

**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, 13 December 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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*Note: Due to email problems, the following was dictated over the telephone by a member of the British High Commission.*

## **Press Release**

### **Statement on Arrest of Charles Margai**

The undersigned diplomatic missions in Sierra Leone note with concern the arrest in Freetown on 7 December of Charles Margai, leader of the unregistered People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC).

We are concerned this may have implications for Sierra Leone's security and stability and also for preparations for credible and democratic elections in 2007. It is important that all parties and candidates for the elections should be able to prepare for these on an equal basis.

We encourage all parties, their leaders and supporters in Sierra Leone to now act moderately and responsibly, and avoid any actions or statements that could heighten tensions.

We hope that the court proceedings against Mr Margai will now proceed expeditiously and according to due process.

We remain in close touch with all parties and continue to monitor developments closely.

Signed,

Embassy of France  
Embassy of the United States of America  
British High Commission  
Delegation of the European Commission  
Freetown, 12 December 2005

# TO VOTE BEREWA Kamajohs Demand Norman's Release

**T**he supporters of Vice President Berewa are working overtime to gain support for his leadership. In a meeting to curry Kamajohs' votes ahead of 2007 elections deadlocked on the question of "when will Chief Hingha Norman be released on charges of the Special Court?" The meeting was held in Pujehun a week ago.

Pro-Berewa campaigners in the Pujehun District not giving up in their effort to retrieve lost support since the defection of Charles Margai are striving to especially get the

support of the Kamajohs. Report states that the said meeting was attended by Former Commanders of the Kamajoh militia in the Pujehun District.

*Contd. Back Page*



# **Kamajohs**

## **Demand** **Norman's** **Release**

*From Front Page*

Making the disclosure to Evening Scoop in Pujehun, ex-Kamajoh foot soldiers revealed in an exclusive interview that for them to support Berewa, the issue of Norman must be addressed or else they will express revulsion by voting against Berewa and the SLPP.

"We see the SLPP as an ungrateful party which does not seek the welfare of its people. If Kabbah is in power today, he should be grateful to Chief Norman who sacrificed a lot to get him back. He should be grateful to the supporters because we made him what he is today. He acts like he made the SLPP. First he dropped Joe Demby, then had Norman arrested and turns round to tell us he wants Berewa! Who does he think he is?"

The Kamajohs are of the view that Norman was ungratefully treated by the SLPP and no amount of rhetoric can distort the history.

There is one ex-Kamajoh Commander now councillor, (name withheld) who could not comment on the issue but registered support for Berewa.

Cocorioko website

[http://www.cocorioko.com/newsbeat\\_](http://www.cocorioko.com/newsbeat_)

## **HINGA NORMAN DEFENCE TEAM SUMMONS LANS GBERIE**

BY ABDUL HASHIM DABOH

Tuesday December 13, 2005

Researcher, analyst and publisher of one of the most insightful books on the Sierra Leone crisis, Lans Gberie, has been reportedly summoned to testify for the CDF defense team early next year in Freetown. The erudite contemporary scholar is expected to present a factual analysis of the crisis as he sees it from all angles. Also summoned by the defense is the former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold. This two and, Tejan Kabbah is expected to deal a great blow to the prosecution indictments against Norman and Co, especially from Norman's former boss TJ- who is both Head of State and Defense Minister.

Hashim Daboh

[www.wpherald.com](http://www.wpherald.com)

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## **U.N.: Liberia needs security assistance**

**By UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL**

Published December 12, 2005

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U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has asked the international community to assist Liberia with security reforms.

"Security problems in Ivory Coast are a threat to stability in Liberia," said Annan Friday, in his ninth report on UNMIL, the U.N. Mission in Liberia.

Along with the secretary-general's report, a five-member panel of experts also submitted its report on Liberia to the U.N. Security Council. The panel expressed concern about the "organized recruitment of ex-combatants in Liberia."

The 445 mile-long border between Liberia and Ivory Coast made the monitoring of recruitments difficult, said the panel.

Security challenges stem from former members of the Liberian army, and members of ex-President Charles Taylor's armed militia.

In his next report, scheduled for March, the secretary-general said he would recommend adjustments to UNMIL. His recommendations will be based on findings of an assessment mission and consultations with Liberia's new government.

