

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Witness Exposes Special Court Corruption

A protected witness who testified against Charles Taylor in The Hague accused the Special Court of corruption, excesses.

Samuel Kargbo, one time supreme council member of the Armed Forces revolutionary Council (AFRC), and who, prior to his being flown to The Hague, was a protected witness, now has his face and name in VCD cassette allegedly produced by the Special Court.

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Witness Exposes Special Court Corruption

In an interview with Samuel, he told this press that management of the Special Court included video recording of his and others testimonies into a video cassette now for sale to the public. "The Special Court promised protecting all of us as witnesses. They asked us to testify as prosecution witnesses, but never told us they will produce a video on us," angry Samuel said. It could be recalled that

Samuel and others have had understanding with management of Special Court relative to the protection of their lives after completion of testimonies.

It has reached this press that officials of the Special Court accept relocating witnesses to countries outside Sierra Leone.

That Samuel on several occasions had called on the head of WVS, Mr. Salim,

asking him to cause his relocation as was agreed, but went fruitless.

Although agreement between the Special Court and witness Samuel was never documented, it was disclosed that a senior officer of the WVS section, Madam Adel, had previously told all the witnesses that they will be relocated to countries of their choice after conclusion of testimonies.

To Samuel's dismays, a video cassette showing footages of his testimony was put out for sale.

On the back of the cassette were words such as "Special Court for Sierra Leone- Outreach Press & Public Affairs" qualifying that management of the said court has knowledge to such.

The cassette also featured witnesses such as Bobson Sesay, Zigzag Manza (one of Charles Taylor's com-

manders), Abu Keita, Father Mario and others.

The video, according to Samuel, is now in public domain and has put their lives in serious threat.

"This is corruption. It is a complete sell out. The Special Court must be investigated for producing and selling a video without the earlier permission of persons featured," Samuel angrily said.

Sources say the produc-

tion of such a cassette must have come from the outreach section of the Special Court.

Facts as revealed disclosed how Samuel, on number occasions, had called on the attention of management of the Special Court to crosscheck the source of the already produced cassette, but gets no good feedbacks at all.

More details next edition.

Final witness completes testimony at Taylor trial

The war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor has finished hearing its final witness, a former rebel in Sierra Leone's civil war.

Sam Kolley, an ex-member of the Revolutionary United Front rebel group, was the last of 21 witnesses to testify

in Taylor's defence.

Kolley insisted Taylor did not arm rebels in Sierra Leone, as prosecutors allege. He also claimed court officials tried to bribe and threaten him to testify that rebels gave Taylor diamonds. Kolley undermined his credibility by

admitting lying during three different interviews with prosecution investigators. Taylor is on trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone on charges of arming and supporting notoriously brutal rebels in Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war. He denies wrongdoing.

RUF Rebel 'Exonerates' Charles Taylor

(AFP) THE HAGUE - A rebel fighter in Sierra Leone 's brutal civil war concluded his evidence in Liberian ex-president Charles Taylor's war crimes trial on Tuesday, wrapping up the testimony for the defence.

Sam Flomo Kolleh, 38, was the last of 21 witnesses, including Taylor himself, to testify for the defence in The Hague since the trial started in earnest in January 2008.

Kolleh, who said he was captured and

forced to fight for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), told judges that prosecution agents had tried to threaten and bribe him to testify against the warlord.

One of them had offered him 90,000 dollars (about 65,000 euros) and told him: "We want you to tell us you took those diamonds to Taylor," the witness said on his first day of testimony last Monday.

Kolleh admitted he had been a

"diamond courier" for the RUF, but denied he ever gave any gems to Taylor. Prosecutor Nicholas Koumjian, who cross-examined Kolleh for several days, accused him of lying to protect Taylor. "It was the RUF that cut the heads off victims and put them on sticks, that took young women as bush wives and that burn people alive ...? It was a human being, Charles Taylor, that made all of that possible?," he asked Kolleh, who replied: "No". Taylor, 62, has pleaded not guilty to 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity stemming from the 1991-2001 civil war in Sierra Leone which claimed some 120,000 lives.

He stands accused of having fuelled

war in Sierra Leone by arming the RUF in exchange for so-called "blood diamonds", in a trial that saw testimony from supermodel Naomi Campbell.

