlike Liberia is not subject to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and therefore need not necessarily respond if Ghana institute proceedings before the International Court of Justice claiming that its sovereignty was violated. As a matter of fact the Government of Liberia had instituted proceedings against the Government of Sierra Leone before the International Court of Justice and true to form the Sierra Leone Government never responded as it was not bound to submit to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. So if Ghana institutes proceedings against Sierra Leone Government at the International Court of Justice, the Sierra Leone Government can refuse to respond since the latter is not subject to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

Once again on the issue of the Warrant of Arrest, I hope that it shall become clearer if I reproduce in extensor what was said by the Appeals Chamber at page 25, lines 16 to 24 of the judgment delivered by Judge Ayoola and I quote inter alia:

"Finally, the Applicant contended that the issue of the arrest warrant and its transmission to Ghana was an infringement of the sovereignty of Ghana. That issue should properly be raised by Ghana rather than the Applicant and that forum which Ghana has for raising the issue, if it so decides, is not the Special Court which is a court of criminal proceedings against individuals. It must be observed that a warrant of arrest transmitted by one country to another is not self-executing. It still requires that the co-operation and authority of the receiving state for it to be executed. Other than a situation in which the receiving state has an obligation under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter or a treaty obligation to execute the warrant, the receiving authority has no obligation to do so. That state asserts its sovereignty by refusing to execute it."



CHARLES TAYLOR

NEW CITIZEN:

Tell me Mr. Terry in the light of your foregoing comments, what is the next step open to your client if at all he wants to pursue this matter any further, or put differently for the benefit of our readers can you summarize your thinking on the way forward?

TERRENCE TERRY

In the light of the foregoing, let me now summarize my thinking on the way forward:-

(1) In the first place, the position taken by the Appeals Chamber on the question of the Warrant of Arrest which needs the cooperation from third party states because it is not self-executing is Mr. Taylor's line of least resistance. As a result of this finding which is supported by a provision in the Special Court's Act already referred to by me above, it seems to me that any action in the future regarding this matter may very well take place in Nigeria in the event Heaven forbid Mr. Taylor lose the support of President Obasanjo during the remaining period of his tenure of office. In the unlikely event that this happens, the matter in the final analysis will have to be resolved by the Supreme Court of Nigeria. Assuming for the sake of argument that it gets to that point, I take the view that the kind of Nigerian Lawyer Mr. Taylor needs to brief in case of the worst scenario is a (street fighter) who is also result orientated and highly respected throughout Nigeria.

(2) Secondly, there is the vexed question of the panel of Appeals Chamber Judges of 3 who eventually delivered the decision on the 31st of May 2004. This is the technicality which borders on lack of jurisdiction and / OR excess of jurisdiction. The way we should proceed on this issue is to argue that the amendment to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone which apparently permitted at least 3 Judges to sit in the Appeals Chamber to adjudicate upon the motion of the 23rd of July 2003 was only carried through or passed by a plenary meeting of the Judges on the 30th of October 2003 – to be precise, a day before the said motion was argued; and on the following days namely 31st October and 1st November, 2003, the said motion was argued before Justice Geoffrey Robertson who sat as President along with the other 3 Judges namely, Justice Winter, Justice Ayoola and Justice Gelaga King. Keep in mind that the motion seeking to rescue Justice Geoffrey Robertson was filed as early as the 27th day of January 2004 and it was only on the 25th of May 2004 that Justice Geoffrey Robertson saw it fit to put out a signed Declaration that he was withdrawing under Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. It will therefore not be unreasonable to assume that Justice Geoffrey Robertson participated in conference OR conferences which touch and concern the ruling on the motion of the 23rd July 2003 at some time with the

other 3 Judges up until the 25th of May 2004 – to be exact 6 days before Justice Ayoola delivered that judgment to which the other 2 Justices namely, Justice Winter and Justice Gelaga King concurred. Furthermore, if it turns out that the amendment to Rule 72 (E) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone was wholly unwarranted and inconsistent with the provisions of Article 2(2) (C) of the Special Court's Act, then, everything that flows from that namely, the delivery of the said decision of 3 Judges on the 31st of May 2004 was bad in law, invalid and a nullity at its inception. It might therefore be worth the while proceeding by way of motion to the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone seeking an order of Certiorari under the provision of Section 125 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone to quash the decision of the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on the ground that it is an adjudicating body so referred to under Section 125 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone in that the Appeals Chamber acted without Jurisdiction and / OR in excess of jurisdiction.

