

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



**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Monday, 11 June 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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For di People  
Friday, 8 June 2007

# Ruf Trial Resumes

AS TRIAL of Charles Taylor in the Hague was adjourned to 25 June, Ruf trial resumed sitting on Tuesday 5 June 2007. Before trial commenced, lead counsel for the prosecution, Harris in his submission implored the trial judges for the admissibility in court of both audio and video tapes purported to be evidence by the first accused Issa Hassan Sesay.

by

**SU THORONKA**

The submission by the prosecution however, provoked a legal argument between the defense which took the better part of the day's proceedings. Lead counsel for the accused Jodash argued that evidence was obtained from the witness by defensive conspiracy of the prosecution and that the tape recordings were not voluntarily obtained from the accused person. The

accused person according to defense counsel did not understand his right to counsel when he was being interrogated to obtain statement from him.

That the prosecution used the word 'co-operate' in order to persuade the accused person to make statements which could unknowingly be used against him in court. Trial judge, Justice Bankole Thompson is yet to give final ruling on the submission having heard the argument put forward by both the prosecution and the defense.

During yesterday's proceedings, Justices of the UN Special Court warned lawyers on both sides to conclude their arguments which have dragged for two weeks now.

They have become impatient over the legal tussle whether or not to accept in evidence audio and video recordings purported to have been statements made by first accused Issa Hassan Sesay who has taken the witness seat but has still not testified in Court.

Justice Eto made it clear that it is high time that both parties come to a final conclusion and that they as Judges wouldn't allow such arguments to go on and on.

The prosecution argues that statements made by the accused person were voluntary and that the office of the prosecution gave money to the accused as inducement or incentive in order to extract information from him.

It is however hoped that Sesay would start his testimony on Friday 7 June 2007.

SLA

## The Spark

Monday, 11 June 2007

### **Charles Taylor Boycotts Trial**

Report infiltrating from the Hague revealed that former Liberia President and warlord Charles Taylor has refused to appear for trial at the Special Court in the Hague.

Taylor who stands charged for various crimes also rejected his defence lawyer from representing him in court.

Sources further revealed that the British government has offered to imprison Mr. Taylor if found guilty.

## Inner City Press

Friday, 8 June 2007

<http://www.innercitypress.com/uncourts060807.html>

### **Sierra Leone Prosecutor Goes Hat in Hand to a Closed Down BBC, While ICC Stays Off the Record**

Byline: Matthew Russell Lee of Inner City Press at the UN

UNITED NATIONS, June 8 -- Two faces of the international justice system were on display Friday at UN headquarters, one pursuing publicity and the other trying to prohibit it.



Charles Taylor's prosecutor Stephen Rapp came to brief the Security Council about the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In the run-up to Mr. Rapp's appearance, a major public relations firm, Hill & Knowlton, offered interviews with Mr. Rapp before or after. Wire services throughout Europe were, they say, bombarded by publicity for Mr. Rapp.

And yet, when the Council briefing ended, there appeared to be no demand. UN Television shut down the stakeout camera

and lighting. Mr. Rapp finally emerged, along with the president of the Court, Hon. George Gelaga King. Inner City Press, the only media on the scene, asked Mr. Rapp five questions in five minutes.

Amplifying on a previous quote that he spends forty percent of his time cap in hand, Mr. Rapp said he spends 40% of this time on the road telling people about the Court.

But how much cap in hand?

"Isn't this cap in hand?" Mr. Rapp asked, gesturing back at the Security Council. Inside, the UK's Deputy Ambassador Karen Pierce had announced her country's contribution of \$4 million to the Court. As to who is paying for the Hill and Knowlton public relations firm, it is not clear. Inner City Press asked the UN Spokesperson's Office and was provided with some background information, including when the UN provided money to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. But the specifics of this Court's use of an outside P.R. firm could not be ascertained.

Inner City Press asked Mr. Rapp about a quote from Liberian president, and long-time World Bank and UN System insider, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, that "the media is very excited about Mr. Taylor. We just want to leave that era and put it behind us. And we wish the media would do the same." (Macleans).

"I doubt she said that," Mr. Rapp replied. "In April, she was very happy we were there." Mr. Rapp continued that "Her people don't want Taylor to return."

Stephen Rapp (hat in hand not shown; ICC briefer not shown, see below)

Inner City Press asked how the Court is publicizing its work in Sierra Leone. Mr. Rapp said that there will still not be streaming video all the time -- as there was for Slobodan Milosevic's trial -- but that the trial's opening, which Taylor boycotts, was shown, as will be the last week of the trial.

Speaking of television, Mr. Rapp said he needed to go up to the offices of BBC, to appear before 11 p.m. London time. Inner City Press accompanied him upstairs.

Asked about one Cindor Reeves, also quoted in Macleans, Mr. Rapp said that "the individual says he's a protected witness... If that were true, we could not confirm it." Mr. Reeves has been quoted that John Richardson, a person in Liberia subject to targeted travel sanctions, has threatened him. Of Mr. Richardson, Rapp said "he's the one who runs 'ForTaylor.net' and who put up the billboards."

Would threatening a witness be a crime he could prosecute? Mr. Rapp said that one who threatens could be charged with contempt, and could be put in jail for up to seven years.

Mr. Rapp arrived at the door of BBC's office, which was locked. "They said they might be gone," Mr. Rapp said. To Inner City Press he said, "I read your report after" his last appearance at the UN. That appearance had been in the UN's briefing room 226. This time, Inner City Press is told, the request to hold a press conference was discouraged, with the explanation that Friday at 5 o'clock does not work.

But the Security Council chose Friday at 3 p.m. to hold its "debate," consisting of the reading of prepared statements by Council members and, among others, Germany, the Netherlands -- which says it has provided "gratis personnel" to the Court -- and Nigeria. President Obasanjo had offered sanctuary to Charles Taylor, but then under pressure, Mr. Taylor set out to Cameroon and was captured. The UN arranged for his detention and then his transfer to The Hague. Now his prosecutor has hired an outside P.R. firm, to try to tell the story.