The RUF is blamed for the mutilation of thousands of civilians who had their hands and arms severed in one of the most brutal wars in modern history.

Taylor insists that the case against him is based on "lies". The prosecution closed its case in January last year, having called 91 witnesses. The defence will formally close its case on Friday. The court has set a date of February 8, 2011 for the prosecution's closing arguments, followed by those of the defence the next day and rebuttals on February 11.

The Associated Press

Tuesday, 9 November 2010

Last witness completes testimony in Taylor trial

By MIKE CORDER

LEIDSCHENDAM, Netherlands -- The war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor approached a conclusion Tuesday with the close of witness testimony, amid mutual accusations by a former Sierra Leone rebel and prosecutors of seeking to subvert the landmark case.

Sam Kolleh, an ex-member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group, was the last of 21 defense witnesses to testify in the Special Court of Sierra Leone's final trial.

The marathon case has shone a spotlight on atrocities committed by rebels during Sierra Leone's 1992-2002 civil war such as the amputations of limbs by rebels that became the conflict's grisly trademark.
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Prosecutors say Taylor armed and supported the RUF, one of the most notorious rebel groups, in exchange for so-called blood diamonds mined by slave laborers in Sierra Leone.

From his presidential palace in Liberia's capital Monrovia, Taylor allegedly supplied not only arms and ammunition to the RUF but also drugs and alcohol given to child soldiers to desensitize them to the horrors of the war they were forced to fight.

In months on the witness stand testifying in his own defense, Taylor denied the allegations and cast himself instead as a statesman and peacemaker in the troubled West African region.

In his testimony, Kolleh also insisted Taylor did not arm the RUF and said they obtained weapons from another rebel group in Liberia.

He also claimed that court officials tried to bribe and threaten him to testify that rebels gave Taylor diamonds.

Kolleh, however, undermined his credibility by admitting that he lied during three different interviews with prosecution investigators.

Prosecution lawyer Nicholas Koumjian rejected the bribery and threat claims, calling them "something you have made up since May, as this case has gotten more and more desperate for the defense."

Taylor has pleaded not guilty to 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity including murder, rape, sexual enslavement and recruiting child soldiers.

Defense and prosecution attorneys will now prepare closing statements summing up their cases, to be presented Feb. 8-11, before judges retire to consider their verdicts.

Among harrowing testimony at the trial, one witness described how a villager had his fingers hacked off and strung together to make a necklace before being shot; another witness recalled how rebels disemboweled a prisoner and used the intestines as ropes at a roadblock.

The trial started nearly three and a half years ago with Taylor boycotting the proceedings and firing his lawyer, saying he did not have enough time or money to prepare his defense and claiming he was being railroaded to a conviction. The first witnesses only appeared at the trial in January 2008 after Taylor had hired new lawyers.

The defense case was sensationally interrupted by the court's decision to subpoena supermodel Naomi Campbell to testify about claims Taylor gave her rough diamonds at a 1997 party at Nelson Mandela's presidential mansion in South Africa.

Campbell said she was given diamonds, but said she did not know they were a gift from Taylor.

Eight rebel leaders have been tried, convicted and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 15 to 52 years by the Sierra Leone court. Those trials were held at the court's headquarters in the Sierra Leone capital, Freetown. Taylor's trial was shifted to The Hague because of security fears.

Columbia Daily Tribune

Wednesday, 10 November 2010

War crimes official to speak at MU

The prosecutor who indicted the former president of Liberia is speaking on the University of Missouri campus tomorrow.

Former prosecutor David Crane will present “Diamonds, Guns and Thugs” at 7 p.m. in the Fred W. Smith Forum Room at the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

Crane was founding chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, an international war crimes tribunal. During his tenure, he indicted former Liberian President Charles Taylor for his involvement in the Sierra Leone civil war.

Hirondelle News Agency

Wednesday, 10 November 2010

Rwanda's request over ICTR archives remains firm

Rwanda's request to host the archives of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) remains strong, The New Times reported Wednesday.

