

**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

as at:

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

Local News

Child War Victim Shows Courage to go on / *Awoko* Pages 3-4

International News

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / *UNMIL* Pages 5-7

International Community Issues Ultimatum to Uganda LRA Rebels / *Voice of America* Pages 8-9

Kenya Tribunal for Post-Election Crimes Opens Political Divisions / *Voice of America* Pages 10-11

World Recalls End of World War I / *BBC Online* Pages 12-13

Awoko

Wednesday, 12 November 2008

Child War Victim Shows Courage to go on

Loss of hands doesn't deter young woman from Sierra Leone

Mariatu Kamara is 22, pays close attention to fashion, makeup and hairstyles, and, like many young women in Canada, starts college today. But, unlike others at her downtown campus, Kamara is doing it all without hands. Hers were hacked off in a machete attack in her native Sierra Leone a decade ago.

Kamara is unlike other students as well in that she has a book coming out in the next few weeks, published by Toronto's Annick Press and expected to be a huge hit with its target high school audience. *The Bite of the Mango* tells her story so far: of having her hands amputated when she was 12; of being raped by a village man just before that, and of having the son resulting from that assault; of spending years wracked with guilt after the infant died at 10 months, convinced she'd killed him by not loving him enough. Hers is not an easy story to read. But *The Bite of the Mango* brings a new perspective among recent accounts of kids caught in Africa's civil wars that of a girl child.



Kamara has been in Canada six years. Her incredulity at her new life, and her gratitude, bring tears that lie close to the surface. "Coming from a place of war where you had nothing, now you're in a country where everywhere you turn there's opportunity that will make your life better and help other people around the world ..." she says. Toronto's bustling metropolis is a far cry from the Magborou village of 200 people and eight huts, where Kamara was raised with extended family. All children worked on the communal farm as soon as they were physically able, most at age 6. Her reality began to shift when she was 11, with the sudden threat of attacks by the government-opposed Revolutionary United Front.

The actual attack came without warning, except for Kamara's dream of burning palm oil, signifying spilled blood, the night before. While heading with her cousins to a nearby village, they walked into an ambush. She was held captive for several hours, and remembered an aunt's advice to answer "yes" when asked if she liked what she saw after witnessing the murder of villagers she knew. One of those she saw shot to death was a man from a neighbouring village who had raped her weeks earlier. Kamara didn't then know she was pregnant. The book, co-written by award-winning Canadian magazine journalist Susan McClelland and distributed by Firefly, gives an unflinching account of her brutalization by boy soldiers her age. "It took the boy two attempts to cut

"I just think it's time to let go, you know? Forgive them," says Mariatu Kamara, 22, of the child soldiers who hacked off her hands in Sierra Leone 10 years ago. Kamara starts at George Brown College in Toronto and her new book, The Bite of the Mango, soon will be on bookstore shelves in Canada. (Photo: Tony Bock / Toronto Star)

off my right hand," Kamara writes. "The first swipe didn't get through the bone, which I saw sticking out in all different shapes and sizes. He brought the machete down again in a different spot, higher up on my arm. This time, my hand flew from the rock onto the ground."

The rebels' signature was mutilation and during the decade-long conflict, an estimated 20,000 civilians had arms, legs, lips and ears amputated with machetes and axes. "Go see the president," the child soldier told her. "Tell him to give you new hands." The book's title is a nod to her spirit, referring to a mango offered by a man she encountered that same night. He held the fruit to her mouth, but she insisted on taking it, holding it in the clotting stumps she'd wrapped in a sheet. She tells of her journey to the capital, Freetown, her medical care and pregnancy, and her next few years living in a refugee camp, begging on the streets each day. Kamara's dark story, told to a visiting journalist, so moved an Owen Sound resident who read about her in a local paper that she was sponsored to come to Canada. She was immediately embraced by Toronto's Sierra Leonean community.

This week she begins a program at George Brown College that teaches counselling and advocacy for women and children who have experienced violence. "Sometimes I do find it difficult, but you know the people that I meet, they're just so wonderful. They don't even think

that I have a problem. They just take me as a normal person," she says. Her arms and missing hands are usually covered by her sleeves but a ringing cellphone prompts her to peel them back and dive into her purse to deftly answer it. Prostheses, she's decided, are too expensive and not worth the effort. Kamara says she is committed to school, so requests for appearances already coming in from across the country will be met when possible. Recent international book fairs have created a buzz and it is expected the international book rights will soon be bought. As well, she's a UNICEF Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. She's also featured in an upcoming documentary about child war victims and was filmed on a visit to Sierra Leone last February, where she toured health and educational facilities.