(3) The third option is to go back to the Appeals Chamber for a review of their decision based on the second ground above. But I will advise Mr. Taylor not to vie for that route as he would be flogging a dead horse on the ground that the same Judges of the Appeals Chamber will again sit on the review application and may not be inclined to reverse their previous decision. To summarise therefore, it is true to say that as a result of the judgment of the Appeals Chamber delivered by Justice Ayoola that the indictment which was confirmed and issued against Mr. Taylor on the 7th day of March, 2003 by Justice Bankole Thompson is very much alive. The same is true of the Warrant of Arrest which was issued against Mr. Taylor on the 7th March, 2003 by Justice Bankole Thompson. But I submit that the crux of the matter is that nowhere throughout the length and breadth of the said judgment delivered by Justice Ayoola will you find anything coming remotely close to any pronouncement or ex-cathedra statement to the effect that the Warrant of Arrest should definitely be enforced on Mr. Taylor in the Republic of Nigeria or any other third party state for that matter without that state consent or cooperation – indeed, a condition precedent for Mr. Taylor's arrest as duly spelt out within the parameters of the said Rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. To that extent, I submit most respectfully that Mr. Taylor's position in so far as the Warrant of Arrest is concerned still remains the same and any process in that regard embarked upon by the Prosecutor or officials of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to execute the Warrant of Arrest on him in Nigeria. I daresay cannot in law be effected on him without the consent or cooperation of the Nigerian Government. Forgive me if I sound repetitious, but that is the bottom line – nothing more nothing less.

Hence however strongly Justice Ayoola may have felt on the question of the Warrant of Arrest he clearly resisted the temptation and rightly so of making any pronouncement or consequential order authorizing the Prosecutor and/or the officials of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to proceed forthwith to Nigeria with the purpose of arresting Mr. Taylor. Speaking for myself and based on the very provisions of Rule 58 of the Rules of procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, it is clear to me that the Special Court for Sierra Leone can only invite third states to enter into agreements and / OR ad hoc arrangements which may facilitate Mr. Taylor's arrest and transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The position cannot be otherwise and it is therefore understandable that Justice Ayoola could not and did not go so far as to order that execution of Mr. Taylor's arrest in Nigeria in circumstances wherein the consent and / OR cooperation of the Nigerian government has not been sought and clearance given to effect that first preliminary step that could lawfully lead to his arrest.

CDF plans big demo



BY MOHAMED ISSA

The unfolding events at the special court for Sierra Leone in the trial of some of the leaders of the former civil defense force has the potential of unraveling the gains made to date in our peace process.

This is manifested in preparations now underway, according to sources, for a countrywide demonstration by former members of the civil defense force.

This determination to protest against the special court arises from the denial of the trial chamber of the court to grant chief Norman's request for self defense.

According to the organizing group, their act of solidarity with the detained leaders will serve as a demonstration to the entire world that Sierra Leoneans are unhappy with the treatment meted out to chief Norman especially.

They refer to the detention of all the inditees in fact as unfair and a betrayal of trust.

Expressing their anger further, the aggrieved group maintained that chief Norman and the CDF were the only ones that sacrificed their lives for this nation.

especially when our regular army was cooperating with the rebels.

"Our concern is to tell the international community that chief Norman should

Hinga Norman

be exempted," said Mr. Mohamed Kamara, one of the aggrieved.

Standard Times

Friday June 11, 2004

For di people

Friday June 11, 2004

After Kamajor Chieftain's Special Court Bombshell! Norman Orders Wife To Evict Kamajor Fighter!

SPECIAL COURT indictée, Chief Sam Hinga Norman has given a quit notice to former CDF administrative assistant BA Zerokong to vacate his 13E Spur Road residence following a bitter brawl with Norman's wife, Mammy Norman.

by

MOSES KARGBO

It has been learnt that Zerokong has been living in Chief Norman's quarters for the past six years after the former CDF chieftain allocated him a flat because of his tremendous contributions towards the restoration of president Kabbah's government, and also for being Norman's personal assistant.

FDP learnt that relationship between the two families became sour after the indictment of Chief Norman by the Special Court and that the former Internal Affairs minister's wife has been insistent that Zerokong should quit

the premises. At their Spur Road residence, Zerokong said he and his wife have been victims of persistent harassment from Mrs Norman and that just few days ago, she physically attacked his wife thereby inflicting serious injuries on her body.