"There is a time when people, decision makers, were fronting the point of financial means as one [necessary] requirement. But the view of Rwanda is that this doesn't require financial means," the Rwandan newspaper quoted the Prosecutor General, Martin Ngoga, as saying.

"It will be dangerous if 'financial means' is used as a tool of prejudice against some members of the UN over others in this context. This is a matter of principle and not a matter of financial means," Mr Ngoga further said.

The final decision on which country will host the archives, once ICTR's mandate ends, is yet to be made by the UN Security Council, the instituting organ of the tribunal.

According to reliable sources at ICTR, Tanzania, host of the 16-year old tribunal has also applied to the UN to host the ICTR archives. But the Prosecutor General stressed that Rwanda would not like to be seen as competing with the former or others.

Ngoga maintained that keeping the archives in Rwanda where the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi took place is a logical decision as the archives are part of Rwandan history.

"We made our views clear to the registrar, and to the UN - and this hasn't changed. We think that the archives, being part of our history, we are the most logical home, but it is also important to note that we wouldn't like to be seen in a situation where we are competitors," Ngoga was quoted as saying.

The UN Security Council has given the ICTR up to December 31, 2011 to finish its first instance cases.

FK/NI/ER/GF

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Afro News

Monday, 8 November 2010

UN report "revisionist" on Rwanda genocide

A recent UN report looking into Rwandan war crimes in Congo Kinshasa (DRC) legitimises a "double genocide theory", confusing victims and perpetrators to the Rwandan genocide, according to Fulvio Beltrami in Kampala.

Fulvio Beltrami, an Italian residing in the Great Lakes Region since 1993, reacts to the International Crisis Group (ICG) report urging the UN Security Council to react against Rwanda after a recent UN report concluded on wide-spread war crimes committed by Rwandan forces in Congo (DRC) between 1993 and 2003:

The UN released report on crimes committed in the DRC between 1993 and 2003 is based on investigations done between October 2008 and June 2009 by 33 UN employees and Human Rights Congolese and international experts (between them some ICG experts, according humanitarian aid workers based in eastern DRC).

Personally, I think the methodology of the investigation is too weak when it comes to impartiality. It also seems to be obfuscated or corrupted by regional and international actors, who since August 1994 have been promoting several revisionist theories about the Rwandan Genocide.

Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi armies have surely committed actions against civilians that can be classified as war crimes during the studied period.

The same crimes have also been committed, in the same period and in the same country, by Angolan, Zimbabwean and DRC armies and several pro-Kinshasa militias such as the Mai Mai. But the UN report seems give more importance to the ones attributed to Rwanda and Uganda.

During war time, it is sad to observe that crimes against humanity can easy be committed by all parties. One only needs to look at current examples in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I do agree with the ICG that each crime against humanity must be accounted for by those responsible without any possibility of impunity dictated by political interests.

What I do not agree with in the UN reports the ICG article is the declaration that war crimes done by the Rwandan Army can be classified as "genocide".

Genocide and ethnic cleansing operations are strictly defined by well classified characteristics: First of all the identification of one population as enemy on ethnic diversity bases.



Ceremony at Kigali Memorial Centre, commemorating the victims of Rwanda's 1994 genocide

© PolishMFA/afrol News

This should be followed by an ethnic hate public propaganda campaign in order to convince the own population to exterminate the enemy; promotion of any collective actions against the enemy that can lead to his physical elimination. In the minor of results, campaign will assure the own population's ideological support for the ethnic cleansing operations.

Planning of mass destruction, with clear instructions to the political, military and administrative authorities, is necessary to accomplish "the job". A detailed list of victims and the creation of civil militias are necessary basic tools.

All these were the characteristics of the former Rwandan government that has perpetuated the genocide of 1994.

No one of these characteristics can be found in the Rwandan and Ugandan military operations during the war in the DRC.

Rwanda and Uganda are small countries with a really open population. If a genocide project had been implemented by authorities at that time, it would be impossible that people like me (living permanently in the area) do not observe any external signals from popular emotions, mass media and governmental propaganda.

I just ask for an answer to this simple question.

If the post-genocide Rwandan government (so-called Tutsi) had the intention of committing a new genocide against the Rwandan refugees (so-called Hutu), why not start with Hutu population already present in Rwanda instead of putting so many financial and intellectual efforts into the reconciliation process as it did after the 1994 genocide?