Less desirous of publicity, apparently, is the more directly UN-related International Criminal Court. In Friday's UN "Journal," an event was listed from 1:15 to 2:30 p.m. in Conference Room 6: "Friends of the International Criminal Court, briefing by the Office of the Prosecutor of the [ICC], organized by the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein." There was no indication that it was a closed meeting, either in the Journal or on the sign outside Conference Room 6, so Inner City Press attended.

There is much to say about the briefing, but supposedly now none of it can be reported. When question time arrived, Inner City Press was told that the event was entirely "off the record." This seeming strange, for an open event of the UN ICC, Inner City Press asked several questions, among them:

does the ICC track information collected, for example by UNICEF, of parties' recruitment of child soldiers, in Nepal and Sri Lanka and, for example, by Eastern Congo militia leader Peter Karim, who has been given a colonel's post in the Congolese Army?

The ICC speaker's response was... off the record.

Inner City Press asked about events in Somalia, including the targeting of civilian neighborhoods and a European Union memo questioning whether those supporting these shellings might be guilty of war crimes.

The International Criminal Court speaker's response was... off the record. Afterwards, Inner City Press asked the speaker if there was anything said that could be used. Apparently not. What sense does this make, for a public institution about a public issue? "International Confidential Court," one wag has taken to calling it.

Friday at the Security Council stakeout, Inner City Press asked Darfur envoy Jan Eliasson if the ICC indictments are helpful. The indictments "must proceed," he said. Video here.

On Thursday at stakeout, when a question was asked for the ICC's position on UN officials meeting with the Lord's Resistance Army leaders who are under ICC indictment, without arresting them, Prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo walked away from the microphone. Video here, from Minute 8:36. Friday one of his deputies -- unnamed here in light of the unilateral and belated "off the record" declaration -- was asked this same question, but has requested that the answer not be published. Only at the UN...

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## United Nations

Friday, 8 June 2007

### **More Funds Needed for UN-Backed Court in Sierra Leone, Official Says**

Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro joined officials from the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone today in appealing for an additional \$60 million to complete the Court's work by the end of 2009.

"It is imperative that the international community continues to generously support the Special Court, ensuring that it has both the human and financial resources to conclude its mandate," Ms. Migiro told the 15-member Security Council, as it met to consider the Court's work.

The Special Court, established on 16 January 2002 by an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UN, is mandated to try "those who bear greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against community committed in the country after 30 November 1996.

The projected budget for completing the Court's work by the end of 2009 is \$89 million. If the Court is to adhere to its completion strategy, it is vital to assure adequate financial support, particularly as available funds will be exhausted by November this year, according to Court officials.

Four trials are currently before the Special Court, three of which are taking place in Freetown, and the other - the war crimes trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor - at The Hague.

Mr. Taylor is facing 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers, for his role in the decade-long civil war that engulfed Sierra Leone, which borders Liberia.

The Special Court offers hope future generations "a hope that in the affairs of men and women of all nations, the rule of law may prevail and that those whose deeds offend the conscience of mankind shall not go unpunished," said Ms. Migiro.

The Taylor trial marks "a watershed event for international justice," the Court's Prosecutor, Stephen Rapp, told the Council.

It shows that "no matter how high the position of the person responsible, there will be a day of justice," he added.

Noting that the Court's importance goes beyond the completion of its legal proceedings, its President, Justice George Gelaga King, said its establishment represented a major contribution to long-term peace and security in Sierra Leone and the region.

"The Court has contributed greatly to the efforts being made in Sierra Leone to resurrect the rule of law and to end impunity," he stated.



## Reuters

Friday, 8 June 2007

### Sierra Leone court needs more funds to try killers

By Evelyn Leopold

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - A Sierra Leone court is running out of money to try nine suspects accused of heinous crimes -- chopping off arms and legs, raping, enslaving girls and forcing boys to kill.



The president of the court, Justice George Gelaga King of Sierra Leone, and the prosecutor, American Stephen Rapp, told the U.N. Security Council on Friday they expected to wrap up trials and appeals by the end of 2009.

But King said available funds of the court's \$89 million (45.2 million pounds) budget would be exhausted by November. And Rapp said another \$60 million was needed from voluntary contributions.

"The challenges facing the special court are serious," said Rapp, a former U.S. attorney (prosecutor) in Iowa.

Richard Dicker, a counsel for Human Rights Watch, said the "lesson to the Security Council is that reliance on voluntary contributions from states is no way to operate a court."

The tribunal, established in 2002, is a mixed court with personnel appointed by Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

All trials are held in the Sierra Leone capital Freetown -- except for former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is in The Hague, Netherlands to prevent unrest in West Africa.

Taylor, who refuses to attend his trial, is accused of fomenting war by giving brutal rebels guns so he could enrich himself with Sierra Leone's diamonds. In turn the rebels maimed civilians of all ages, raped women and girls and forced young boys to join them in a killing spree.

The court issued 13 indictments, but three suspects have died and the whereabouts of one is unknown.

King told the council that after the legal proceedings the court needed to find countries that would shelter witnesses as well as make sure legal papers are preserved. The court also needed help in preparing radio and video screenings for the public in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Canada's deputy ambassador, Henri Paul Normandin, whose country chairs a U.N. committee for the court, said financing was the most critical issues facing the tribunal.

"Throughout its history, the court has struggled because it has often been unsure from one month to the next whether there would be money in the bank," Normandin said.

Some 50,000 people are said to have died during a decade of warfare that began in 1991. Intervention by Britain, the former colonial power, and U.N. peacekeepers kept the rebels from overthrowing the government.

But reports by Reuters showed the government was making little progress in tackling corruption, was squandering foreign aid and leaving its most vulnerable citizens as destitute as they were before the war ended five years ago.

## USA Today

Thursday, 7 June 2007

### **Court trying former Liberian leader seeks funds**

By Donna Leinwand, USA TODAY

The special court trying former Liberian president Charles Taylor on war crimes charges is in danger of running out of money before his trial ends in The Hague, Netherlands.

Prosecutor Stephen Rapp and the court's administrator will ask for more funds Friday before the United Nations Security Council. They also seek funds from Congress.

