

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

Friday, 12 May 2006

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

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Concord Times
Friday, 12 May 2006

Suspected Special Court spy, 3 others charged

Story: Sahr Musa Yamba

Michael Chemidline, an American citizen, a suspected spy nabbed around the Special Court April 29th has been charged to court together with three other Sierra

Leoneans.

They were charged with conspiracy to engage in a purpose prejudicial to the interest of Sierra Leone contrary to law.

The three Sierra Leoneans are

Felix Rogers, Damascus Kamara and Collins Kamara.

They were arraigned before Magistrate Adrian Fischer at court No. 1A Thursday on a three-count

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Suspected Special Court spy, 3 others charged

From page 1

charge of conspiracy. Defense counsel for the accused, Africanus Sesay objected to the first count on the grounds that they were charged under a law that was nonexistent at the time of the alleged incident. "There is no law dating back as far as common law, which the accused have violated for the prosecution to proffer charges as contrary to law," Counsel Sesay submitted. His second objection was on the grounds of jurisdiction arguing that the court (magistrate court) had no business trying people who allegedly took snapshots of the Special Court, which, he submitted, is an international territory that came into existence by an agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. "The government of Sierra Leone cannot bring an action on behalf of the Special Court," counsel Sesay submitted. His third objection was based on arguments that the Special Court is not a prohibited place and there

is no inscription around there stating it is a forbidden area.

He cited Section 61B of the constitution arguing further that the Special Court is an international ground like any embassy or High Commission.

Responding to the objections, state counsel, Gerald Soyie submitted that conspiracy to commit any offence is prescribed under common law citing Section 6 of the constitution. He submitted that any body acting contrary to the interest of the state in the case of espionage could be charged. He submitted that at the material time of the alleged incident, the offence of conspiracy existed and subsisted up to date. "That been the issue, the laws of Sierra Leone have been violated," he argued.

On the issue of jurisdiction, prosecutor Soyie submitted that the Special Court is an institution "living in Sierra Leone." He maintained it is an international body, but the purpose of the Special Court is that it is trying prisoners in the interest of

justice, prisoners who every body in this country has an interest in and submitted that any one taking photographs as alleged in charges and thereby creating an impression that the prisoners tried at the Special Court might be rescued, the state has the right to be concerned. He argued it is the "paramount duty of the state to maintain law and order."

Soyie completely disagreed with the defense counsel. He submitted that it is the business of the government of Sierra Leone to take necessary action in connection with any entity within its jurisdiction if government after due consideration establishes that its interest and security are endangered. He submitted the accused were engaged in an action prejudicial to the state.

The accused were refused bail by the Magistrate who is to make a ruling on the objections raised later. The hearing was adjourned to Monday May 15th.

Exclusive
Friday, 12 May 2006

Norman Is Dying

By David A. Jabati Jnr
Former Deputy Minister of Defence and Head of The Civil Defence Force (CDF) in the SLPP led government, now Special Court indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman is

reported to be dying slowly in detention at the Special Court, New England, Freetown.

According to impeccable family and Special Court sources, the health of Chief

Norman, (as he is commonly called) is deteriorating at a very alarming rate.

"Is that the prize he is pay-

ing for his service to his motherland?" asked a family member.

"We have written a letter

to the Registrar of the Special Court complaining about the health of our brother but it is sad to say that his health continues to depreciate by the day," opined another elderly member of the fam-

ily.

Chief Hinga Norman, according to sources, sustained a serious injury in his

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Norman Is Dying

From front page

limb when he was nabbed and dragged by police personnel at his Liverpool Street offices, following his indictment by the Special Court. Since his arrest, he has been walking with the aid of a stick. "This injury, coupled with some psychological problems he is currently facing whilst in de-

tention have compounded his health condition even more," a senior member of the Kamajor militia group complained to The Exclusive.

It would be recalled that two big-fish indictees of the Special Court, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie died without being tried. The question asked by pundits is "what will

the Special Court show to the World, should Chief Hinga Norman, like the two, tow the death-line without being tried?"

However, according to Special Court sources, all the indictees of the Court are provided with adequate medical attention at their individual detention facilities.

Exclusive
Friday, 12 May 2006

Espionage ...