Reinforcing the genocide doubt

The UN report, in order to reinforce the genocide doubt, has concentrated some of his investigations on the 1996 war actions against refugee camps during the Kabila rebel troops' invasion, supported by the armies of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Angola.

Rwandan military actions against refugees camps in the east of former Zaire was totally justified in order to stop a clear attempt by ex-FAR and genocidal militias hiding in the neighbour country and planning to re-launch their anti-Tutsi genocide in Rwanda.

The military option was the only solution in face of UN failure to resolve the security threat the refugee camps posed to Rwanda as the camps were infiltrated by those that had organised the 1994 genocide.

Paul Kagame (Vice-President and Minister of Defence at that time) since March 1995 had repeatedly warned the international community about Rwanda's intention to attack this source or regional instability if an international solution was not found.

The Rwandan refugee camps in former Zaire had provided an effective humanitarian sanctuary to members of the former, genocidal Rwandan government and army.

Protected from prosecution by the UN refugee agency UNHCR and international NGOs, they resided in the camps with impunity and manipulated the aid structures to increase their military power and political legacy.

The sanctuary provided in Zaire permitted them to resume the mass killing they had started in April 1994 and to sabotage reconstruction and reconciliation attempts within Rwanda, injecting the all region with hatred and



Remains of victims to Rwanda's 1994 genocide at one of the country's many memorial centres

© Tiggy Ridley/DFID/afrol News

genocidal rhetoric for over two years.

What other alternatives remained for the legitimate Rwandan government if not attack and destroy these camps?

How much responsibility rests with UN, donors, governments and private aid agencies, which sustained the refugee camps in the knowledge of their role in the continuation of ethnic war against Rwanda?

UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali recognised in November 1994 that "the most effective way of ensuring the safety of the refugees and their freedom to return to Rwanda would be the separation of political leaders, former Rwandese government forces and militia from the rest of the refugee population."

Why did the UN not deploy its troops to undertake this necessary action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter?

Why has none of the responsible leaders of genocide present in the refugee camps in Zaire been arrested in accordance with article VI of the UN Security Council Prevention and Repression of Genocide Convention?

The armed resistance to Kabila's rebel army and his allies was mainly done by former FAR and genocide militia in eastern Zaire.

Former FDLR military leaders like Major General Paul Rwarakabije and Brig Gen Jerome Ngemdahima affirm that most casualties among Rwandan refugees had been the direct consequence of FAR and genocide militias war tactics of using human shields.

Moreover, many FAR and militia soldiers were dressed in both military and civilian clothing. It was not possible to separate civilians from soldiers during the fights.

Surely is true that several Rwandan soldiers massacred civilians during the camps assaults, meanly because these soldiers were victims of hate and revenge, but in no occasion premeditate orders of mass killing actions by high military commander have been reported.

And what about the genocide Rwandan militias still operative in eastern DRC? I suppose there is an agreement about the need for an international solution to this problem.

Unluckily - due to the genocide ideology of these militias that still refuse to abandon their arms and follow the purpose of a "final solution" against Rwandan citizens - the only option to stop them must be a military one.

A double genocide theory

According to my personal opinion, the UN report has fallen victim to manipulations in order to support the double genocide theory invented by the former Rwandan government responsible of the genocide and supported by French and Vatican interests (included many missionaries leaving in the area, like the White Fathers and unluckily some Italian missionaries too).

Evidence that international experts have been victims of well studied manipulation can be founded in the ICG analysis too. For example when the ICG defined FDRL as "partly responsible" for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

*Sorry, but I have to protest. The FDRL members were **fully responsible**, first of all, their leader Callixte Mbarushimana!*

The Rwanda genocide was well documented by media. For this reason the revisionist supporters have invented the double genocide theory: Both parties in the conflict have participated in the genocide so all are responsible.

Confusing victims with their murderers is the most horrible and simple way to white-wash the genocide memory.

The ICG proposition to extend the mandate of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICT), giving it a regional jurisdiction and extending its temporal reach beyond 1994 at least until 2002, is morally unacceptable according to my opinion.

