

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 of:

Tuesday, 12 July 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 11 July 2005

New Deputy Prosecutor for the Special Court

Dr Christopher Staker, has been appointed as Deputy Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He succeeds Desmond de Silva QC, who was recently appointed as Chief Prosecutor by the United Nations Secretary-General in consultation with the Government of Sierra Leone.

As provided by the Special Court Statute, Dr Staker was nominated by the Government of Sierra Leone.

Dr Staker's appointment will ensure continuity within the area of appeals, if appeals are lodged against any decisions that are expected to be handed down in 2006. He appeared for the Prosecution in relation to a number of preliminary appeals before the Appeals Chamber in 2003. Those motions, which were won by the Prosecution, included whether the former President of Liberia could plead head of state immunity, whether the Special Court lacked the jurisdiction on the ground that it was unconstitutional and whether the recruitment of child soldiers was a crime under customary international law within the temporal jurisdiction of the Special Court.

Dr Staker has extensive experience in international and public law. He studied at the University of Adelaide, and has a doctorate (D.Phil.) in public international law from the University of Oxford. He was called to the Bar in Australia in 1987. He has held various legal positions in the Australian Attorney-General's Department, including in its Office of International Law. He later served as the Counsel Assisting the Solicitor-General of Australia. Internationally, he has held the posts of Principal Legal Secretary at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and Senior Appeals Counsel at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

He was counsel in a number of prominent cases before the High Court of Australia, and other Australian courts, involving issues of constitutional law, administrative law and public international law. He has also appeared before the International Court of Justice (for Australia in the East Timor case and the Nuclear Weapons advisory opinions) and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (as agent and lead counsel for Guinea-Bissau in the Juno Trader case).

During his two years at the ICTY, he worked for the Prosecution, and served as lead counsel before the Appeals Chamber.

Dr Staker will take up his post on 15 July 2005.

#END

Special Court gets new Deputy Prosecutor

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Dr Staker will take up his post on 15 July 2005.

As provided by the Special Court Statute, the Government of Sierra Leone nominated Dr Staker.

"Dr. Staker's appointment will ensure continuity within the area of appeals, if appeals are lodged against any decisions that are

expected to be handed down in 2006." the release states and adds that he "appeared for the Prosecution in relation to a number of preliminary appeals before the Appeals Chamber in 2003. Those motions, which were won by the Prosecution, included whether the former President of Liberia could plead head of state immunity, whether the Special Court lacked the jurisdiction on the ground that it was unconstitutional and whether the recruitment of child soldiers was a crime under customary international law within the temporal jurisdiction of the Special Court."

The release continues that

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Concord Times
12 July 2005

"SLPP Threatened My Life"

...Special Court
Witness Disclosed

By Joseph Turay

A local journalist code named TF1 033 who is also a witness for the prosecution for the Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday told the court that supporters of the ruling SLPP government threatened to kill him on the grounds that he was an AFRC collaborator. The witness testified that he was involved in the AFRC

From front page

junta regime between 97-98 as a journalist. He said he monitored the activities of the AFRC on to the time they were ousted in a military intervention by the then Economic Community's Monitoring Group ECOMOG after which he was accused as a

collaborator and had to escape with the junta regime to the provinces where he was appointed by a junta commander by the name of Gullit, as an Information Officer.

TF 1 033 said he witnessed the Pademba Road Prisons jail break under the command of Gullit who freed about 4,000 prisoners and that the invading force later re-

treated to state house where they killed and amputated many civilians. The witness further told the court that he heard Gullit ordering his men to burn houses and kill all captured civilians, adding that he saw many AFRC commanders like, 55; Bazzy, Gibril Massaquoi and other Senior fighters all receiving orders from Gullit.

TF 1 033 also told the court that he was given a radio transmitter by the invading force although at the time he was not an effective practice as a journalist because at the time, his newspaper was grounded due to lack of funds. "I was afraid of mob justice by SLPP supporters so I had to escape for my life" the witness concluded.

Exclusive
12 July 2005

TUESDAY JULY 12, 2005

Editorial

NO MORE GOOD LAWYERS IN SIERRA LEONE

The appointment of a deputy prosecutor for the Special Court of Sierra Leone in the person of Christopher Staker will be taken with a pinch of salt given the fact that the nomination or appointment of persons to that position is the sole prerogative of the government of Sierra Leone.

Indeed Crane did a good work - at least he tried his best - in indicting some leading former commanders of the different factions in the war, including a former government minister. In that regard, it would have been assumed that, after Crane's departure and the subsequent elevation of his deputy Desmond De Silva to the position of Prosecutor, some native legal luminary would have understudied and understood the intricacies of what it means to be a deputy Special Prosecutor of the Court. We would have expected that, at this moment, a Sierra Leonean would have been trained enough and good enough to hold that important position.

It therefore came as a bit of a surprise to discover that the position of deputy prosecutor has again gone to a foreigner - an Australian this time. We do not want to dwell on the question of whether the Australian is qualified in international jurisprudence or not (Trial Judge Bankole-Thompson did not have experience as a Trial Judge in international law but is now coping well in his duties as one) but what is at stake here is the indictment of the whole group of streaming Sierra Leonean lawyers both within the country and in the diaspora as being unqualified, perhaps unfit, to do what others can do. It is a shame that at this crucial point in time of our history, the government of Sierra Leone can still not find a single good apple in the basket to show the world that we are also coming of age.

It is regrettable; and we would wish the Bar Association to address this state of affairs - otherwise it would appear there are no more good lawyers in this country. We hope there are.

Christian Monitor
12 July 2005

Convicted Australian Policeman Is Confident On Sierra Leone Appeal

Australian police officer Peter Halloran was confident his appeal against an indecent assault conviction in Sierra Leone would be successful, the Victorian police union said. Halloran, a former investigator at the UN-backed war crimes court in the West African state, was sentenced in February to 18 months jail on charges he assaulted a 14-year-old Freetown schoolgirl hired to work in his home. The 56-year-old Victoria Police officer had earlier been acquitted on charges of unlawful carnal knowledge, procuring a girl under age 14 and conspiracy. He has consistently maintained his innocence. Lawyers on Thursday opened arguments in his appeal, claiming the trial justice made a legal error when he did not allow a statement from the victim denying Halloran's guilt into evidence. Victoria Police Association secretary Senior Sergeant Paul Mullett on Friday said Halloran was in good spirits and was confident his appeal would be successful. He said Thursday's hearing was relatively short and a determination would be handed down before July 15.

"We want that decision handed down within that specified timeframe because the enormous (previous) delay has been a great concern to us," he said. Sen Sgt Mullett said the

Association was concerned Victoria Police had not sent a senior representative to Sierra Leone to assist Halloran. "The silence from Victoria Police has been deafening and the Victoria Police Force should have someone from a senior level over there," he said. Halloran has been out on bail since March 10, pending appeal. Australia had ordered an investigation into his conviction, which has been seen as political, following his exoneration by an inquiry committee at the war crimes court.

THIS REPORT WAS
COLLECTED FROM
THE AGE
NEWSPAPER
AUSTRALIA.

Awareness Times
12 July 2005