1 American, 3 Sierra Leoneans Sent to Prison

By Ibrahim Foday River Side Drive; New York Kamara and Collins Kamara sense Magistrate Adrian cial Court for Sierra Leone According to the prosecu-
One American citizen and three Sierra Leoneans were yesterday arraigned Fisher at Court No. 1A, for al- and have been sent to tion, the four were arrested
Michael Chemidlin of 730 Felix Rogers, Dawusco before the take-no-non- leged espionage at the Spe- prison. Contd. page 2

1 American, 3 Sierra Leoneans Sent to Prison

From front page

on the 18th April 2006 around the Special Court precincts in Freetown, while attempting to take snapshots of the said building for reasons that are still to be established.

They were charged with three counts of conspiracy, inspecting a prohibited area in a bid to take photographs and inspecting a prohibited area.

It would be recalled that the Special Court is at present housing the former Liberian president/warlord Charles Taylor who is being tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity levie J against him, with the trial still pending.

When this press contacted Michael Chemidlin at his court cell, he confirmed doing the act but said it was nothing

subversive. He however said his presence in this country is on behalf of Jesus Christ and the church as a whole because according to him, he is a religious brother. Although Defense Counsel Lawyer Africanus Sesay applied for bail for all the accused persons, the Magistrate never heeded and adjourned the matter to Monday 15th May 2006.

Spectator
Friday, 12 May 2006

Special Court spy suspect, 3 others sent to Central Prisons



Suspect: Michael Chemidliu

By Alford Dillet

An American national Michael Chemidliu and three Sierra Leonean youth, Felix Rogers, Damasco Kamara and Collins Kamara who appeared before Magistrate Adrian Fisher at court no. 1 on a 3 count charges of "conspiracy to engage in a

purpose prejudicial to the interest of Sierra Leone" contrary to law, were yesterday denied bail and lodged at the Pademba Road Central Prisons.

The suspects were said to have allegedly conspired to spy the Special Court for Sierra Leone situated at Jomo Kenyatta Road, a prohibited area for

unauthorized photographs and in contravention of section 16 sub sections 1 d of the treason and state offence act.

The defense counsel headed by Lawyer Africanus S. Sesay objected to the charges, arguing that the jurisdiction of the Court did not prohibit photography since it was not

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Special Court spy suspect, 3 other sent to Central Prisons

from front page

inscribed, adding that the court had the power to create its own rule regulating its affairs, and therefore government cannot bring an action on behalf of the special court. Reacting to the objection raised by defense, Gerald Soyey Esq. representing the Inspector General of police in prosecution, postulated that conspiracy is a common law offence, and that anybody acting contrary to the interest of the state is liable to be charge to court.

Lawyer Soyey pointed out that the

Special Court is in Sierra Leone for the purpose of promoting justice and that the accused took photos surreptitiously with a view to creating an impression, and that the State has a paramount duty to maintain law and order in court. The matter was adjourned to Monday 15th May 2006. Michael served as chief staff Sergeant in the U S Army and was retired on the 31st March 2006 after a brief mission in Iraq. He entered Sierra Leone through Accra, Ghana on a prospective business transaction.

Human Rights Watch

11 May 2006

For Immediate Release

EU: Foreign Ministers Should Resolve Taylor Issue

(Brussels, May 12, 2006) - When European Union foreign ministers meet in Brussels on May 15, an EU member state should offer to take former Liberian president Charles Taylor if he is convicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Human Rights Watch said today.

In the absence of a commitment from a specific state, the European Union should collectively agree that one of its member states will ultimately take Taylor if convicted. If no specific country has stepped forward by Monday, the Netherlands should accept a collective EU commitment as sufficient to move forward with transferring Taylor's trial to The Hague.

"The EU and its member states played a pivotal role in pushing for Taylor's surrender," said Lotte Leicht, EU director at Human Rights Watch. "But now West Africa is being hung out to dry. Delaying the transfer of Taylor's trial puts West Africa at risk."

On March 29, Taylor was surrendered to the Special Court, where he is indicted on war crimes and crimes against humanity. The next day, the Special Court requested to relocate Taylor's trial to The Hague, citing concerns about stability in West Africa if the trial is held in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown. The Netherlands agreed to host the trial, but only if Taylor leaves the country after the judgment is delivered, meaning that a third country must agree to take him if convicted.

"The Special Court requested that Taylor's trial be relocated to The Hague due to the security concerns posed by his presence in the region," said Leicht. "Liberia's new president has echoed the same concern. There is an urgent need to resolve this."