Taylor, 59, is accused of arming, bankrolling and controlling rebels in Sierra Leone who mutilated civilians and used child soldiers during an 11-year civil war.

Taylor boycotted the start of his trial Monday, fired his lawyer and said he didn't believe he would get a fair trial. The trial will resume June 25.

The Special Court of Sierra Leone has enough money to operate through October, court administrator Herman von Hebel said. "The court has usually been pretty well funded. It's the first time that it has appeared to be so short on money," U.N. spokesman Yves Sorokobi said.

The United Nations and the government of Sierra Leone established the court in 2002 to prosecute the most egregious war criminals, von Hebel said. The court operates on donations from U.N. countries, unlike war crimes tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, which are staffed and funded by the United Nations, said Michael Newton, a Vanderbilt University law professor who helped establish the court.

"The Sierra Leone tribunal was created with a much more limited mandate and focus. We wanted to create something that was lean and close to the people," Newton said.

Sorokobi said he was confident U.N. members would come up with donations for the court, particularly with its showcase trial underway.

The court has about \$15 million and needs an additional \$7 million to finish the year, von Hebel said.

## Voice of America

Friday, 8 June 2007

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2007-06-08-voa28.cfm>

### Former Chief Prosecutor Reflects on Taylor Trial

By Joe De Capua  
Washington

The war crimes trial of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor resumes June 25th, after opening day proceedings were held last Monday.

Among those present in the courtroom at The Hague was David Crane, former chief prosecutor for the Special Court in Sierra Leone. Professor Crane signed the indictment against Taylor in 2003. He spoke to VOA English to Africa Service reporter Joe De Capua about his impressions of the first day of the trial.



**David Crane, former chief prosecutor for Sierra Leone Special Court**

"It was an exciting day. It was a sombre day. It was a day of remembrance and a day of pride for the people of West Africa. I had to relive the entire process as I listened to prosecutor Stephen Rapp describe the horrors that were perpetrated by Charles Taylor and his henchmen. And it was kind of an emotional time as well. So, there were a lot of mixed feelings," he says.

The charges against the ex-Liberian president stem from the long civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone, which Taylor allegedly fuelled.

Taylor was not present for the opening day of his trial but released a statement criticizing the court and the charges against him. Professor Crane says, "Certainly, Charles Taylor should have been there. But this is not unusual for tyrants, heads of state and others, who've been accused of these severe crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity."

Taylor says he will represent himself from now on at his trial, rather than have a defense team. Crane has doubts. "I'm not sure. In some ways this was a tactic on Monday. That could very well happen, but I wouldn't even be surprised if you saw his defense counsel and Charles Taylor sitting in the courtroom on the 25<sup>th</sup>. I think this was a choreographed deflection to try to get the world's focus on the fact that he didn't show up at the trial versus the very important opening statement that catalogued the horrors...perpetrated on the people of West Africa."

Crane says the trial was adjourned after opening statements because apparently there was a camera in Taylor's interrogation cell, making it difficult for Taylor and his attorney to talk openly. In the interests of a fair trial, Crane says the court gave them three more weeks to prepare.

Reforma (Mexico)  
Monday, 4 June 2007

## Conózcalo

**Nombre:** Charles Ghankay Taylor.  
**Edad:** 59 años. Nació en 1948, Liberia.  
**Experiencia:** Estudió economía en Boston. Regresa a Liberia cuando Samuel Doe da el golpe de Estado. Taylor es nombrado Viceministro de Comercio. En 1983 huye a EU con 900 mil dólares de fondos públicos. Un año después es preso en EU, de donde escapa. En 1989, al

frente de 200 hombres, intenta derrocar a Doe, cosa que logró 7 años después. En los 6 años de guerra civil desatada por Taylor murieron 200 mil personas y 800 mil tuvieron que salir de un país de 3 millones de habitantes. En junio de 2006 Taylor llega a Holanda para ser procesado en el Tribunal de La Haya por crímenes de guerra y delitos contra la humanidad.



AFP

Stephen Rapp: **fiscal del Tribunal para Sierra Leona**

# ‘Taylor sumió al país en una guerra brutal’

Inder Bugarin  
ENVIADO

LA HAYA.- Charles Taylor, antiguo predicador, mercenario y Presiden-

te de Liberia, pasará hoy a la historia como el primer ex mandatario africano que enfrenta el peso de la justicia internacional, al iniciar el proceso en su contra en el Tribunal Especial para Sierra Leona.

El tirano, mejor conocido como “el Señor de la Guerra”, deberá responder a crímenes contra la humanidad y a las atrocidades cometidas por la guerrilla del Frente Revolucionario Unido (RUF), durante las guerras que asolaron Liberia y Sierra Leona en los años 90 causando más de 50 mil muertos.

En entrevista exclusiva con REFORMA, el fiscal especial Stephen Rapp, quien tiene la misión de procesar a Taylor, habla de la importancia del juicio que fue trasladado a La Haya por decisión del Consejo de Seguridad de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) y cuestiones de seguridad.

*¿Cómo describe a Charles Taylor?*

Como un criminal responsable de realizar los más severos crímenes que un ser humano puede cometer a otro.

*¿Confía en que nunca más caminará por las calles?*

Será decisión de los jueces, pero estoy seguro de que presentaremos un caso firme en el que no quede duda alguna de que es responsable de las 11 causas en su contra.

La sociedad de Sierra Leona es una pacífica y nunca se hubiera sumido en una brutal guerra sin la intervención de Taylor en 1991, quien a través de la guerrilla del Frente Revolucionario Unido desató una ola de ataques contra civiles, devastando el país, asesinando, abusando sexualmente y mutilando a decenas de miles y generando dos millones de desplazados.

Las evidencias mostrarán que Taylor estaba detrás de esta campaña y que fue el autor de la guerra civil (1991-2002).

*¿En qué medida este caso sentará un precedente en la era de justicia global?*

Somos el primer tribunal que juzga el reclutamiento de niños y niñas como soldados y su uso en operaciones de combate, y eso sentará una base para la protección de menores en conflicto.

