

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



(L-R) Principal Defender Prof. Vincent Nmehielle, Registrar Lovemore Munlo, SC and Medical Officer Dr Donald Harding address a press conference on Monday at the Sierra Leone News Agency.

**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**

Tuesday, 13 June 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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# Special Court Appoints Defense Team for Charles Taylor

*By Vidal Boltman*

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has disclosed to Journalists in Freetown that a team of Lawyers have been appointed by the court to defend Mr. Charles Taylor. This disclosure was made yesterday, Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006 by the Principal Defender, Pro-Vincent Nmehielle.

Mr. Nmehielle maintained that since Mr. Taylor has said he that he does not have enough funds to secure a defense team to represent him in court against the charges of war crimes preferred against him, the court has

therefore provided him with one. He further disclosed that the team has already been presented formally with the case file for onward discussion with Mr. Taylor.

The matter as to whether Mr. Taylor will serve his prison term in Sweden or not if convicted, Mr. Pro-Nmehielle said the court has not received any documents with regards to that and therefore cannot comment. Also, on the issue as to whether Mr. Taylor's trial will be taken to somewhere else, the Principal Defendant said the decision is still with the President of the court.

Awoko

Tuesday, 13 June 2006

# “Norman’s health is not life threatening”

## - *SCSL Doctor*

By Betty Milton

The Medical Officer (MO) at the Special Court, Dr. Donald Harding has informed members of the media that the health condition of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) indictee, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman is not life threatening and that the accused has been receiving medical treatment at the clinic in the Court.

At a press conference held at the Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA) building at Wallace Johnson Street, Dr. Harding stated that though he could not disclose the present cause of the accused’s ailment as this will be against the ‘patient’s privacy’.

The Principal Defender Professor Vincent Nmehielle disclosed that it is the role of his office to ensure the welfare of the indictees, which he maintained was an “important

priority.”

In his statement the Registrar of the Special Court Lovemore Munlo disclosed the budget estimates for the court operations from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006 to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2007 which he said amounts to \$27,000,000 (twenty seven million US Dollars) adding that the funds for this year are sufficient.

The Registrar also stated that when he first took up office in October he did hear and read in newspapers that the court is broke but so far the court has been going on well without any financial difficulties.

Talking about the trial of Charles Taylor, the Registrar said that the case is at the preliminary stage as the accused [Taylor] has made his initial appearance at the Trial Chamber II where his case has been assigned, and

*Contd. Page 4*

# Norman's health is not life threatening

*From Front Page*

where he [Taylor] pleaded to the charges.

The Registrar disclosed that the Prosecution has presented a summary of their case to the defence team and they in turn will have to reply before the case can start.

He went on to state that the issue of venue for Taylor's trial will be decided

by the President of the Court and that he is not aware of any particular venue where the case had been transferred to.

He stressed that if they have to move Taylor's trial to any other venue, there are a lot of logistic and financial things, which have to be put in place.

Mr. Munlo also stated that Taylor had made a plea

through his lawyers that he does not want his case to be transferred.

Giving a brief status of the three trials that are presently going on, the Registrar said that two of the cases that is the CDF and the AFRC are in the defence phase and that before the end of the year, the RUF case will also be in the defence phase.

Exclusive

Tuesday, 13 June 2006

# "Norman is dying..."

## \*Family Sources say \*But Special Court Denies

*By Joseph Turay*

The Medical Officer at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Dr. Donald Harding,

yesterday 12 June 2006 said in Freetown that the health condition of the CDF first accused; Chief Sam Hinga Norman "is not life threaten-

ing."

Addressing journalists yesterday at the SLENA building Wallace Johnson  
*Contd. page 2*

# "Norman is dying..."

*From front page*

Street, The Medical Officer confirmed Mr. Norman's ill health problem although he fell short of disclosing to the press, just exactly the nature of Mr. Norman's illness since according to him, it is even against the accused's wish.

When this asked about the M.O.'s relationship with Mr. Norman and when last he received treatment from him, Dr. Harding said that Norman, like the other detainees, has never refused

treatment from him. "He was in the clinic last Saturday," Dr. Harding said. He denied that Mr. Norman is suffering from Diabetes as alleged by the media and the public, but that like any human being the CDF accused is liable to fall ill.