Zerokong said Mrs Norman also invited her brother from Bo, David Johnny, claiming that she was been harassed and threatened.

"Johnny on his arrival did not even bother to ask what was happening. They both attacked my wife, beat her up and stripped her naked, cut her on the palm with a razor and threw to the floor the sauce she had prepared for our feeding," he said.

He said despite all this,

Mrs Norman went further to explain to her husband through his lawyer Sulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie that she was being harassed and that the very day they should appear in Court, they received a quit notice from Chief Norman's lawyer and signed by him (Norman) that they should vacate the premise.

Zerokong said he was doing well in Liberia when after the AFRC overthrown the SLPP, he was personally invited by Chief Norman to come home and assist in ousting the AFRC junta.

"I obeyed Chief Norman's call and acted as administrative assistant for the Civil Defence Forces.

"We fought and ousted

the AFRC. Chief Norman was so impressed with my performance that he gave me an apartment in his quarters.

"But now that he is not around, his wife is hell-bent on having me evicted. That's how I have been rewarded," he said.

Meanwhile, the matter is being investigated by the



MOSES KARGBO

Lumley police station, while at the same time both parties are battling it in Court.



NORMAN: creating a wave of strategic controversies

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Africa News June 10, 2004 Thursday

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Africa News

June 10, 2004 Thursday

LENGTH: 2843 words

HEADLINE: Liberia;
UN Panel Cracks Taylor's "Zoe Bush"

BYLINE: The Analyst

BODY:

Only a few non-Liberians may disagree that the underlining causes of Liberia's civil conflict are the misuse of power in the face of massive inequity in the distribution of the nation's wealth derived from taxes and natural resources - timber, diamond, iron ore, gold, etc. But it is now clear that even though Charles **Taylor** launched his so-called "Popular People's Uprising" in 1989 to correct these inequities and restore trust in the governance of the country, he ran the most nefarious system ever that many in the West dare dubbed, "**Taylor** Liberia."

Between 1998 and 2003, he built a timber industry that did not only perpetrate the most heinous crimes against humanity, but run a close-knitted dubious financial network through which timber revenues were siphoned into private use and to maintain timber armies. He called them his "pepper **bushes**" and as a recent **UN** Panel of Experts Sanctions Review Team has rightly found out, FDA and Finance Ministry epitomized by Charles **Taylor's** brother, Bob **Taylor**, and Deputy Minister for Revenue, Juanita Neal, have been the hubs of "Liberia **Taylor** Inc." Our Staff Writer takes a panoramic view of the Panel's findings and recommendations on the Bryant Administration's compliance with the timber and diamonds sanctions.

The **United Nations** Panel on Liberia has suggested that the timber and diamonds sanctions on Liberia should be delayed pending further reforms in the forest sector and adjustments in export regulations in the mineral sector.

The suggestion which was contained in the Panel's report submitted to the **UN** Security Council on June 1, 2004, is based on the discovery of the role played by timber and diamond revenues in the fueling of conflicts inside Liberia and in the ECOWAS subregion between 1997 and 2003.

Calling for the stay of the timber sanction, the Panel report notes: " the Forestry Development Authority (FD) does not function outside Monrovia.

Given evidence of past FDA complicity with human rights abuses and widespread corruption, a comprehensive review of the industry is required by an independent authority. Likewise, the lack of trained personnel, including accountants, suggests that a management company should be appointed to run the Authority." With a significant portion of the conditions necessary for the lifting of the timber sanction yet to be met, according to the Panel's report, the resumption of logging activities will definitely result to the further destabilization of the

subregion.

For instance, according to the report, the NTGL through the FDA, is yet to fully build the capacity of the FDA by amongst other things, preparing the terms of reference and commissioning an independent oversight committee with a mandate to raise community awareness, supervise and review non-governmental organizations and encourage sustainable forest management, and commissioning an independent audit.

It is yet, the report claims, to review concession agreements with the view of imposing penalties on companies violating sanctions or conduct a forest inventory to amongst other things, determine the potential value of forest resources (timber and non-timber forest products) and provide information for monitoring, taxation, and enforcement.