*¿Cuál es el mensaje que envía la aparición de Charles Taylor en el banquillo de los acusados?*

Es un mensaje dirigido a todo el mundo, de que nadie está por encima de la ley. La transferencia de Taylor pone fin a la era en que los responsables de los más severos crímenes en África podían evadir la justicia en el exilio.

Además confiamos de que este proceso contribuya a pacificar conflictos, porque al final todos los involucrados entenderán que no podrán evadir la rendición de cuentas frente a la ley.

*¿Por qué un Presidente que fue considerado como el más rico de África está pagando su defensa con fondos de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas?*

Sabemos que recaudó millones de dólares principalmente por el saqueo de diamantes en Sierra Leona, pero no se sabe con precisión en dónde están y como resultado está recibiendo asistencia pública argumentando que no tiene fondos.

Lo único que tiene registrado es una propiedad en Monrovia (capital de Liberia), que es difícil de vender. Pero Naciones Unidas anda rastreando sus recursos.

*¿Considera el proceso como más importante después del fallido contra el Presidente serbio Slobodan Milosevic?*

Indudablemente, al involucrar a un ex Jefe de Estado y los más severos crímenes cometidos en Sierra Leona.

*¿Cómo garantizar que este caso no termine frustrado como el de Slobodan Milosevic?*

A diferencia de Milosevic no padece ninguna enfermedad, está en buena forma, no carga con el peso de su propia defensa y recibe el trato adecuado para que pague por sus crímenes.

Además esperamos procesarlo tan rápido como sea posible.

Confiamos en que finalizaremos en diciembre del año 2008 para tener el veredicto a mediados del año 2009.

**United Nations**  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 8 June 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

06/08/2007 04:43:42

#### **Cargo ship stolen in Liberia found in Ghana**

June 8, 2007 (AFP) - A commercial freighter stolen by pirates from Monrovia's main port last month has been found in Ghana, a Liberian police official Charles Blake, said Thursday. "The Tahoma Reefer is at the Tema port in Ghana," Blake told a news conference. Liberia has now handed the case over to Interpol "and very soon, the truth surrounding the disappearance of the ship will be known," he said.

#### **Liberians in Minn. pulling for their piece of immigration reform**

Source: AP Alert - Minnesota Date: June 08, 2007 - BROOKLYN PARK, Minn.\_The size of Abdullah Kiatamba's extended family of Liberian refugees could be a lot smaller come October, when a special designation that has let them stay in the United States expires.

#### **Canada Steps Up Support to Offset Multilateral Debt**

June 08, 2007 - All Africa Global Media via COMTEX --The government of Canada has announced its readiness to assist Liberia clear its multi-lateral debt through internal resources of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

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

Local Media – Newspaper

#### **Key Bridge Linking Liberia with Sierra Leone Reopens**

*(The News)*

- A key bridge linking Liberia with Sierra Leone was officially reopened Thursday with officials of both countries promising not to encourage or allow their respective borders to be used as entry points for destabilization.
- The Mano River Bridge was closed by the Sierra Leonean Government in the 1990s due to strain relations between the two countries.
- It is expected that the reopening of the bridge would boost trade between the two countries and enhance their reconstruction processes.

#### **Canada Steps up Support for Liberia's Debt Relief**

*(Daily Observer, The Inquirer and The Informer)*

- The Government of Canada has announced its readiness to assist Liberia clear its multi-lateral debt through internal resources of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

- A communication from the office of the Canadian Finance Minister, addressed to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said Canada stands ready to allocate its share of certain IMF internal resource refunds towards Liberia's debt relief costs.
- According to the Executive Mansion, the Canadian Government is also prepared to provide additional contributions, if required, to offset the costs, on a fair donor burden-sharing basis.
- The formal communication by Canada stepping up its support for Liberia's debt relief follows a visit to that country in March by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. During the visit, the Liberian leader among other leading Canadian officials, met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper; the President of the Canadian International Development Agency, Mr. Robert Greenhill as well Governor-General of Canada, the Rt. Honorable Michaëlle Jean.

### **Nigerian Doctors Say HIV/AIDS on the Rise in Grand Bassa and Maryland Counties** (*The Inquirer*)

- [sic:] The Nigerian medical doctors who were assigned to assist Liberia in the health sector said that HIV/AIDS is on the increase in Maryland and Grand Bassa Counties.

Local Media – Radio Veritas (*News monitored today at 9:45 am*)

### **Police now Equip to Combat Armed Robbery, Police I.G. Says**

- Speaking to the House Plenary of the National Legislature, Police Inspector General, Colonel Beatrice Mona Sieh said the police is now equipped with sufficient bullets to fight armed robberies in the country.
- Col. Sieh however said the police was faced with the lack of vehicles and said more arms and other logistics were needed to fight crimes nationwide.
- Meanwhile, armed robbers have raided two neighborhoods in the Borough of New Kru Town outside Monrovia.
- The Police say some thirty suspects were arrested in connection with the armed robbery.

(*Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio*)

### **Liberia-Sierra Leone Border Reopens**

- The Liberia-Sierra Leone border officially opened yesterday with the two countries hoping that this would boost economic trade.
- The border was closed in the 90's due to strained relations between the two countries.
- Security officials of both countries held a meeting prior to the opening of the border and assured citizens of Liberia and Sierra Leone of maximum security.

(*Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio*)

### **Senate initiates Major Audit of Rules and Order Committee**

- Members of the Liberian Senate have mandated the suspended Rules and Order Committee to present financial records in its possession from January 2006 to present to facilitate a an audit.
- The decision was taken at Plenary yesterday, based on a report by a special audit committee which accused the Chairman on Rules and Order, Margibi County Senator Clarice Jah of refusing to make available documents for internal audit.
- Senator Jah has however rejected the claim and promised to submit to the audit.

### **Freeze on Diamonds Export Still in Place**

- Speaking at a workshop on the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme in Monrovia, the Deputy Minister Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy, Kpandel Fayiah said the freeze on the export of diamonds can not be lifted now until the ministry receives the Kimberly Process Certificate that would be used to export diamonds.
- Mr. Fayiah said the certificate is expected to arrive this month and the freeze on the export of diamonds will be lifted by July.



**Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)***Canada Promise to Help clear Liberia's Multi-Lateral Debts**

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia said the Canadian Government has agreed to assist Liberia clear its multi-lateral debt through internal resources of the International Monetary Fund.
- The release said Canada would allocate its share of certain IMF internal resource refunds towards Liberia's debt relief costs and is also prepared to provide additional contributions to offset the costs, on a fair donor burden-sharing basis.

**Unexploded Bomb Discovered in Grand Gedeh**

- Correspondents say an unexploded U-X-O bomb has been discovered in Toe Town, Grand Gedeh County.
- The UNDP Small Arm Control Unit discovered the bomb about two weeks ago near a market in the eastern suburbs of Toe Town.
- The reports said a team of experts from the UN Mission in Liberia will visit Toe town today in connection with the discovered bomb.
- The D-2 Operation Officer of the Ethiopian Contingent, Major Alamayew Zenleke said the team would assess the area.

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 7 June 2007

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### **International Clips on Liberia**

06/07/2007 05:11:43

#### **Spanish Government Pledges Buses**

All Africa Global Media via COMTEX, June 07, 2007 --The Government of Spain has pledged 20 buses to support Liberia's public transport system. The disclosure according to an Executive Mansion release was made on Wednesday by outgoing Spanish Ambassador to Liberia, His Excellency Francisco Tejada, when he went to bid farewell to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the Foreign Ministry as he ends his tour of duty.

06/07/2007 04:04:57

#### **Unmil, Border Guards Accused of Sexual Assault**

Freetown, June 07, 2007 (Concord Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Programmes Development Manager of Save the Children, United Kingdom, Virginia Perez Friday claimed United Nations Mission in Liberia, UNMIL peacekeepers, police and soldiers along the borders of Sierra Leone and Liberia now sexually assault young girls between the ages of 12 and 16 before allowing them passage.

#### **UNMIL Bitter Over Alleged Sexual Assault**

By Tanu Jalloh in Freetown

Concord Times (Freetown) 7 June 2007 - The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has issued a statement expressing serious concerns following accusations of its troops' alleged involvement in transactional sex activities alongside police and military personnel manning the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia.

#### **Liberia's Warlord Plays For Time**

The First Post - June 07, 2007 - It was always likely that Charles Taylor, the warlord president whose bloody rule plunged Liberia into a decade-long nightmare, would not be standing in the dock when his trial in The Hague opened this week.

#### **Accountability in West Africa: Charles Taylor on Trial at The Hague**

*Lauren Gelfand*

*World Polices Review Exclusive*, LONDON, 7 June 07 -- "He killed my ma. He killed my pa. I will vote for him." With those words chanted in the ruined streets of impoverished, war-torn Liberia, Charles Ghankay Taylor was swept into office in 1997, capping a bloody eight-year campaign that began with the savage ouster of dictator Samuel Doe.

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

06/07/2007 04:07:21

## **Zainab Bangura Speaks On Elections, Her Job**

Concord Times (**Sierra Leone**) via NewsEdge Corporation :

In a candid, but rare interview granted to the media, former presidential candidate, Zainab Bangura, who now works for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) talks to Concord Times about her new job, Liberia, and the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

06/07/2007 04:15:33

## **Sierra Leone Diamond gets 4.02 mln usd from third diamond sale**

Source: AFX International Focus Date: June 07, 2007

LONDON (Thomson Financial) - Sierra Leone Diamond Co Ltd said it realised gross proceeds of 4.02 mln usd from its third diamond sale. The diamond and mineral exploration company said it sold 7,965.54 carats of rough diamonds, sourced from its alluvial operations in the Kono district, at 504.25 usd per carat.

## **Thuraya launches prepaid mobile in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast**

Asia In Focus via NewsEdge Corporation :

ABU DHABI, June 7 Asia in Focus - THURAYA SATELLITE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CO. has commenced operating its new Prepaid Roaming service with Etisalat of UAE, Mobily and STC (Al Jawwal) of Saudi Arabia and GSM networks in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. The new service allows Thuraya's prepaid subscribers to roam on those GSM networks, and at the same time, allows the prepaid subscribers of those GSM networks to roam on Thuraya's large satellite network covering more than 110 countries.

### Local Media – Newspaper

#### **UNMIL Adopts New Security Measure, Poised to Reduce Checkpoints**

*(The News, Nation Times, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer and New Democrat)*

- Addressing a regular press briefing Wednesday, UNMIL Force Commander Lieutenant General Chikadibia Isaac Obiakor disclosed that the Mission will shortly launch "Operation Over Watch" which would culminate in the reduction of its many checkpoints across the country.
- Lieutenant General Obiakor said the gradual reduction of check-points should not be regarded as threat to the country's ongoing peace and security processes.
- He however said that the Operation would afford UNMIL the opportunity to maximize its patrols at all times irrespective of location. "The over watch strategy would be better than the checkpoints, " he assured.

#### **Baboon Impedes Free Movement and Farming Season in Western Liberia**

*(Daily Observer)*

- A mysterious baboon wearing iron claws with "gamble seeds" on top of its forehead is said to be impeding the free movements of people and making the farming season bitter for the people in Dewon in the Western Liberian County of Bomi.
- Farming activities have come to a standstill and residents in the area are now afraid to send their children to school in the nearby towns for fear that they could be attacked by the baboon.

- No death has been reported so far but two persons have been seriously injured by the creature.

### **UNMIL and Government Split over Security Threats**

*(New Democrat)*

- [sic:] The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the Liberian Government have offered contradictory views indicating they are at odds over reports of national security threats in Liberia. Justice Minister Frances Johnson Morris has announced a plot to subvert the Government but UNMIL says it is not aware of such plot.