Family sources have however continued to maintain that Mr. Norman is seriously ill, contrary to reports from the Special Court medico. A close relative of Mr. Norman who spoke to The Exclusive said the authorities at the

Special Court are merely downplaying the seriousness of his deteriorating health condition for reasons which according to him, are aimed at keeping the former CDF National Coordinator in detention until his ailing condition becomes irreversible. This he said is becoming a matter of concern to the family and that; they are now busy working out options to secure his release.

Asked what option they are considering; he said:

"When we are through, we shall let you know."

# Christian Monitor

Tuesday, 13 June 2006

## Norman's Condition not Life Threatening

**By Edward B. Kargbo**  
The Special Court for Sierra Leone has, during a press conference held yesterday, dismissed reports that

former coordinator of the Civil Defence Forces, Chief Sam Hinga Norman was seriously sick in detention. According to the Court's

medical officer, Dr. Donald Harding, Norman is in good health and that he is proceeding with his trial. Harding also stated that

Norman's health condition is not 'life threatening' and that the court is actively treating what he is suffering from.



**Chief Sam Hinga Norman**

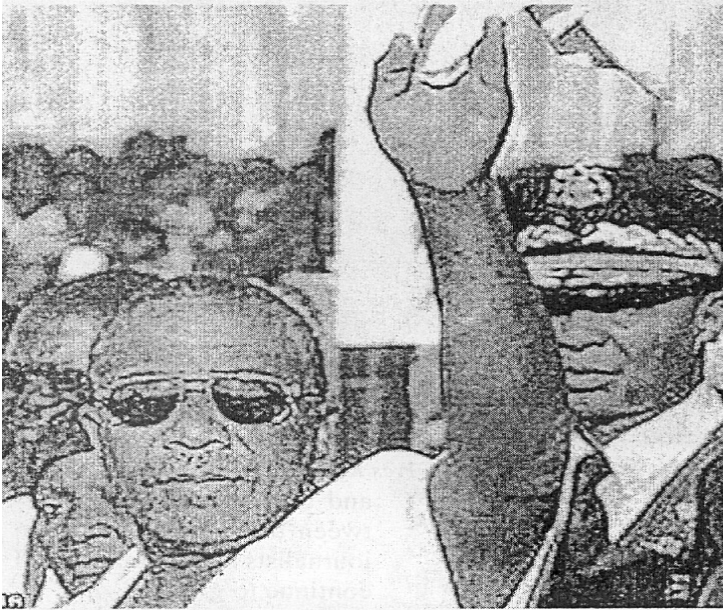
Responding to questions from journalists, Harding said that Norman is not diabetic, he however failed to disclose what exactly Norman was suffering from. He said that it was in Norman's interest not to disclose what is his affliction however, he could make that disclosure only with his (Norman's) consent. Principal defendant of the Special Court, Professor

Vincent Nmechielle, on his part, said according to the rules of the court, the doctor has no right to disclose to the public what a detainee is suffering from.

The registrar of the court, Lovemore Munlo said if at all Norman wants his actual health condition to be disclosed, it should be done in a written form and should be signed by Norman himself.

Standard Times  
Tuesday, 13 June 2006

# Taylor's house bugled



*Charles Taylor*

Police in Monrovia have sentenced two persons recently arrested at the Monrovia residence of the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor.

Ottis Benjamin and Jonathan Gaye were arrested by a community watch team and charged for theft of property by the police, an offence baillable under the Liberian law.

The two men were allegedly arrested last week while coming from the residence of the former Liberian leader with a roll of carpet, a fax machine and other valuable items.

At the preliminary hearing of the case over the weekend, the court educated them about their rights as required under the laws of Liberia and later sentenced

them to jail pending the adjudication of the case, which is expected to come up this week.

In a related development, family members of the indicted Liberian former president are demanding a speedy and independent investigation into the case.

A member of the family, Mr. Sando Johnson said that it is strange to the family to hear that someone would break into the former president's residence when UN soldiers are deployed in and around the compound to protect the facility.

According to Mr. Johnson, the family views the act as an "international conspiracy" that needs thorough investigation.