Besides appointing a director, conducting preliminary reviews in which 24 out of 30 existing timber companies came out with clean slates, discussing bilateral arrangements and participating in donor meeting, and other promotional activities, the FDA is still yet to conduct the all-important "ground-truthing field surveys and maps from GIS," the Panel has found, whatever that is supposed to mean.

Worst, the company announced last month that it has set up accounts for reforestation and conservation at the Central Bank of Liberia but neglected to establish a necessary component of that system that regards the establishment of a system for depositing all forestry revenues in accounts directed by the Ministry of Finance at the Central Bank of Liberia.

Having cracked the recesses of "**Taylor** Liberia Inc." known locally within certain circles as "**Taylor's Zoe Bush**" or "**Pepper Bush**" the Panel discovered widespread corruption and uncoordinated use of timber revenues mainly to procure weapons, pay militia commanders and foot-soldiers, and purchase vehicles for the private use of certain inner-circle members of the **Taylor** administration with the FDA and the Ministry of Finance as the hubs or central actors.

"Despite the initial focus on unpaid taxes and the concession allocation process, the review is also uncovering evidence of widespread bribery and human rights violations, much with the direct complicity of the Forestry Development Authority," the report says of the findings of an FDA committee appointed recently to examine concessions awarded during the **Taylor** regime between 1977 and 2003. No reason was given for narrowing the review down to the tenure of the **Taylor** regime.

The committee was reportedly expanded to include representatives of the Association of Environmental Lawyers of Liberia (Green Advocates) acting under the auspices of the NGO Coalition of Liberia Civil Society.

The report further revealed that even though the committee discovered that US \$26,725,642.00 was owed FDA in unpaid taxes, only the Mohammed Group of Companies owned and operated by Gen. Kuku Dennis conceded being in tax arrear and came forward with a payment of US\$7,000.00.

The Oriental Timber Company referred to publicly by Mr. **Taylor** as his "**pepper bush**" denied an approximately US\$17 million tax arrears and claimed that it has paid in excess of US\$12.6 million.

Of the total amount of US\$46 million OTC paid in cash to government, at least US\$33 million was accounted for in flag receipts; the balance remains claims.

Notes the report: "For example, in May 2003, OTC claimed credit for \$2,576,434 for vehicles purchased on behalf of the Government of Liberia. However, at least \$7.5 million of he flag

receipts were for payments authorized by the former Deputy Finance Minister, Juanita Neal, to non-government accounts." Commenting on timber revenue and insecurity in Liberia and the subregion, the report notes: "For example, forestry companies funded security forces in the three major ports outside Monrovia to ensue a supply of revenue to **Taylor**, ensure a loyal security while condoning gross human rights violations [in the process], to provide arms and soldiers to destabilize Coe d'Ivoire." While it notes the role of the timber industry in providing basic social services, the report says sanctions on the timber industry creates the possibility for good governance and sustainable natural resource management in Liberia as well as provide an opportunity for improvement and maximum utilization of the soil in the agricultural sector.

On diamonds, the report commended the efforts of the NTGL through the Ministry of Land, Mines, and Energy in initiating the process of designing a Kimberly Certification Scheme for Liberia.

"The Panel recommends that the National Transitional Government and the sanctions Committee formally request the Kimberley Process to assist Liberia in its attempt to join the Kimberley Process so that this objective may be achieved as soon as possible," the report says.

The **UN** Panel of Experts was established on December 22, 2003 pursuant to Security Council resolution 1521 (2003) to conduct a follow-up assessment to Liberia and neighboring states, amongst other key mandates, on steps taken by the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) to establish an effective certificate of origin regime for trade in diamonds.

It was also mandated to conduct follow-up assessments on steps taken by the NTGL to establish full authority and control over the timber producing areas and to ensure that government revenues from the Liberian timber industry are not used to fuel conflicts or otherwise in violation of the Council's resolutions but are used for legitimate purposes for the benefit of the Liberia people, including development, and steps taken to establish an effective certificate of origin regime for trade in diamonds that is transparent and internationally verifiable with a view to joining the Kimberley Process.

Members of the Panel are timber expert, Arthur Blundell (Canada); civil-aviation expert and chair of the Panel Atabou Bodian (Senegal); Interpol expert with experiences in arms investigation, Damien Callamand (France); diamond expert, Caspar Fithen (UK and Northern Ireland), expert on humanitarian and socio-economic aspects, Tommy Garmett (Sierra Leone), and financial assistant Hamish Thomson (UK and Northern Ireland).