The report will highlight additional responsibilities for UNMIL, including protecting the Special Court for Sierra Leone and detaining Taylor if he returns to Liberia.

The embargo on Liberian diamonds and timber will continue as a means of curtailing illegal exports, said the panel.

Global Witness, a lobby group, told the BBC illegal diamond mining by former rebels is undermining efforts to restore stability. The group said the United Nations failed to halt illegal exports of minerals.

The panel expressed concern over a 25-year agreement with Mittal Steel which contained provisions costly to Liberians. "These provisions suggest transparent negotiations are necessary," said the panel.

Liberian President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has said she is confident in her ability to tackle the challenges ahead. Liberians hope her presidency will finally bring stability to the war-torn country



The people of Niger need **our help today!**

## Showered With Enthusiasm, Liberia's President-Elect Receives High-Level Reception in Washington

allAfrica.com

ANALYSIS

December 11, 2005

Posted to the web December 11, 2005

By Reed Kramer  
Washington, DC

*Having beaten the odds to win (helped by some polls and a helicopter), Africa's first female elected president faces daunting challenges.*

When Ellen Johnson Sirleaf launched her campaign to become president of Liberia, conventional wisdom rated her chances as slim to none.

No African woman had ever won a presidential election. The presumed front-runner, George Weah, was a charismatic political novice, three decades her junior, whose international soccer fame had made him a national hero and household name, especially among Liberia's largely unemployed youth. To stand a chance of winning, Sirleaf had to find a way to rise to the top of a heap that included 21 other candidates.

Among those who did not expect Sirleaf to triumph were U.S. officials who track African developments. According to government sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to give on-the-record interviews, almost all U.S. intelligence and diplomatic reporting pointed to Weah as the near-certain winner, an outcome that was privately favored by at least some of the policymakers most closely involved. After her victory was certified, however, President George Bush telephoned his congratulations, and on a private visit to the United States this week Sirleaf is being courted by top administration officials and leading members of Congress.

While in Washington Friday, in addition to seeing World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz, she met at the White House with National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley and his Africa deputy, Cindy Courville. Next week, she is scheduled to meet Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Treasury Secretary John Snow, along with members of the House and Senate, including Majority Leader Bill Frist and the Congressional Black Caucus. Liberia's relationship with the United States is the longest lasting in Africa, dating from 1822, when freed slaves went ashore from a U.S. Navy vessel sponsored by the American Colonization Society, whose members included the incumbent U.S. president, James Monroe, for whom the capital city was named when the settlers declared Liberia a sovereign republic in 1847.

Outpourings of public support for the president-elect have been widespread. During a tour of West African capitals early this month, she was greeted with rare enthusiasm, including a standing ovation at the Franco-Africa summit in Bamako, Mali, attended by 53 African leaders and French President Jacques Chirac, who invited her to visit Paris.

Ellen, as she is increasingly known - like a Pelé or a Madonna, needing no last name - is also receiving a warm welcome among Liberians living in the United States. Although each of the leading candidates in the



presidential race received backing from U.S.-based support groups, Sirleaf's supporters were among the most active. A group called "Family, Friends and Well-Wishers of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf" raised funds, organized rallies, and, last week after her victory became official, held a thanksgiving service at in Washington, DC.

"This is a wonderful development for our country," said D. Elwood Dunn, a Liberian who is professor of political science at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. "It's almost like she has been training for this throughout her career."

Last year, before campaigning was permitted inside Liberia, a group called 'Liberians for Ellen' set up a web site to mobilize support for Sirleaf's candidacy among Liberians in the United States. "Many Liberians did not want to break from their parties, but they wanted to back Ellen," says the group's founder, Amara Konneh, a 35-year old information specialist living in Philadelphia. Konneh says he has admired Sirleaf "ever since her campaign in 1985," when she won election to the Senate but refused to take the seat to protest electoral misconduct by then-head-of-state, Samuel K. Doe, a former army sergeant who, having seized power in a 1980 coup, sought to legitimize his military regime with a staged victory at the polls.

Konneh left Liberia during the civil war in 1990 after his father and three brothers, along with an uncle and his family, were killed in the war. "My ethnic group was targeted, and I narrowly escaped death myself, so I went to Guinea to join my sister in a refugee camp," Konneh says. From money he earned there working on local farms, he started a school and later became a regional coordinator for refugee schools in Guinea, where over 500,000 Liberians took refuge from the fighting in their homeland during the 1990s. He managed to gain asylum in the United States, where he worked his way through school, earning a bachelor's degree in 1996 before getting his Master's from Drexel University.