## Cocorioko website

Tuesday, 13 June 2006

<http://nocache.homestead.com/hstrial-lkanu/index.html> (temporary URL)

### **HINGA NORMAN BEING TAKEN CARE OFF WELL --SPECIAL COURT**

Tamba Borbor from Freetown

In the face of concerns raised by the family members of the onetime Civil Defence Forces (DCF) coordinator, Chief Samuel Hinga Morman regarding his deteriorating health status in detention at his court cell, the Special Court of Sierra Leone Monday, June 12th disclosed that the latter is still achieve and therefore, he is not faced with any life treated illness.

Speaking during a news conference held at the Sierra Leone News Agency conference hall at Wallace Johnson Street, Freetown, the Medical Officer Special Court Sierra Leone Dr. Donald Handing said he won't be very much specific to state that exactly the illness Chief Norman is suffering from one to the confidentiality of the indictee.

He said the court is consistently assisting Chief Norman well adding that the detainee was in the court clinic last Saturday.

Dr. Handing informed the media that Chief Norman has over refused treatment but stopped-short from saying whom best he treat the detainee.

Registrar of the court, MR. Lovernore Munlo said the transfer of Charles Taylor's from Sierra Leone to whenever would involve logistics inclusive finance whiles stating the trial Mr. Taylor has been moved from Trail Chamber one to two.

He said indicating that the question of where he should be tried will be adequately addressed the President of the court and not the Registrar.

Meanwhile, the Special Court will be making a crucial ruling very soon about whether President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah should appear before the court in the famous supboena issued on behalf of chief Hinga Norman .

*Note: Tamba Borbor, former editor of the Spectator newspaper, was not the author of this article and was not present at the press conference. He is currently mining diamonds in Kono.*

## The Analyst (Monrovia)

Monday, 12 June 2006

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200606120686.html>

### **Taylor's Residence Burglarized, Police Apprehend Two Suspects**

By Mensiegar Karnga, Jr.

The Criminal Investigation Division (CID) of the Liberia National Police (LNP) over the weekend sent two suspects to court for their alleged involvement in burglary at the Congo town residence, otherwise known as "White Flower," belonging to former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

The suspects were apprehended by some residents of the community on Friday morning after allegedly being caught in the act and subsequently turned over to the Liberia National Police for prosecution.

The residents of the community told The Analyst that during the morning hours of Friday, unknown men made their way into the compound through the back by climbing on a ladder.

They allegedly broke into one of the three houses in the compound and made away with several valuable items including chairs, car batteries, and rugs, among others. Several residents questioned the success of the men with the huge presence of UNMIL Nigerian soldiers manning the yard of the detained former president.

The residents furthered that upon noticing the presence of unknown men in the compound, they surrounded the building. Several of the men reportedly escaped and only two of them were arrested and turned over to the LNP.

"The alleged criminals were not actually strange in the community; they were all members of the former president's Anti Terrorist Unit (ATU) who were assigned in the community before his departure to exile in 2003," alleged a resident.

At the same time, authorities of the LNP told journalists that the arrested men have confessed during preliminary investigation and have been turned over to the Monrovia Magisterial Court to face justice.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of the Charles Taylor family, Sando Johnson in an interview on Star Radio said the burglary at the former Liberian president's residence is characterized by national and international conspiracies.

## International Relations and Security Network

Monday, 12 June 2006

<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/news/sw/details.cfm?ID=16155>

### **Trying times for Sierra Leone court**

Sweden offers a prison cell as debate continues over where former Liberian leader Charles Taylor should stand trial.

By Ayesha Kajee in Khartoum for IWPR (12/06/06)

A decision by the Swedish parliament to allow former Liberian president Charles Taylor to be imprisoned in Sweden if he is convicted of war crimes has removed a major blockage to a trial in The Hague.

Taylor's trial by the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has been stalled on several counts following his extradition in March from exile in Nigeria.

He faces 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and funding rebel fighters in Liberia's neighbor Sierra Leone, who terrorized civilians by hacking off hands, feet, ears, and lips.