### **Single Shotguns Seized at Border Towns in Nimba County**

*(New Democrat)*

- [sic:] Thousands of single shotguns have been seized at border towns in Nimba County, UNMIL Acting Chief Military Public Information Officer, Major Paul Ung said. The weapons totaling about 2,600, Major Ung said were smuggled into the country through the border points.
- For instance UNMIL Sector II Bangladeshi Contingent reported Wednesday morning that they seized 1600 all brand new single barrel shot guns in Bahn, Nimba County.
- Major Ung said the report came about a week after the Bangladeshi Contingent also reported the seizure of 1000 single barrel shot guns in the commercial town of Ganta, around the border with Guinea.

### **Local Media – Star Radio** *(News culled from website today at 10:00 am)*

#### **U.N. Official wants Responsiveness in Decentralization Process**

- Speaking when the Liberian Government and its UN partner established the Liberian Decentralization and Local Development Project, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Liberia, Mr. Jordan Ryan said decentralization depends on a government that is responsive at all local levels and is accountable to the people.
- The project is part of efforts to engage and enhance the involvement of local communities at the political and governance levels and aimed at strengthening development of policies, systems and institutions in the local governance sector.

#### **Spanish Government Pledges 20 Buses for Transport Sector**

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia says the Government of Spain has pledged 20 buses to support Liberia's public transport system.
- The pledge was made yesterday by outgoing Spanish Ambassador to Liberia, Francisco Tejada, during a farewell visit to the President.
- Ambassador Tejada said the Spanish private sector and the Municipality of Barcelona are donating the buses.
- The pledge comes two days following a riot by science students at the University of Liberia in demand of buses to take them to the Fendall campus.

*(Also reported on Radio Veritas and ELBS)*

#### **Missing Vessel Surfaces in Ghana, Chinese National Linked**

- The Liberia National Police says it has information that one of the vessels missing from the Free port of Monrovia is held up in Ghana.
- In an interview, the Chief of Interpol at the Liberia National Police, Charles Blake said a Chinese Businessman, Zheng Fuli claimed he towed the vessel to the Ghanaian Port of Tema.
- Mr. Fuli told the police, Kwabena Gyima, a Ghanaian chartered his fishing boats to tow the MV Tahoma Refer to Ghana.
- The MV Tahoma Refer went missing from the Free port of Monrovia on May 11.

**Over 200 Liberians Refugees Return Home**

- Over two hundred Liberian refugees from Sierra Leone arrived in the country through Bo Waterside on Tuesday.
- According to a UNHCR release, the latest return marked the repatriation of over one hundred thousand Liberian refugees assisted to return home.

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

## The Tyee

Monday, 11 June 2007

<http://thetyee.ca/Books/2007/06/11/KidCriminals/print.html>

### **Can Kids Be War Criminals?**

Consider the cases of Omar Khadr and Ishmael Beah.

Meeting Ishmael Beah is a disorienting experience. Here is someone who once competed with other child soldiers to see who could slash the throats of captured prisoners most quickly. Beah won. It's one of many chilling scenes in his book, *A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Boy Soldier*.

And yet here was Beah when I met him, courteously holding the door of an elevator for me to enter. That was in March, during the Vancouver leg of his book tour. In our conversation, Beah proved to be charming, eloquent and humorous. He was also a publicist's dream: dressed in a hip maroon shirt and blue jeans, with Gap ad good looks and a smile that would make a room full of dental hygienists swoon.

It has been a remarkable year for Beah. His book rides high on bestseller lists. He has graced American talk shows and starred in *Bling'd*, a VH1 documentary that takes American rappers to the diamond mines of Sierra Leone. Even Jon Stewart has paid tribute.

### **'Second life'**

All these successes belong to what Beah, now 26, calls his "second life." But they would not have happened were it not for the cruelty of his first life in Sierra Leone. "I was in college when I started to write a book about my past," said Beah. "I thought the writing would help me understand certain things and come to terms with certain things. For lack of better word, that it would be 'therapeutic.'"

But before I tell you more about Beah, I want give you two reasons why you should read his book right now: the Omar Khadr and Charles Taylor trials.

On Monday last week, two United States military judges decided to drop war crimes charges against Khadr, who has been held in the Guantanamo Bay prison for five years. Khadr was accused of killing an American medic during a battle with U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2002. The judges dismissed the case because Khadr had been classified as an "enemy combatant," and military commissions like the one at Guantanamo Bay can only try "unlawful enemy combatants." (This is not a trivial technicality: the military commissions were created to circumvent the United States' obligations under the Geneva Convention, which would normally apply to enemy combatants. See here, for example.) Prosecutors will likely appeal the ruling, but no tribunal yet exists to hear that appeal. Khadr will remain at Guantanamo Bay indefinitely.

### **Child adults**

But whether Khadr was a lawful or unlawful combatant, one thing is certain: he was 15 years old when American soldiers captured him. Should a child soldier be tried for war crimes?

U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Layne Morris argues that Khadr should be treated as an adult. For proof, Morris described Khadr's behaviour in the battle in which Khadr allegedly killed an American soldier. (Morris was injured in the same clash.) Trapped in a compound besieged by American troops, Khadr chose not to escape with a group of women. The Americans then bombed the compound, killing most of Khadr's companions. When American ground forces entered, the injured Khadr threw a grenade at them. "Anyone who thinks those are the actions of a child, I can't even take them seriously," Morris told CBC's *The Current* on Tuesday.

Had he read Ishmael Beah's book, Morris would know that this is exactly how a child soldier would act. They are fierce fighters and suicidally loyal to superiors -- that is why child soldiers are used. Moreover, international legal convention, psychological research, and common sense all tell us that most youths are easily manipulated and therefore not entirely responsible for their actions. Indeed, David Crane, the former chief prosecutor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, said that he would not prosecute child soldiers because they were "as much victims as the people they raped, maimed and mutilated."

Ishmael Beah committed much more heinous acts than those attributed to Omar Khadr. Now Beah is on talk shows and Khadr remains in indefinite incarceration. Were their situations really different? Or is it just that Beah killed Sierra Leonean civilians, while Khadr allegedly killed a single American soldier?