In July of this year on a visit to Monrovia to explore ways to boost Sirleaf's chances, Konneh decided he could best contribute by putting his computer skills to work. Before going, Konneh says he studied American political operatives like James Carville and Karl Rove for pointers on how successful campaigns are run. He conducted a quick poll of 800 youths in the capital to find out how Sirleaf was regarded and charted the results on a spreadsheet. "My results were very surprising," he says. "They liked her, but they said they weren't too sure about the old people because the old politicians had failed them."

Along with Washington-based political consultant Riva Levinson, Konneh helped Sirleaf and her political team utilize the polling data to shape her campaign message. Levinson, who also worked on Sirleaf's 1997 campaign, "is bright and politically connected," Konneh says. "She was our secret weapon." After the July visit, Levinson, managing director at BKSH and Associates, a government-relations firm headed by prominent Republican fundraiser Charles Black, advised Sirleaf in a memorandum to position herself as "a strong and capable woman" who will battle to make a better future for the country. Emphasize energy and "avoid any clothes (especially hats) that someone's grandmother might wear," Levinson suggested to Sirleaf, who has four sons and six grand children.

With Weah in the spotlight, Sirleaf was struggling for visibility. "We wanted to draw attention to the fact that Ellen could become the first woman elected to lead a modern African nation," Levinson says. "We kept saying this but were drowned out by Weah's soccer superstardom and the 'conventional wisdom' that he was bound to win." When the Times of London's Prue Clarke, in a dispatch from Monrovia on July 30, called the election "a two-horse race" between Weah and Sirleaf and mentioned that she could be Africa's first elected female president, the campaign team was elated. "This was our tipping point" in international perceptions, Levinson says, citing successive stories in the European and North American press that picked up the same theme.

In August, Konneh returned to Liberia to carry out more extensive polling in the six of the 15 counties with the largest number of registered voters. "We also included her home county of Bomi, because we didn't want her to end up as Liberia's Al Gore," who lost his home state of Tennessee in the 2000 U.S. presidential campaign, Konneh said. He designed a questionnaire, hired 20 university students and gave them a crash

course on interviewing techniques. To analyze the findings, he added more elaborate formulas and graphs to his spreadsheet. The polling helped determine the areas of the country where Sirleaf was best placed to get the most votes.

The polling numbers painted a sobering picture. Weah had a clear lead. Charles Brumskine was running second, with Sirleaf trailing in third place. "When we asked voters the most important issue for the country, they named education," Konneh says. Ironically, a large number felt that Weah, who ended his schooling before completing secondary school to play soccer, could be trusted to deliver education to the youth. Presented with the findings, Sirleaf gave more attention to her stand on the importance of education and on her broad experience. "She kept pounding these themes, and resources were re-allocated to get the message across," he said. And she kept reaching out to her natural constituency, women voters.

Sirleaf's team recognized that their most valuable asset was the candidate herself. "The average market person felt very comfortable with her, and she was comfortable with them," Maryland political consultant Larry Gibson told the Associated Press. A law professor who managed the 1992 Clinton/Gore campaign in Maryland and three successful campaigns for Baltimore's first black mayor, Kurt Schmoke, Gibson said he agreed to help Sirleaf at the urging of his friend Harry Greaves, a top Sirleaf lieutenant, after deciding "Ellen was the best chance for the country." Greaves credits Gibson with boosting Sirleaf's profile with tactical advice and effective campaign posters and bumper stickers purchased for bargain prices in China.

Of the 22 candidates who competed for the presidency in the first round of the elections on October 11, Sirleaf had the most extensive resume, with a public service career spanning 35 years and a Masters degree in public administration from Harvard. In the late 1970s, she served as Liberia's finance minister, before going to work as a vice president for Citibank and Equator Bank. She was a candidate in Liberia's two previous, and seriously flawed, election campaigns - first in 1985, when she ran for the Senate, and 1997, when she stood for president against then-rebel leader Charles Taylor and became widely known as Liberia's 'iron lady'. She was jailed three times in 1985 before escaping the country after international pressure forced her release from prison in July 1986. She headed the Africa Bureau at the United Nations Development Fund, with the rank of assistant UN secretary-general, and served on numerous private boards, international commissions and eminent persons panels. Prior to launching her campaign earlier this year, she chaired Liberia's Governance Reform Commission established under the 2003 peace agreement that ended the civil war and led to Taylor's resignation as president.