Normally such a trial would take place at the Special Court's headquarters in Freetown, the Sierra Leonean capital. But the court, fearing that trying this powerful figure in Africa might endanger regional stability, has asked the International Criminal Court, ICC, to host the Taylor trial at its high-security facilities in The Hague,

Charles Taylor's name still evokes extreme fear throughout west Africa, where he conducted a reign of terror both in Liberia and by proxy in neighboring countries, conscripting schoolchildren to maim, pillage and murder. Even now, he wields significant financial and political influence in the region, with several supporters holding high-ranking positions in Liberia's fledgling democratically elected government.

Taylor also has a record of escaping from incarceration several times, on one occasion from a prison in the United States where he was awaiting extradition. Liberia's request for him to be extradited was almost thwarted when Taylor tried to flee from Nigeria to Cameroon in late March, and he was only apprehended at the border.

Apart from the danger that he could escape again, there are real fears that even in captivity in Sierra Leone, his very presence would destabilize the fragile peace in the region.

The Liberian government, which formally requested the Nigerian authorities to hand Taylor, quickly dispatched him to Sierra Leone. The jubilation expressed by human rights activists when Taylor was finally handed over to the Special Court, which had issued a warrant for his arrest in 2003 while he was still Liberian president, has been dissipated by the obstacles which have arisen to a speedy trial.

The Swedish parliament's decision on 31 May will help speed up the process. The Dutch government was only prepared to host the trial on condition that a third country agreed to imprison the accused if a conviction was secured.

Liberian president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, on a visit to Britain, gave her backing to a trial outside Africa, explaining that "a little bit of distance gives us [Liberians] a little more comfort".

In a veiled reference to Taylor's continued support base, the president, elected in November 2005, noted, "There are too many risks associated with an overbearing presence."

The trial has also been held up by arguments from Taylor's defense counsel that he will not get a fair trial in the Netherlands, as well as by bureaucratic delays resulting from the change in the presidency of the Special Court. The court's appeals chamber recently dismissed a motion by Taylor's British lawyer, Karim Khan, to withdraw the request for a change of trial venue. In the interim, court president and chief prosecutor Desmond Da Silva, who submitted the request, had resigned. His successor, Sierra Leonean judge George King, assumed his duties on 27 May and is expected to make a final decision on the trial venue soon.

The venue issue has polarized opinion in the region. Some want a trial in Freetown, saying Africans must see justice being done, and that the victims and families have a right to be present during hearings on the crimes of which the former Liberian leaders stand accused.

In a recent opinion piece in the New York Times, John Leigh, Sierra Leone's former ambassador to the United States, argued that "witnessing the proper administration of justice will render us Africans better able to protect our rights and more reliant on democratic principles rather than on superstitious beliefs". A Freetown trial, he said, would "drive home the democratic principle that no one is above the law".

Indeed, it was for precisely these reasons that the Sierra Leone court, unlike the international tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, was set up in the country where the crimes took place.

When the Sierra Leone court was established in late 2002 with a three-year mandate, it was also hoped that this "hybrid" court - combining international and domestic law - would operate more speedily than the two tribunals. But so far it has failed to live up to expectations.

The court's sluggishness came under fire when Taylor's Sierra Leonean ally Foday Sankoh died in July 2003 while awaiting trial. Sankoh was responsible for kick-starting Sierra Leone's civil war in 1991, and was notorious for his cruelty and for inciting his troops to mutilation, torture, and cannibalism.

The death from natural causes of the Special Court's number one indicted suspect before he was brought to trial was a major blow. David Crane, chief prosecutor at the time, commented that Sankoh received the "peaceful end that he denied to so many others".

The court began holding trials in June 2004 but has been hamstrung by funding constraints and the lack of adequate infrastructure in war-damaged Sierra Leone. A report by the US-based watchdog Human Rights Watch acknowledges that "the court has made tremendous achievements on scarce and insecure resources", especially in terms of outreach and witness protection.

In making a final decision on a venue for Taylor's trial, Justice King will need to weigh all these factors carefully. He has already gone on record stating that the Special Court needs more time and more funding, and that "any thought of the court ending this year or even in 2007 is unrealistic".

Amnesty International has warned that a change of venue will require further human and financial resources, and that this should only be considered if the international community cannot provide effective security for proceedings in Sierra Leone.