While the reports showed in many places that the NTGL has a long way to go in satisfying the conditions for the lifting of the sanction regimes, Chairman Gyude Bryant in his June 3 address at the Security Council, outlined efforts made to meet the requirements of the Council and called for the immediate lifting of sanction without delay.

According to him, besides the fact that the sanctions had outlived their usefulness, they were hurting the economy as well as ordinary Liberians.

How much of the argument filtered down favorably to the Council members is not known, but it appears majority of the Council members remain unconvinced that the time to lift the sanctions regime on Liberia is now.

..

PACA Detects Move To Extend NTGL Tenure -Wants Bryant Out, if...

The Patriotic Consciousness Association of Liberia (PACA), a pro-democracy and human rights

group, says it has detected some maneuvering by the Gyude Bryant administration to extend the tenure of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL).

Speaking during a press conference yesterday, the Chairman of PACA, Mr. Fred Baye, divulged that his organization has been keenly following some developments in official circles and has observed a move by the Bryant Government to postpone the general and presidential elections, comes 2005.

Mr. Baye said his organization has also detected a deliberate attempt by the Gyude Bryant Government to sidestep the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), allegedly holding consultations with personalities, both in Liberia and within the sub-region, for the extension of the tenure of the NTGL.

He indicated that there were strong signals from diplomatic quarters that give credence to the suspicion of the Patriotic Consciousness Association that the Bryant administration is reluctant to relinquish power after the two-year tenure given it.

According to Mr. Baye, the mandates of the NTGL are to ensure complete and comprehensive disarmament, resettlement of Liberian refugees, reintegration of demobilized ex-combatants, and the creation of a conducive condition for the holding of a free, fair and democratic elections in 2005.

The PACA chairman further said that Bryant and his collaborators were lobbying for the postponement of the 2005 elections on grounds that the two years given the NTGL are insufficient for the transitional government to accomplish anything substantive.

But Mr. Baye noted that such argument is baseless and cannot hold water because the mandate of the transitional arrangement is unambiguous and is achievable within the timetable given the government.

He said as he sees it, the transitional government could easily extend its authority to the leeward counties as soon as UNMIL established firm control and disarmed the factions.

"Mr. Baye noted that Chairman Bryant did not need additional years to do what an elected government would do, adding, "This government's mandate is clear and all Bryant needs to do is follow through the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement." According to Mr. Baye, if for any reasons the tenure of the NTGL has to be changed or extended, it would be prudent and expedient for Chairman Bryant to step aside.

He said his organization recommends that if there should be a need to revisit the CPA, the stakeholders, including political parties, interest and pressure groups, pro-democracy and human rights organizations should meet and brainstorm on what part of the CPA needs amendment.

"It is at that meeting of the stakeholders that the leadership question would be answered and not for few persons sitting there and making adjustments for everybody," Mr. Baye said.

Mob Justice Takes Stronghold -H/Rights Institution Alarms

With the upsurge of jungle justice characterized by mob actions against suspected criminals in and around Monrovia without any resolute response from the government of Liberia relative to apprehending perpetrators of such "heinous crimes" there in order to bring them to an end, concerns abound in many quarters as to the existence of government or not.

Whilst this may seem to be an embarrassment to the government with ripple effects on the peace process, several human rights organizations are expressing apprehensions.

The Liberia Watch for Human Rights (LWHR) has joined the fray and said the dispensing of mob justice and common crime continues unabated since the seating of the Gyude Bryant-led interim administration and there are many questions and concerns as to the authority of the government to clampdown on individuals in such habits.

In a press statement, the LWHR, a human rights advocacy institution alarmed that such action seem growing daily in what it termed "geometrical progression" in the capital and its environs in spite of the huge presence of the **United Nations** Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL).

With enormity of the situation, the human rights organization said it is seriously troubled over the persistent mob actions and the prevailing culture of violence, gradually seeping into the society without government taken any concrete action to stop it.

"Our grievance comes in the wake of jungle justice that took place over the weekend when some residents of Timber Field on the Somalia Drive near the Free Port of Monrovia mobbed to death a man identified as Harrison Tarplah for his alleged connection with the mysterious death of a 4 yr-old girl," the release signed by its Executive Director, Thompson Ade-Bayor said.