This would mean creating a total confusion of responsibility at a time when the ICT-Rwanda has not even been able to try some of major genocide leaders including Habyarimana's wife, which are well protected by some African countries or in Europe, mainly thanks to the French and Vatican complicity.

The ICG report affirms that the UN report represents a change that could correct the terms of the deceptive and fragile peace some leaders wish to proclaim in the Great Lakes region. The report could support a Congolese national dialogue and address the historic record of impunity in the DRC and would go a long way to foster durable peace and real security in the region.

But maybe it is necessary to think about the difference between Nazism and Hutu power. The first genocide ideology is not accepted anymore in Europe, even by right-wing parties. On the contrary, the Hutu genocide ideology is still alive in the Great Lakes region.

Giving a false label of "genocide" to the war crimes committed in the DRC means supporting the double genocide revisionist theory and, indirectly, to increase the determination of Hutu genocidal extremists to "finish the job".

Those living in the region, like me, really do not need all this external interference to resolve regional problems and assure peace and security.

What we need is the end of external interference and the reinforcement of economical and social regional integration between the Great Lakes Regions countries through a deep and real reconciliation process between the different populations.

This difficult but necessary task should be done only by African actors!

By Fulvio Beltrami

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Thursday, 11 November 2010

ICC prosecutor analyses Jos massacre

By Thijs Bouwknecht



Lagos, Nigeria

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is looking into potential crimes against humanity committed in Nigeria's Plateau State. The court's prosecutor's office

confirmed last week that it is analysing a massacre that killed over 300 people in January.

The killings took place some 30 kilometres south of the city of Jos in Plateau State in central Nigeria, where in January Christian and Muslim mobs went on a rampage with guns, knives and machetes.

The ICC's decision to launch an examination into possible crimes against humanity follows a petition filed by Nigerian rights organisation the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) to Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo's office in The Hague.

In a letter last week, the prosecutor's office said that investigators are reviewing if there is a reasonable basis to start investigations in Nigeria, which is a state party to the ICC. "Analysis will be carried out as expeditiously as possible," the letter said, but further cautioned, "that meaningful analysis of these factors can take some time."

The ICC further said that it would see whether it has jurisdiction over the crimes committed, and if any Nigerian courts are investigating or prosecuting the atrocities.

SERAP on January 29th requested the permanent war crimes court prosecutor to investigate "allegations of unlawful killing of at least 326 people" and "reports that the military and police used excessive force against both Christians and Muslims in responding to the violence."

The ICC is a court of last resort and it can act only if states are unable or refuse to deal with the most serious crimes under international law. SERAP claims that the Nigerian government "in effect, has shown itself unwilling or unable to transparently and effectively investigate and prosecute" the allegations.

ERAP lawyer Femi Falana, who had sent the petition to the ICC on behalf of the rights group, welcomed Ocampo's move. "This is fantastic news for the victims of the unlawful killing and other abuses that took place in Jos earlier this year, and previous outbreaks of deadly violence in the city."

"Ending impunity for the cycle of violence in many parts of Nigeria is essential for sustainable peace, stability and security, and for the country's social, economic and political development," Falana said.

After the worst of the mid-January violence in and around the nearby town of Kuru Karama, President Goodluck Jonathan pledged to bring the perpetrators to justice. "Those found to have engineered, encouraged or fanned the embers of this crisis through their actions or pronouncements will be arrested and speedily brought to justice," he said.

But the President's warnings did not prevent fresh atrocities. After his statement, up to 500 people - including women, children and babies - were killed when three villages near Jos were attacked. The attacks are said to have been in revenge for the January massacre.

Nigeria is deeply divided along ethnic and religious lines. More than 13,500 people have died in religious or ethnic clashes since the end of the military rule in 1999. Plateau state, where Jos is located, lies in the so-called middle belt between the predominantly Muslim north and the mainly Christian south.

The massacre south of Jos is the latest in a series of deadly incidents in and around Plateau State. According to Human Rights Watch, an unprecedented outbreak of violence in Jos claimed as many as 1,000 lives in September 2001. More than 700 people died in May 2004 in inter-communal clashes in the town of Yelwa in the southern part of Plateau State, and at least 700 people were killed in the violence in Jos in November 2008.