On September 21, three weeks before first-round voting, Sirleaf presented her platform in a nationwide address that was broadcast live on radio and covered heavily in Monrovia's vibrant press. "She outlined her vision for the country in a comprehensive way that no other candidate had done," recalls the Rev. Jervis Witherspoon, another supporter who returned to Liberia from the United States to work on the campaign. Witherspoon helped to establish a 'war room' where electoral strategy was developed and events on the ground were monitored. A pastor with the Bethel World Outreach Ministries, headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, Witherspoon got to know Sirleaf in the 1990s when he was heading Bethel Cote d'Ivoire in Abidjan and she was regional representative for the Modern Africa Growth and Investment Company and CEO of Kormah Development Corporation.

In the final stages prior to the first-round election, the Sirleaf campaign felt support building. Poll numbers rose significantly in the large counties where resources had been targeted. Her support doubled in Bomi County, her home, and rose similarly in Nimba and Margibi. "The first-round strategy was to contain Charles Brumskine and go into the second round with George Weah, where the issue would become education and competence," Konneh says.

When the votes were counted, the results confirmed that the strategy had worked, although Witherspoon admits to being somewhat disappointed that Sirleaf was able only to capture just under 20% of the total. It was sufficient, however, to propel her into the two-candidate run-off against Weah, who tallied 28%. Nearly 75% of registered voters cast a ballot.

Throughout the campaign, the specter of deposed President Charles Taylor rose to the surface. Several of Sirleaf's first-round opponents tried to tie her to his dictatorial legacy by claiming she backed Taylor when he launched an invasion at the end of 1989 to overthrow the Doe regime. "Many of us supported Charles Taylor in the beginning" to get rid of Doe, Sirleaf said in an interview with AllAfrica in August. "Six months into his movement we realized that he was nothing but a power hungry-person after personal enrichment, and we fought him ever since."

Just before the election, Weah took his campaign into Grand Gedeh County, Doe's home area, where the dominant ethnic group is Krahn. Reports circulated that Weah had donned a T-shirt with a photo of Doe and had promised two senior security posts to former Doe associates. Although Weah denied the reports vociferously, and two newspapers were censored by the Press Union of Liberia for fomenting tribal sentiments, the incident reverberated around the country, particularly in Nimba, the northern county where Doe's troops had been accused of serious abuses while seeking to crush Taylor's rebellion.

"In the minds of many people in Nimba," Professor Dunn said in an interview, "this suggested a resurrection of Samuel Doe, and it frightened the hell out of them." Konneh agrees that the incident had a measurable impact. "Tribalism, like racism in America, is a big issue on people's minds, and because Grand Gedeh and Nimba have not had good relations in the past, it was a big moment in the run-off campaign." Ethnic considerations may help explain why a number of Taylor associates went for Sirleaf instead of Weah in the second round. Among the most prominent was Jewell Howard-Taylor, the estranged wife of the deposed dictator who herself won election to the Senate in Nimba on October 11 and then campaigned for Sirleaf during the run-off.

As run-off electioneering proceeded, Sirleaf sought to target people who had voted for all the unsuccessful contenders. Nearly 50% of the votes had been cast for the 20 candidates that were eliminated in round one. Brumskine, who came in third with 14%, refused to endorse either candidate, but the fourth, fifth and sixth-place finishers lined up behind Weah.

"We had a sense that Weah had his core group of supporters and that Ellen would be able to attract voters from all the other candidates," despite the endorsements, Witherspoon says. Levinson said the key was "a proactive message" emphasizing what Sirleaf could do to restore stable democracy and advance reconstruction. While Sirleaf was inclined to ignore Weah's attacks, her advisers strongly stressed the importance of responding to negative attacks, without resorting to personal insults.