It is no doubt that since the seating of the government, many things went wrong. As such, concords the LWHR, since the seating of the NTGL, it has recorded series of crimes in Monrovia and its suburbs without the Ministry of Justice bringing anyone to justice as deterrent to discourage this culture of violence and impunity.

For statistics, it named, among many others, the brutal killing of a young man in West Point, identified as Wortehjay, who was tied up mercilessly, flogged and burnt to death on allegation of stealing dried herring (bunnies) from a woman's basket at the Waterside Market.

"This incident occurred on New Year eve. Hitherto, no perpetrator was arrested nor to talk of prosecution," LWHR claims.

The group also recalled that similar incidents occurred at the Rally Time Market on the **Un** Drive when a young man, Junior Charles was flogged and set ablaze by the angry mob, merely based on being suspected thief.

Meanwhile, the Liberia Watch for Human Rights has re-echoed its disappointment and dissatisfaction over the manner which the NTGL is handling the security situation in the country, particularly mob action and other common crimes.

LWHR is therefore calling on the Ministry of Justice to immediately conduct investigations into the brutal murder of Harrison Tarplah and bring the perpetrators to justice so as to curb the culture of violence and impunity, as well as to maintain its constitutional status.

In a related development, the human rights institution seems to be bewildered over the many security lapses despite the presence of multi-national-peace peacekeepers, the recent brutal killing of an American citizen of the Defense Department, John Auffrey as ostensibly displaying the lapse and porosity within the security service.

In the same vein, the three CID officers of the Liberia National Police who were linked to the murder of the American also sheds light on the professional perfidy within the Liberia Police.

While LWHR salutes Police Director, Col. Chris Massaquoi for the step taken to have disrobed the three officers and sent them to court for prosecution, it would like him to delve into the

bottom and uproot the black sheep by over-hauling the entire system.

"There are several others within the CID section, who are fond of treacherous acts of abetting crimes, extortions, kickbacks and torturing suspects to extract information. If Liberia should have a crime free society in the aftermath of its civil conflict, security reform should top its scale of preference. In the event of doing this, series of requirements need to be considered apart from being a high school certificate holder-moral conducts and the track records of applicants should be miscroscoped to conform to international standards.

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SC/8119
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10 June 2004

PRESS STATEMENT ON LIBERIA BY SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Following is today's press statement on Liberia by Security Council President Lauro Baja (Philippines):

The Security Council conducted a midterm review of the sanctions on Liberia in accordance with resolution 1521 of 22 December 2003. The members received a briefing from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) on the work of the Committee including its discussions on the latest report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia.

The members of the Council took note of the improved situation in Liberia and its positive impact on the enforcement of the sanctions regime. They also noted that no major violations of the arms embargo and diamond and timber sanctions had been reported since August 2003. They, however, felt that peace was still fragile and that the conditions for the lifting of the sanctions were yet to be fully met.

The members of the Council took note of the views expressed in the Council on 3 June 2004 by H.E. Mr. Gyude Bryant, Chairman, National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Jacques Klein, on the need to lift the diamonds and timber sanctions as soon as possible to enable the NTGL to use Liberia's own resources for its reconstruction and development to the benefit of the Liberian people.

The members of the Council acknowledged progress made by the NTGL on meeting the conditions for lifting of the measures, in particular diamonds and timber sanctions, and expressed their readiness to assist the Liberian authorities in fulfilling those conditions.

The members of the Council emphasized that continuation of the measures on Liberia was not meant to be punitive for the NTGL and the Liberian people but to ensure that the peace process was irreversible. They expressed their readiness to keep the measures on diamonds and timber under regular review with a view to their possible termination, based on further evaluation of the progress made on the benchmarks.

The members of the Council recognized the difficulties faced by the NTGL with regard to their efforts for reconstruction and recovery and called on the international community to provide assistance to Liberia in a timely manner and, in particular, to redeem their pledges made at the Reconstruction Conference held in New York on 5-6 February 2004.

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AFRICA : NEWS

UN guards Liberia sanctions

11/06/2004 10:47 - (SA)

Monrovia - Struggling Liberia has insisted it is ready for sanctions on its diamond and timber industries to be lifted, but a wary UN, mindful of security concerns, has again advised that they remain in place.

Liberian leader Gyude Bryant appeared before the UN Security Council last week asking that sanctions be lifted to boost the west African state's war-battered economy and curb unemployment that has crested beyond 80 percent.