Unlike the war crimes tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, which are directly financed by UN member states, the Sierra Leone court operates on voluntary funding from a few countries. As of last month, the court had received less than half of its US\$25 million budget for the year.

At the same time, King will need to recognize the need for a speedy resolution to the dilemma, so that a trial can get under way soon. Following the death in custody of former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic earlier this year, the reputation of the international justice system will be significantly damaged if Taylor is allowed to languish without trial for much longer.

*This article originally appeared in Africa Reports, produced by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR). Africa Reports is supported by the UK Foreign Office and the US State Department.*

## Associated Press

Sunday, 11 June 2006

### **HK will help Dutch in appeal against arms smuggler**

Dutch investigators are likely to turn to Hong Kong again for help when prosecutors at The Hague launch an appeal against the acquittal of a Dutch weapons smuggler of war crime charges.

According to Desiree Leppens, a spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office in Rotterdam, an appeal against Guus van Kouwenhoven - a businessman close to Liberia's former warlord president tyrant Charles Taylor - is likely to be filed within the next two weeks.

On Wednesday, van Kouwenhoven was convicted of smuggling weapons from the mainland via Hong Kong to Liberia and was sentenced to eight years in prison.

The prosecution argued the businessman had managed a militia of 2,500 fighters - who have been accused of perpetrating mass rape and murder - and should be held responsible for the war crimes they committed.

But the court dismissed the charges after finding that van Kouwenhoven's link to the crimes was too tenuous and the prosecution case not strong enough.

"We are thinking of appealing the war crimes charges. We will use all the information presented during the trial - including the Hong Kong information - in the retrial," Ms Leppens said. "We think we have enough information but we may visit Hong Kong again to collect background information." Statements provided by local witnesses proved van Kouwenhoven had smuggled weapons from the mainland via Hong Kong to Liberia, she said.

Testimony from up to 10 local witnesses - mainly the crew of the MV Antarctic Mariner owned by Hong Kong-registered Global Star (Asia) - confirmed weapons had been smuggled onboard the ship.

"The evidence from the crew was important. In particular, the captain of the ship and his statement, made up the bulk of our evidence," she said.

"We are satisfied with [the weapons smuggling] conviction because that is what we had started investigating in the beginning. For this offence eight years is the maximum penalty."

Van Kouwenhoven's defence lawyer Inez Weski is reportedly considering an appeal against the arms-smuggling conviction.

## Associated Press

Sunday, 11 June 2006

### **Arms Dealer Bust Embargoes With Impunity**

By ARTHUR MAX, Associated Press Writer  
THE HAGUE Netherlands

"Mr. Gus" was a flamboyant figure in West Africa.

He hosted champagne parties, backslapped with cabinet ministers and rebel generals, flew his helicopter to war zones and barely hid the fact that he was trading arms for timber.

On Wednesday, a Dutch national court sentenced Guus Kouwenhoven, 64, to eight years in prison for breaking a U.N. weapons embargo. It acquitted him of war crimes.

Kouwenhoven's is a rare case of justice delivered. U.N. investigators and human rights activists say hundreds more embargo busters are trading weapons for wealth with impunity.

The Kouwenhoven trial the second war crimes case in the Netherlands in a year demonstrated a newfound determination by some countries to pursue businessmen who fuel and finance civil wars, rebellions and tribal conflicts in faraway lands.

But as an isolated success, it underscored the difficulty of jailing the money men who enable the wars that have killed hundreds of thousands in Africa and trouble spots around the world.

Kouwenhoven's example is "still very rare," said Alex Vines, who investigated the Dutchman as a member of a U.N. panel from 2001 to 2003. "The evidence needed to achieve a successful prosecution is very high."

Some names repeatedly appear in reports about illicit dealers.

Suspected Russian arms trader Viktor Bout allegedly has been trafficking weapons to Central and West Africa since the early 1990s. U.N. reports say he set up a network of more than 50 aircraft around the world.

Though Bout has been investigated by police in several countries, he has never been prosecuted for arms dealing.

But he is among more than 60 people under a U.N. travel ban for their association with former Liberian President Charles Taylor. Kouwenhoven was arrested shortly after returning to the Netherlands in 2005.