Kamara recognizes the opportunity, and responsibility, to give back. "I have food around me, clothes everywhere," she says. "I don't think that, 'Tomorrow I have to go to town and start begging,' but (those left behind) still have to go through that." As for the child soldiers who maimed her? "I just think it's time to let go, you know? Forgive them. They are also our brothers. They suffered, too," Kamara says. Today, however, her focus is forward finish school, get a good job and then help make concrete changes in Sierra Leone. And she wants to build a home there, where her whole family can live and she can visit. "Oh yeah, that's my dream always a big house," she smiles. "That's a big dream, but we'll work it out."

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
11 November 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

UNMIL Expects More Jordanian Police

(The Inquirer, Informer)

- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ellen Margrethe Løj has welcomed Jordan's decision to boost the presence of the UN Police (UNPOL) in Liberia by providing an additional newly formed police unit (FPU), which is due to arrive in the country in December this year. Ms. Løj made the statement when she awarded UN peacekeeping medals to 120 officers of the Jordanian Formed Police Unit for their contribution to peace and stability in Liberia.
- The UN Envoy commended the Jordanian police officers for supporting the Liberia National Police in various ways, particularly in dealing with "mob violence," urging the Jordanian police officers to demonstrate the "patience and reserve" that was necessary to support their Liberian colleagues.
- The strengthened police component will enhance the provision of strategic advice and expertise to their Liberian counterparts in the rule of law field, and operational support to regular activities of the Liberia National Police (LNP) and Corrections sector as well as react to urgent security incidents.

President Sirleaf Vows Stern Action following Audit of government entities

(Heritage, The Inquirer)

- The Heritage reports that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has received several audit reports from the General Auditing Commission (GAC) for perusal and subsequent action. The President has vowed to take drastic action against any corrupt public officials. The latest presentation by the Auditing Commission to the President is in addition to audit reports of several government entities.
- Addressing journalists at regular press briefing on Monday, the Assistant Press Secretary to the President Charles Nelson said the reports cover the financial transactions of major government ministries and agencies but did not disclose the ministries or agencies involved.
- The Inquirer however quotes Mr. Nelson as saying that among audit reports received from the GAC is a report on the financial transaction of the Ministry of States and Presidential Affairs. Commenting on other matters, Nelson said the President remains positive regarding the prospects of the Emergency Response Unit of the Liberian National Police (ERU) and is delighted that the force is now conducting joint night patrols and confident that the success of the force is core to protecting lives and property.

Several Major Cases Set for Hearing during November Term

(The Informer, Heritage, The Inquirer)

- The media reports that as the November term of court begins, several major cases have been placed on the dockets of the relevant courts. Prominent among the cases are the Hans William/Madia Paykue alleged Murder of Little Angel Togba; the slain Chinese murder case; Senator Roland Kaine and Pastor Fatoma murder cases.

- All of the above cases when assigned are expected to be heard in Criminal Court "A" before Judge Boima Kontoe who was retained for this term while Kaine's case is expected to be heard in Court "B" before Judge Yussif Kaba, resident Judge of the Civil Law Court. Presiding over the opening of the courts yesterday, Judge Kaba blamed the delay of trial proceedings on lawyers who he said are not sometimes aware of the issues in the proceedings.

Vice President Boakai Visits CSA -Expresses Satisfaction over Performance

(The Inquirer, Heritage)

- The Inquirer reports that Vice President Ambassador Joseph N. Boakai on Monday visited the Civil Service Agency (CSA) on Carey Street in Monrovia. According to the CSA Press release, Vice President Boakai expressed satisfaction over the performance of the Civil Service Agency which had been dormant for years.
- He said although people were criticizing the government "rightsizing" programme, he is optimistic that citizen would one day appreciate the benefit of the exercise. The Civil Service boss, Dr. William Allen, explained that the CSA was strongly implementing the government's Civil Service Reform policy which will ensure adequate compensation for civil servants for improved service delivery.
- Commenting on the Senior Executive Service (SES), a programme launched to attract qualified Liberians from the Diaspora to come back home and work in the government, Dr. Allen said because of the brain drain the country is presently facing, recruitment of SES personnel will bring effective leadership in government and that several candidates for the senior executive service will be deployed in some key ministries and agencies.