Sirleaf met head-on the suggestion that Weah was the 'genuine' Liberian in the race and that her victory would restore to power the descendents of the 'settlers' - the freed slaves from the United States who settled in Liberia in the 19th century and dominated political and economic power for most the country's history. "My father is a Gola from Bomi; my mother is a Kru from Sinoe," she said, "and my grand father on my mother's side was German."

With the run-off approaching, the Sirleaf camp felt increasingly confident. Sirleaf challenged Weah to a debate, which, when he refused, provided another opening to contrast the contenders expertise. "How does Mr. Weah expect to communicate his vision and agenda to international partners, ranging from development theorists to scientists, if he cannot talk to his nation and people about his plans to lead this country," Sirleaf's Unity Party said in a statement.

"With my computer program, I could project various scenarios scientifically," Konneh says. "But when I could really sense that victory was possible was the day I witnessed people turning out in big numbers in the middle of a rubber plantation at two in the morning."

Sirleaf was rallying crowds wherever she appeared, but the poor state of the country's roads limited her travel, so the campaign deployed a chartered helicopter from neighboring Sierra Leone. "The helicopter gave her access to places that were not accessible by ground," Konneh says. "She was able to go to multiple places in one day's time and personally deliver her message to voters."

When the ballots were counted after voting ended on November 8, Weah and his camp reacted with disbelief. Sirleaf emerged with 59.4%, compared with 40.6% for Weah, who has yet to formally concede defeat and has blamed the Liberian election commission for a flawed process. But the international teams that monitored the voting and the United Nations Mission in Liberia have said the election was conducted fairly and have urged Weah and his backers to accept the outcome, which was officially certified on November 23.

There are daunting challenges ahead for Sirleaf, who turned 67 on October 29. While in Washington, in part to seek funding needed to launch Liberia towards reconstruction and development, she is facing pressure from the Bush administration and members of Congress to seek Charles Taylor's extradition from Nigeria, where he has been living in asylum since he agreed in 2003 to leave the country. The U.S. government and many human rights groups want Taylor to face trial at the UN-sponsored Special Court for Sierra Leone, which accused him of backing Sierra Leone's brutal rebellion during the 1990s and indicted him for crimes against humanity.

"I think Ellen will handle the Taylor case very carefully, consulting regional leaders and other interested parties before taking action," Elwood Dunn says. "She can't let that issue stop her from hitting the ground running by tackling the many problems that our country is facing."

Having surprised the soothsayers, the spotlight is now on Sirleaf to bring similar magic to the long odds against Liberian recovery. She must secure international resources to rebuild a ravaged country, which 14 years of war have left without power generating capacity or modern infrastructure and with an uprooted and impoverished population.

According to Richard Tolbert, a Liberian-born international banker working on Wall Street who supported Sirleaf's candidacy and joined her on her West African tour, Sirleaf's victory has elicited "tremendous goodwill" from around the world. "We saw it everywhere we went," he said. "By electing Africa's first female president, Liberia - Africa's first republic - has again taken its rightful place at the vanguard of African liberation and democracy." [Tolbert serves on AllAfrica's Board of Directors.]

The country's development needs are massive, said Tolbert, nephew of former Liberian President William Tolbert, who was ousted and killed in Doe's 1980 coup. "It is up to all Liberians to, as we say, 'put hands together' and get down to the serious business of reconstruction and prove to the world that we can once again be a great people."

## RELATED

[Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Interview \(August 2005\)](#)

[High Stakes in Liberia \(October 2005\)](#)

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## Weah rally sparks Liberia clashes

**Police in Liberia have clashed with supporters of George Weah, who was defeated in last month's election.**

Police fired tear gas at the protesters in a suburb of the capital, Monrovia.

Violence began after Mr Weah addressed several hundred supporters, alleging the election had been rigged and saying his rival would not be sworn in.

Ex-football star Mr Weah lost to economist Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in the polls, judged fair by most observers.

Mr Weah told hundreds of supporters at a rally on Sunday that he would block January's inauguration of Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf as president.

"There is no victor for now, and I say there will be no inauguration in the country until the world gets together and finds a means for a peaceful resolution to the problem," he said.

Supporters chanted "No George Weah, no Liberia".

Riot police were deployed on the streets and made several arrests. The United Nations Mission in Liberia also deployed UN police.

Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf is set to become Liberia's first elected head of state since the end of 14 years of war in 2003.

She will be Africa's first elected woman president.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/4520532.stm>

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