### **Fascinatingly repugnant**

Now here is the second reason why this book is timely: Charles Taylor is on trial in The Hague. The former president of Liberia is accused of fomenting a civil war in Sierra Leone that caused over 50,000 deaths. The conflict, fuelled in part by proceeds from "blood diamonds," became notorious for roving militias that torched villages, kidnapped and raped women and amputated limbs. Many of the perpetrators were children, and one of the charges against Taylor is that he conscripted child soldiers.

The trial will get plenty of attention. Not only is Taylor a former African leader, he is also a fascinatingly repugnant individual. Born in Liberia, he studied in the United States, escaped from a prison in Massachusetts, trained in Libyan revolutionary camps under Muammar Gaddafi, and led a vicious rebel army in Liberia. Liberian civilians became so terrified of Taylor's forces that they elected him president in 1997 in the hope that this would end the civil war. Charles Taylor's winning election slogan was: "He killed my ma, he killed my pa, I vote for him."

Ishmael Beah, when we spoke in March, said that he was looking forward to Taylor's trial. "It shows people that no one is above law, not even a former president."

But Beah added that the trial should have taken place in Sierra Leone, instead of being moved to The Netherlands out of fear of attack by Taylor sympathizers. "Sierra Leoneans should be able to see justice done in their own country," said Beah. "Removing him to The Hague shows that in Sierra Leone, all you have to do is threaten violence and the judicial system will cower."

### **Lost boys**

With the trials of Omar Khadr and Charles Taylor now in the news, *A Long Way Gone* is a timely book. But it is also a compelling work of literature, one that will be read long after the headlines change.

The story begins with Beah, then 12, on his way to a nearby village to perform in a rap and dance group with his older brother. When rebels attack, the boys are separated. Beah begins a picaresque journey across the war torn countryside, looking for family members. He often wanders with other lost boys, all of them hungry, ill, desperate, chased by wild boar and by villagers who think they are rebel spies.

Beah's descriptions of these travels, seen through the eyes of a traumatized child, are tinged with magic realism. Here is Beah fleeing with a group of boys from a rebel attack:

I was behind Alhaji, who parted the bushes like a diver heading to the surface for air. Some of the bushes slapped me, but I didn't stop. The gunshots grew louder behind us. We ran for hours, deeper into the forest. The path ended, but we kept running until the sky swallowed the sun and gave birth to the moon. The bullets continued to fly behind us, but now their redness could be seen as they pierced through the bushes. The moon disappeared and took the stars with it, making the sky weep. Its tears saved us from the red bullets.

We spent the night breathing heavily under bushes soaked with rain.

At last, Beah and the other children find themselves in a village protected by a government-aligned militia. The commander gives the boys a choice: join his forces and help fight the rebels, or continue to wander the countryside in fear of the next attack. Soon the boys are carrying AK-47s and sneaking through the jungle toward their first battle.

### **'Rambo' revived**

In the months that follow, the new recruits are kept high on drugs, whether engaged in combat or watching war movies at base camp. Killing soon becomes a routine, and often a game. As the boys advance on one village, Beah's friend decides to use a tactic he learned from the Rambo movies. He smears himself in dirt and crawls toward the huts. Beah watches as his friend sneaks behind a man, covers his mouth and slices his throat open. (I felt like photocopying this page in the book and mailing it to Sylvester Stallone with the words: "Sly, you must be proud that so many kids look up to you.")

Then, one day, some men from UNICEF arrive and take the youngest child soldiers away to be decommissioned and rehabilitated. Beah is one of them. He was 15 at the time -- the same age as Omar Khadr was when captured. But while Khadr was put in a military prison, Beah was taken to a rehabilitation centre called Benin Home.

The staff at Benin Home are the real heroes of Beah's memoir. In the first weeks the former child soldiers suffer excruciating withdrawal symptoms, and they self-medicate with violence, attacking each other and the centre's staff.

When Beah returned to Sierra Leone last year, he visited Benin Home and thanked the counsellors. "Those people were amazingly strong," Beah told me. "We would do all kinds of things to them and they would come back and help us. Their only goal was to show us that we were trusted and that we could get hold of ourselves. They rekindled our humanity."

Ultimately, Beah's story gives us reason to be fearful and optimistic about children who are dragged into war.

"You know, it really is not difficult to turn a child into a killer," said Beah. "It requires serious coercion and extreme violence, which in the context of war can happen easily."

"But to heal a child requires genuine care and compassion and a real, long-term commitment. It is extremely difficult. But it can be done."



## BBC Online

Friday, 8 June 2007

### Rwanda scraps the death penalty

Rwanda's parliament has voted to abolish the death penalty, with the ban to take effect at the end of July.

The move will enable countries that are holding genocide suspects, but which object to capital punishment, to extradite them to Rwanda.

But there has been strong opposition to the scrapping of the death penalty from many survivors of the genocide.

Some 800,000 Tutsis and Hutu moderates were slaughtered during the country's 100-day genocide in 1994.

Most of the high-profile genocide cases have been or are being tried at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Tanzania.

But frustrated at its slow process, Rwanda wants suspects transferred to face trial at home.

The BBC's Geoffrey Mutagoma in the capital, Kigali, says 96% of the MPs voted to abolish the death penalty.

Under the new law, Rwanda's 800 death-row prisoners will automatically have their sentences changed to life in jail.

Rwanda last implemented the death penalty in 1998 when 22 people found guilty of genocide crimes were put before a firing squad.

Our reporter says it provoked international criticism and petitions from human rights bodies to suspend the punishment with an act of clemency.

He says it is hoped the new legislation will encourage the transfer of genocide suspects to Rwandan courts.

The law still needs to be passed by the senate, which has never before contested the lower chamber's decisions, our correspondent says.



Some survivors believe the death penalty acts as a strong deterrent

## BBC

Friday, 8 June 2007

### UN 'must arrest Darfur suspects'

Ahmed Haroun was responsible for Darfur in 2003 and 2004

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has urged the UN Security Council to help in the arrest of two Sudanese men suspected of war crimes in Darfur.

Humanitarian Affairs Minister Ahmed Haroun and Janjaweed leader Ali Muhammad Ali Abd al-Rahman, also called Ali Kushayb, are wanted on 51 counts.