Reports Claim UN Snubs "Acting" Senate Pro-tempore

(National Chronicle, The Inquirer, Heritage)

- The National Chronicle reports that the United Nations Mission in Liberia has reportedly refused to meet with the "leadership" of the Senate headed by Lahai Lasannah to discuss developments at the Senate. The Inquirer said the UN through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj recognizes Isaac Nyenabo as the legitimate Senate Pro-temp of the Liberian Senate.
- The paper suspects that the UN Envoy did not want to meet with Lasannah based on a formal communication addressed to the Lahai Lassannah faction. The letter which is in apparent response to a communication requesting an audience with Ms. Løj said the SRSG notes the development concerning the leadership of the Senate including the decision of the Supreme Court and looks forward to meeting the Senate in the near future. The UN Mission in Liberia said it believes in the continued and necessary cooperation in collaboration with the Senate.

Radio Summary

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

President Sirleaf Confident of Continued U.S. Support

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says she is confident that the partnership between Liberia and the U.S. will continue under the leadership of President-elect Barack Obama.
- Speaking to journalists, President Sirleaf said Liberia continues to enjoy bi-partisan support from the U.S. Congress and was confident that the policies remained unchanged on Liberia.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Lawyers, Circuit Court Judges Trade Allegations over Problems in Judiciary

- The National Bar Association and Circuit Court Judges have traded allegations on what is responsible for problems facing the judiciary.
- Delivering the charge on behalf of his colleagues, Criminal Court "B" Judge, Yussef Kaba attributed the problems of ineffectiveness of the judiciary to lawyers' attitude to cases.
- Judge Kaba said some lawyers are not acquainted with cases they take up for clients before coming to court.
- But responding to the charge, the Bar Association said some of the problems with the judiciary system are statements emanating from judicial personnel including lawyers.

- Counsellor Theophilus Gould speaking on behalf of the lawyers said the judiciary does not lack integrity as claimed by Judge Kaba but said the judiciary has failed to educate the public about the workings of the justice system.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Discussion on Freedom of Information Act Opens in Monrovia Today

- The Liberia Coalition for Free Expression with support from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa(OSIWA) is today beginning a series of activities aimed at explaining to stakeholders the intent of the draft Freedom of Information Act currently before the National Legislature.
- In a statement, the group said the week-long activities will also consider discussion of access to information as the underlining concept of the act.

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 9:00 am)*

Monrovia City Council Announces Plans for New Municipal Regulations

- The Monrovia City Council has announced plans to adopt new municipal regulations for the city of Monrovia.
- In a release, the City Council said preparations are underway for a three-day public hearing to solicit recommendation relative to the new regulations.
- The recommendations to be acquired from principal stakeholders will be synchronized and subsequently adopted.
- The Chairman of the Monrovia City Council, Daniel Jonson said the council will shortly begin addressing critical issues covering city cleaning and sanitation.

Voice of America

Wednesday, 12 November 2008

International Community Issues Ultimatum to Uganda LRA Rebels

By Peter Clottey
Washington, D.C.

The leader of Uganda Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels has agreed to sign a final peace deal at the end of the month after the international community warned of dire consequences if he fails to sign the deal. Joseph Kony agreed to sign the final peace deal after rebel delegation negotiating with President Yoweri Museveni government met with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon as well as other regional leaders in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

The leaders warned the rebel delegation that the international community would not rule out a military option if the leader of the rebels fails again to sign the final peace deal. The peace deal is expected to end over two decades of rebel insurgency in northern Uganda.

David Matsanga is the leader of the LRA rebel delegation with Uganda's government. He tells reporter Peter Clottey from Kenya's capital, Nairobi that the rebels would comply with the demands of the international community.

"We went to Kampala last week on the instructions of general Joseph Kony to go into a meeting with the stakeholders. And out of that meeting with the stakeholders, they came out with a resolution and a declaration that this agreement must be signed by the end of this month," Matsanga said.

He said the rebel delegation held meetings with President Museveni about the LRA concerns ahead of the final peace deal.