"Sanctions have had a great impact on the economy of this country. Liberia is losing about \$40m (in diamond exports) every year under the sanctions," said Minister of Mines Jonathan Mason, describing job losses upwards of 35 000 people in the diamond sector.

But despite acknowledging valid and pressing economic concerns in a country battered by back-to-back civil wars since 1989, the UN panel said "tenuous" civil authority backed by an "unpredictable" security situation make lifting sanctions risky and unviable.

"Disarmament is progressing, but there is a strong possibility that factions may have cached weapons either within Liberia or in neighbouring countries" such as Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the panel said.

"As a result, regional stability continues to be a subject of concern."

A tentative peace settled over the country of three million with the flight into exile last August of former president Charles Taylor, though parts of Liberia - particularly the heavily-forested southeast - remain beyond the control of a 15 000-strong UN peacekeeping mission.

Sanctions were first imposed in 2001 to compel Taylor to end his support for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rampaging across next-door Sierra Leone.

Timber sanctions were added in May 2003 to increase pressure on Liberia's three warring factions to end their war, pitching the industry responsible for 20% of state revenues and more than 7 000 jobs into crisis.

The looming return of hundreds of thousands of refugees spread out across the region has also sparked fears that there will be nothing for them when they arrive, despite promises of more than \$500m dollars in reconstruction aid committed in February by international donors.

A rash of petty crime has broken out across Monrovia, with international aid groups and local civilians complaining of robbery, assault, vandalism and car theft.



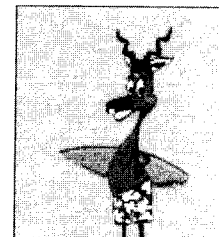
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The slaying in May of a US national at a luxury hotel in the capital only a few steps from the heavily-secured US embassy only underscored the culture of lawlessness threatening peace in the capital.

For rights watchdog the International Crisis Group, the question is not about lifting the sanctions per se but the timing of that decision.

"When disarmament has progressed far enough, and there is full deployment of peacekeepers... then you can actually (lift sanctions) in a responsible way, which is good because it is pretty dire in Liberia economically," ICG director Mike McGovern said.

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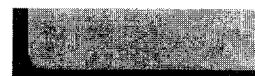


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On the brink of second civil **war** in as many years

Bloomberg

ABIDJAN - Cote d'Ivoire may be on the brink of its second civil **war** in less than two years as violence intensifies in the west African nation, the United Nations (UN) warned in a report yesterday.

Threats to the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire from President Laurent Gbagbo's supporters "have been escalating", UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan told the UN Security Council on Monday.

He warned of "major confrontation between supporters of Gbagbo and the opposition".

The UN, which has 6240 personnel in Cote d'Ivoire, has said instability in the country could upset peacekeeping efforts in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone.

An accord brokered by the French more than a year ago to end civil **unrest** that erupted in 2002 has been unravelling since March.

Cote d'Ivoire grows 40% of the world's cocoa. Cocoa for July delivery rose for the first day in a week, gaining £21 or 2,7%, to £790 a metric ton on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange. Cocoa futures reached a 17-year high of £1613 in September 2002 amid concern that the violence would disrupt supplies of the beans.

Fighting broke out yesterday in the cease-fire zone between the rebel-held north and government-controlled south while demonstrators attacked French and UN targets in Abidjan, the UN's Integrated Regional Information Networks website said.

Unidentified militiamen attacked Ivorian army bases and French peacekeeping troops, leaving

seven dead and at least 14 wounded near the village of Maminigui in central Cote d'Ivoire, the network reported.

The rebel group known as New Forces denied involvement in the attack, the UN report said, citing Amadou Kone, a senior aide of rebel leader Guillaume Soro.

The Ivorian army responded to the attack with an air strike on a rebel convoy, injuring 12 people, reports said.

Ivorian soldiers also came under fire from "uncontrolled elements, supposedly of Liberian origin" at the Ity gold mine near Zouan Hounien on the Liberian border, IRIN said, citing an unidentified senior Ivorian army commander.

Gbagbo's followers have been demanding the withdrawal of UN and French troops, saying the organisation and the country's former colonial power have sided with the rebels and failed to disarm them.

Annan urged Ivorian leaders yesterday to give priority to national interests rather than personal ambitions.

Political parties "must break the current vicious circle of recriminations, resume dialogue and resolve all outstanding issues on the basis of mutual respect and accommodation," Annan said.

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