The ICC prosecutor told the council they worked together systematically to attack civilians in Darfur.

The Sudanese government has rejected the international court's jurisdiction.

More than 200,000 people have died in the four-year conflict and some 2m are in camps after fleeing their homes.

A UN Security Council team is due in Khartoum on 17 June to discuss the issue with Sudan's president.

### Eyewitnesses

In other developments:

- Outgoing UN head of humanitarian affairs in Sudan Manuel da Silva says he believes rebels in Darfur are ready to go back to the negotiating table for peace talks and are tired of fighting.

The US has warned Sudan to accept the deployment of a joint UN-African Union in Darfur or face sanctions such as a no-fly zone.

Mr Haroun was a minister responsible for the Darfur portfolio in 2003 and 2004.

"No crime was committed there without Haroun's intervention. He was the one who recruited the Janjaweed militia," Reuters news agency quotes the ICC prosecutor as saying.

#### SUSPECTS' PROFILES

Ahmed Haroun

- In charge of Darfur in 2003 and 2004 as deputy interior minister
  - ICC says his work included recruiting, funding and personally arming Janjaweed militia
  - Quoted as saying that he had been given the authority to either kill or forgive in Darfur for the sake of peace and security
  - As humanitarian affairs minister he oversees Darfur's 2m refugees
  - Aid agencies accuse of him of hindering their efforts to access the displaced
- Ali Kushayb
- Known as "colonel of colonels"
  - Commanded thousands of Janjaweed in mid-2003

- Allegedly promoted and witnessed rape and torture as part of the war strategy
- The government say he has been in detention since November for Darfur attacks
- But witnesses told AP that he has been travelling in Darfur under police protection

### **Sudan under fresh pressure**

"I have eyewitnesses who saw Ahmad Harun delivering weapons in his own helicopter to the militia in three different states in Darfur," Luis Moreno-Ocampo said.

"I have eyewitnesses watching Kushayb involved in the execution of prisoners, in the rape of women," he said.

In February, the two men were named by the ICC as suspects on a total of 51 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Correspondents say it is unclear whether Mr Kushayb is already in the custody of the Sudanese government for attacks committed in Darfur.

Earlier, Mr Haroun said the move against him was political and that he had a clear conscience.

In the past, Sudan has complained that the ICC has not indicted any Darfur rebels who it says are also guilty of murderous attacks.

## Institute for War & Peace Reporting (London)

Saturday, 9 June 2007

### **Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone Tribunal - Taylor Trial Drama**

Katy Glassborow and Lisa Clifford  
The Hague

The first-ever war crimes trial hosted at the International Criminal Court, ICC, got off to a dramatic start on Monday, June 4, when former Liberian president Charles Taylor refused to attend the first day and dismissed his lawyer.

There was also a fiery confrontation between Karim Khan, Taylor's lawyer, and presiding judge Julia Sebutinde, which ended with the British lawyer defying the judge and walking out of court.

Taylor is being tried by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, but his case was transferred to The Hague last year because of security concerns in west Africa, and now events are playing out in a courtroom belonging to the ICC.

In Taylor's absence, Khan read out a letter from his client in which the ex-president said he would not receive a fair trial before the Special Court.

"I cannot participate in a charade that does injustice to the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia; and the people of Africa; and a disservice to the international community in whose name this court claims to speak," wrote Taylor. "I choose not to be the fig leaf of legitimacy for this process."

Taylor faces 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity including murder, rape and conscripting child soldiers. Prosecutors say he supported Revolutionary United Front, RUF, rebels in Sierra Leone who committed brutal acts against civilians, including amputations and sexual slavery.

He was elected president of Liberia in 1997 and ruled for six years before going into exile in Nigeria. He was indicted in 2003 and returned to Liberia in March 2006 where he was taken into custody by the Special Court.

In his letter, Taylor said that Khan lacks the time and resources to mount an adequate defence - pointing out that his lawyer works virtually alone while prosecutors have a team of nine lawyers.

The defence was given an international investigator in March 2007 and a local investigator in Liberia just last month.

"It is not justice to emaciate my defence to an extent that I am unable to launch an effective defence," Taylor wrote. "It is not justice to throw all rights to a fair trial to the wind in a headlong rush to trial."

Tensions in the court rose higher when Judge Sebutinde ordered prosecutor Stephen Rapp to deliver his opening statement in the absence of Taylor and Khan to continue representing him for the duration of the day-long hearing.

But Khan refused to stay on or take his seat, saying "counsel is not hired help" and that he could not be forced to ignore Taylor's instructions that he step down. Judge Sebutinde then warned Khan that was verging on contempt of court, accusing him of defiance.

After a further terse exchange, Khan left the court, insisting his client's instructions should take precedence over a court order.

The trial then resumed with Rapp's opening statement during which he outlined the prosecution case and claims that Taylor was responsible for attempts to take over physical and political control of Sierra Leone to exploit its natural resources and install a government friendly to Liberia.

Avi Singh, one of two legal assistants working with Khan, told IWPR that Taylor had been looking forward to his trial but had lost faith in the system.

Singh said Taylor is willing to take part but only if given an adequate amount of time, and resources, to prepare.

Asked if Taylor could be tried in his absence, Singh said the former president had been warned this was a possibility.

Singh said Taylor will now represent himself but will not participate in the process.

Some commentators suggested on Monday that Taylor's actions are geared towards delaying his trial. However, William Schabas, director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights, disagrees saying Taylor's is clearly condemning the Special Court as illegitimate because of its meagre defence resources.

Justice Richard Goldstone, the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals chief prosecutor, told IWPR that he believes the trial should go ahead, but stressed that the Special Court needs to "go out of its way to make sure Taylor gets adequate defence".

Goldstone said the court must investigate his complaints and take action if they are well founded, adding Taylor should be offered CCTV to monitor the trial and also be given legal advice.

Unlike some other high-profile suspects tried in international courts, Taylor said in the letter read by Khan that at one time he "had confidence in the court's ability to dispense justice in a fair and impartial manner", but that "over time it has become clear that such confidence is misplaced".