"We also met President Museveni and we delivered as LRA our position, and why there has been a delay. And out of that meeting, it was resolved that the conference did impose on us (rebels), which is very clear and supported by the United Nations and by President Joseph Kabila and other presidents. We argued our case, but it was resolved that on 29th of this month the peace agreement must be signed by the LRA and that is the end of it," he said.

Matsanga said the rebel negotiating team would soon be meeting the leader of the rebels to officially convey the international community's ultimatum.

"General Joseph Kony has said that we as a delegation must go and we are going to meet him next week. We are going to sit down with him as a delegation with other religious leaders, civic leaders from northern Uganda to explain the whole agreement to general Joseph Kony and his commanders. After that we would come back to brief former President Jaoqim Chisaano and Vice President Riek Marcher so that we can go back on the 29th of this month to sign the final peace deal," Matsanga pointed out.

He described as a nice gesture President Museveni's promise to provide food to the rebels.

"Let me tell you one thing that while we were in Kampala, President Museveni agreed and said he is willing to provide food for the LRA during this time of assembly, and that is a very good sign that we want from Kampala," he said.

Matsanga said the rebel delegation was able to sign the cessation of hostilities agreement with Uganda's government to ensure peace and security ahead of the final peace deal.

"Today, I have signed the cessation of hostilities agreement, which is a great breakthrough. I negotiated on this and the government of Uganda refused to sign, but I was successful in convincing them and the world that the renewal of the cessation of hostilities agreement is very important. I signed my part and Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda (leader of the government negotiating team) has also signed his part, which is a very good sign of breakthrough," Matsanga noted.

He said the international community was reassuring to the rebels that if the final peace agreement were to be signed there would not be any repercussions.

"We met not only the Secretary General of the United Nations, but we also met President Kabila for two and half hours in Nairobi. We discussed all issues pertaining to the peace process and we discussed all issues pertaining to our troops who are being attacked by the Congolese troops. President Kabila promised that he would direct his army with effect from Saturday not to attack general Joseph Kony's troops anywhere in Congo when they are moving towards Ri-Kwamgba for this particular meeting," he said.

Matsanga said the UN secretary general failure by the leadership of the rebels to sign the final deal would not be tolerated.

"The secretary general of the United Nations was very clear that if we don't sign this peace deal by the end of the month, what will befall the rebels would be clear and decisive," Matsanga pointed out.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 11 November 2008

Kenya Tribunal for Post-Election Crimes Opens Political Divisions

By Derek Kilner

Nairobi

A Kenyan human-rights watchdog says it has been in communication with the International Criminal Court in the Hague about crimes committed in the aftermath Kenya's December elections. As Derek Kilner reports from Nairobi, Kenyan political leaders are divided over whether to support a recommendation to establish a tribunal on post-election violence in the country.

As part of an agreement mediated by African leaders in February, a commission was established to investigate violence set off by disputed election results that killed more than 1,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands from December through February.

Last month the commission, headed by Kenyan judge Philip Waki, released its findings and recommended Kenya establishes a tribunal with Kenyan and international members, to try those suspected of the greatest involvement in the violence.

Waki refused to reveal the names of the suspects, but said if Kenya's leaders did not agree to the tribunal within 60 days, those names will be forwarded to the International Criminal Court.

Leaders from both of Kenya's main political parties have not offered a firm position on the report, trying to avoid being seen as blocking an investigation into serious crimes, while retaining support of allies who may be implicated.

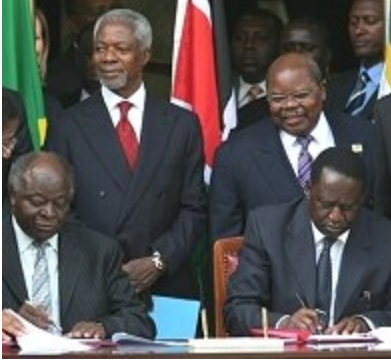
Kenyan civil society leaders have grown increasingly frustrated with the political response. A top official with the state-funded Kenya National Commission for Human Rights, Hassan Omar, called for leaders to act on the report.

"By rejecting the report, we understand the politicians to be telling Kenyans that 'A', they do not want national catharsis, healing of the nation, or a clean break from the past; 'B', they support the love of national morality in politics, and does not believe in the culture of humanity; and 'C' that they prefer to reinforce Kenya's culture of impunity by hiding the concealed painful truth of the post-election violence," he said.

Omar said the human-rights commission, which produced a separate report on the violence, would prefer to establish a tribunal in Kenya, but has been in contact with the International Criminal Court.