A number of EU member states are well-placed to offer to take Taylor if convicted, Human Rights Watch said. Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom currently have agreements with one or both of the international criminal tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia to provide facilities for convicted persons to serve their sentences. Austria and Sweden are particularly strong candidates as they also have similar agreements with the Special Court, although these have not been ratified.

Austria, Denmark and Sweden have cited various reasons against agreeing to accept Taylor in their countries, including lack of parliamentary approval, lack of resources, or the fact that they have shown a commitment to international justice in other ways. If a specific state does not come forward by the meeting of EU foreign ministers, the Netherlands should accept a collective EU commitment to provide a suitable detention facility for Taylor if convicted so that the transfer does not remain stalled.

"We accept that some governments would have to take steps at the national level before guaranteeing that they would take Taylor," said Leicht. "What's needed right now is a political commitment, ideally by one state, but otherwise by the EU collectively."

If necessary, the European Union should consider sharing the financial burden of the arrangement, Human Rights Watch said.

More on Relocating the Trial

The relocation of Taylor's trial to The Hague would mean that trial judges and staff from the Special Court would conduct the proceedings according to the court's statute and rules. The International Criminal Court has agreed to lend its facilities for the trial.

Moving Taylor's trial outside Sierra Leone would create serious challenges that the Special Court and its donors would have to address, Human Rights Watch noted. The most significant drawback is that trying Taylor in The Hague could limit the accessibility of the trial to people in West Africa. Nonetheless, legitimate concerns over security may make the move necessary.

If the relocation of Taylor's trial moves forward, Human Rights Watch will issue a briefing paper to the Special Court and its donors on the crucial importance of maintaining the accessibility of The Hague trial for the people of West Africa. The briefing paper will include a number of specific recommendations on how this can be achieved.

Background

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up in 2002 to try those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during Sierra Leone's armed conflict. The crimes include killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and the use of forced labor by armed groups.

The Special Court has charged Taylor with war crimes (murder, pillage, outrages upon personal dignity, cruel treatment, terrorizing civilians), crimes against humanity (murder, mutilation, rape, enslavement, sexual slavery), and other serious violations of international humanitarian law (use of child soldiers) in the course of Sierra Leone's armed conflict. The indictment alleges that Taylor, as president of Liberia, provided training and financing to the main rebel group in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 11 May 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

President Secures Free HIV Test Kits

Johannesburg, May 10, 2006 (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf accepted anti-AIDS assistance by the global pharmaceutical giant, Abbott Laboratories, during a visit to Chicago, US, this week. Abbott will donate thousands of HIV rapid-test kits and a consignment of antiretroviral to be used in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. According to the international child welfare NGO, Save The Children, Liberia has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world as a result of the pandemic - some 65 deaths in every 1,000 births.

LIBERIA: First financial report shows healthy improvement in government revenue collection

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

MONROVIA, 10 May 2006 (IRIN) - Liberia's peacetime government on Wednesday released a financial report of the first three months of its administration revealing a dramatic increase in revenue generation and collection. The report, released by the Ministry of Finance, covers January to March and details revenues and expenditures, said "the quarter showed very strong revenue performance and constrained spending, leading to accumulation of sizeable cash surplus".

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast to vaccinate five million children against polio

ABIDJAN, May 10, 2006 (AFP) - Ivory Coast is planning to vaccinate more than five million children against polio on both sides of the line dividing the government-held south from the rebel-held north, the health ministry said Wednesday. The campaign, which was in danger of weakening, is aimed at some 5.3 million children aged up to five years old. It will begin Friday and last four days to ensure continued immunity against the disease.

Pro-government youths stone Ivory Coast opposition

ABIDJAN, May 10 (Reuters) - Hundreds of youths loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo stoned the cars of senior opposition figures in Ivory Coast and hemmed them in for several hours late on Tuesday, an opposition official said on Wednesday. Police eventually fired tear gas and warning shots to chase off the youths, who trapped senior figures from the Rally of Republicans (RDR) party in the Yopougon suburb of the main city Abidjan, the official said.