"The ICC has already been in touch with the KNCHR. They are interested in this matter.

They have asked us to share with them our report, plus other reports, and to share with them the relevant information," he said. "They are determining whether this matter is a matter that they would be interested in, and the ICC does not need an invitation to come here."



Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki (L) and opposition chief Raila Odinga sign agreement in Nairobi, 28 Feb 2008

Key supporters of both President Mwai Kibaki and his main opponent in December's election, Prime Minister Raila Odinga, are thought to be among those under investigation.

Supporters of Mr. Odinga from the Rift Valley province have been accused of organizing tribal militias to target members of President Kibaki's Kikuyu ethnic group over long-standing land disputes. Supporters of the president, meanwhile, have been accused of recruiting a Kikuyu gang known as the Mungiki to carry out retaliatory attacks.

Tensions have been particularly visible within Mr. Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement, which holds a majority in Kenya's parliament. The prime minister, who has eagerly courted the favor of the international community during the past year, initially endorsed Waki's recommendations. But a recent meeting of the party's members of parliament rejected them.

On Monday, after a meeting of top party leaders, Secretary-General Anyang Nyong'o said the party would form a new committee to look at the report.

BBC Online

Tuesday, 11 November 2008

World recalls end of World War I

Ceremonies have been held across the globe to mark the 90th anniversary of the end of World War I.

At a service in Verdun, north-east France, President Nicolas Sarkozy paid tribute to the millions who died during the four-year conflict.

French and German troops fought for eight months at Verdun in the longest battle of a war that reshaped Europe.

In the US, politicians took part in the annual Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington cemetery, near Washington.

Vice-President Dick Cheney and Defence Secretary Robert Gates were among those to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the national cemetery's Tomb of the Unknowns to honour those who have died in service to the US.

President George W Bush marked his final Veterans Day as commander-in-chief with a speech at a decommissioned aircraft carrier, the USS Intrepid, in New York.

He paid tribute to the armed forces and thanked veterans across the US for "standing up when your nation needed you the most".

President-elect Barack Obama, meanwhile, honoured fallen troops by laying a wreath at a memorial in Chicago's Soldier Field.

Earlier in London, three of the four surviving British World War I veterans attended a ceremony at the Cenotaph.

Henry Allingham, 112, Harry Patch, 110, and Bill Stone, 108, represented the Royal Air Force, Army and Royal Navy respectively.

At 1100 GMT, a two-minute silence was observed, marking the time - at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month - when the Armistice Treaty came into effect to end the war.

No survivors

Earlier on Tuesday, President Sarkozy took part in an Armistice Day service in Verdun, and paid tribute to those who had died. France will never forget the children who have fought for her

"France will never forget the children who have fought for her," he said.

He paid respect to the soldiers from Europe, North America, Africa and Australasia "who died far away from their countries to defend our liberty".

Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, and the Duchess of Cornwall were guests of honour at the event.

But no French or German veterans were in attendance, says the BBC's Europe correspondent, Jonny Dymond. Not one member of the two huge armies that clashed on the fields of Verdun survives.

Only the dead were left to be remembered, and the backdrop of the service was a huge stone ossuary, containing the remains of tens of thousands of men from both sides who died in the fighting.

A respectful silence was held and the bell tolled inside the ossuary, where Mr Sarkozy lit a memorial flame and a male choir sang the French national anthem.

Since the war, Verdun has become a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation.

But its hillside has come to symbolise World War I's awful savagery, says our correspondent. During the fighting, more than 60 million shells fell on the land, transforming it into a pitted piece of hell on earth.

Pacific century

As well as services across Europe, Iraq and Afghanistan, remembrance ceremonies have been held in Australia, which lost 60,000 men in the conflict.

Services were held across Australia to remember the dead

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd used a speech at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra to issue a call for peace.

"We have all endured a most bloody century," he said.

"Let us resolve afresh at the dawn of this new century... that this might be a truly pacific peaceful century."

A lone bugler then played the Last Post, which is used to to commemorate the war dead in Commonwealth countries.

Meanwhile, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was in Warsaw to mark the anniversary of Poland's independence - which also came on 11 November 1918.

World War I was the world's first industrialised war.

It toppled four European empires, led to the creation of the Soviet Union and marked the end of Europe's long global hegemony.