Local Media – Newspapers

UN Envoy Solicits Evidence of Peacekeepers' Involvement in Sexual Exploitation

(The News and The Analyst, New Democrat and The Diary)

- In the wake of the release of the report by Save the Children UK that peacekeepers and aid workers are engaging in a food-for-sex trade with young Liberian girls and women, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss yesterday implored the international charity to provide specifics to enable UNMIL investigate the allegations, especially those involving the mission's staff.

Government Criticizes Sexual Exploitation Report

(The Inquirer)

- The Liberian government has criticized the recent Save the Children UK report on sexual exploitation in Liberia, saying that it is deeply concerned about some of the generally unsupported claims and conclusions reached in the report, according to a Health Ministry press release issued yesterday. The government took serious note of Save the Children UK's admission that the report did not constitute a detailed research, the release added.

IMF Approves Economic Reform Program for Liberia

(Daily Observer, The Inquirer and The Informer)

- Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh said in a press conference in Monrovia yesterday, that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had endorsed Liberia's economic reform program and assigned personnel to monitor the program for six months. She said that the IMF had set up a permanent resident office in Liberia and posted its first Country Representative to Liberia in 25 years.

Dutch Prosecution Wants 20 Year Sentence for Taylor's Associate

(New Democrat and New Vision)

- Sources in The Netherlands said recently that state lawyers were seeking a prison sentence of at least 20 years for the Dutchman Gus van Kouwenhoven—who is on trial for war crimes in Liberia.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

IMF Approves Economic Reform Program for Liberia

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Finance Ministry Hands Over Sacked Customs Officers for Prosecution

- Addressing a news conference in Monrovia yesterday, Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh said that the ministry had forwarded three dismissed customs officers to the Justice Ministry for prosecution. Three men are accused of misappropriating revenue collected at the Customs Detail at Ganta, Nimba County.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Education Ministry Lacks Accurate Record on Schools in Liberia

- Deputy Education Minister for Planning Emmanuel Roberts told journalists in Monrovia yesterday that the Ministry lacks reliable record on the number of schools in the country. He added that the Ministry had no knowledge of the number of teachers in the school system.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Elections Commission Rejects Withdrawal Request from Candidate in By-Elections

- According to a press release the National Elections Commission's Board of Commissioners yesterday rejected a request from Rivercess County representative candidate Sampson Cephas to withdraw from the upcoming by-election because the letter to withdraw from the race ignored the procedure requiring candidates not to withdraw from the process once ballots had been printed.
(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

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. Jeddi Armah at armahj@un.org.

Hirondelle News Agency

Tuesday, 9 May 2006

FONDATION HIRONDELLE - HIRONDELLE NEWS AGENCY IN ARUSHA
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA

ICTR/FINANCES

COST OF THE ICTR TO REACH ONE BILLION USD BY THE END OF 2007

Arusha, May 9th 2006 (FH) –The court’s spokesperson has transmitted a document to the Hirondelle Agency stating that the estimated cost of the ICTR, whose mission is to trace and judge the main criminals of the 1994 genocide, amounts to 1,032,692,000 USD between its creation in 1995 and 2007.

The ICTR has its headquarters in the small town of Arusha, Tanzania. A thousand employees are divided among the three branches of the tribunal: the chambers, the prosecutor’s office and the registry. Originating from 85 different countries, they work for the most part in the jurisdiction’s headquarters in Arusha.

Members of defence teams, who do not have the status of officials of the United Nations, are on the payroll of the Tribunal as well, as part of the free legal aid allocated to all impoverished detainees.

The ICTR’s budget proceeds from UN member states’ contributions. For the year 2006-2007, it amounts to approximately \$ 250.5 millions. The budget for the previous year was of \$ 230.5 millions

The ICTR was created following resolution 955 of the UN Security Council, adopted on November, 8th 1994. The first trial took place in January 1997.

27 alleged criminals have been judged since then. Among them are former state ministers and administrative officials.

The Rwandan government considers that this is not enough to justify the budget allotted to the tribunal.

During a press conference held in Kigali on Monday, Rwandan President Paul Kagame denounced the court for costing up to \$ 1.5 billion and for delivering “less than 40 verdicts in “almost 11 years”. The Rwandan State Secretary had previously announced that the ICTR had disposed of a \$ 1.6 billion budget since it began.

The ICTR has detained 72 persons to date. 27 have been condemned, 16 of them to life imprisonment. The court is currently examining the cases of 27 other defendants, and 15 more men await the opening of their trials.