The U.N. Security Council has imposed arms embargoes on Somalia, Ivory Coast, the Darfur region of Sudan, and several provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The embargo on Liberia is to be lifted later this year.

Luis Moreno-Ocampo, chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court created in 2002 to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity, said early in his tenure he would consider

pressing charges against businessmen suspected of financing serious crimes. But he has quietly backed away in the face of the difficulties.

The Netherlands has invoked "universal jurisdiction" to prosecute businessmen implicated in war crimes: Dutchman Frans van Anraat in December became the only European businessman convicted so far of war crimes when he was jailed for 15 years for selling banned chemicals to Saddam Hussein's regime.

Examples of suspected traders evading prosecution are easier to find.

Italy arrested Ukrainian-born Leonid Minin, an Israeli citizen living in Milan, in 2001 on suspicion of dealing in so-called conflict diamonds and timber.

Italian prosecutors traced nearly 200 tons of assault and sniper rifles and grenade launchers and 9 million rounds of ammunition shipped from Ukrainian suppliers to Liberia using false end-user certificates, shell companies and phantom airlines, according to a summary by Amnesty International.

But an Italian court found it had no jurisdiction since the illegal shipments did not pass through Italy. Minin was later fined \$51,000 for illegally possessing \$636,750 in diamonds.

Global Witness, a private group that gathered much of the evidence in the Kouwenhoven trial, said it is hoping to reopen the case against Minin with new documents. The London-based group investigates the trade in arms for natural resources.

Beyond merchants like Kouwenhoven, who flaunt their power and connections, are 300 to 400 more businessmen quietly engaged in illegal weapons trading, said Alex Yearsley, a Global Witness activist.

"There's a whole other strata that no one really knows about," Yearsley said. "They are more skilled operators, not so brazen."

Yearsley said prosecutors also should focus on the lawyers, bankers and money managers who set up and run the complex businesses and launder the profits, arguing that the traffic would wither if "there was no place to hide their ill-gotten gains."

Vines said the Kouwenhoven conviction may have a deterrent effect, but it may drive the arms trade even further underground.

"As the price goes up, I suspect investigations will get more difficult," he said. "People are getting more careful."



## International Justice Tribune

Monday, 12 June 2006

### Verdier leads the quest for truth in Liberia

Sherman C. Seequeh

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), established February 20 in Liberia, holds its first hearing, a young, unassuming, fair-skinned, thin man will be at the center of the proceedings. "When things begin to work as planned," Liberian lawyer Jerome Verdier will preside this 9-member commission which announced on June 5 that it had begun gathering information about 25 years of political violence and corruption.

Verdier himself was a victim of the massive violence perpetrated in this small coastal country in West Africa. He was attacked on several occasions by marauding thugs during the height of the civil war launched in December 1989. Some of his loved ones were killed and his property was commandeered. Over 250,000 Liberians have lost their lives in this war and thousands of others have been maimed, raped or robbed. The creation of the TRC was part of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement brokered in August 2003. This agreement is intended "to provide a forum that will address issues of impunity, as well as an opportunity for both victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to share their experiences, in order to get a clear picture of the past to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation." Verdier believes it is essential for the truth about the past to be revealed and understood and that Liberians be held accountable for their actions. "People died, people lost properties, people have been displaced, people are in refugee camps... The TRC will follow all leads. It will assemble all pieces of evidence and whatever evidence points to any Liberian, inside and outside of Liberia," he stated.

Verdier has a wealth of experience in civic activism, human rights defense and environmental protection. At the University of Liberia, he was a prominent leader in the student union, a bastion of progressive struggle against the tyranny of the military junta that reigned in Liberia in the 1980s. Having obtained a degree in economics and an LL.D. he began working in the field of human rights, defending journalists and workers. He openly denounced war, violence, corruption and impunity, even during Charles Taylor's 6-year rule, and advocated for rule of law, transparency and accountability. As the Executive Director of Liberia Democracy Watch, and member of the environmental lawyers group Green Advocates, Verdier was at the center of several landmark human rights crusades that exposed public corruption, increased public awareness and added impetus to the peace process.

"No member of society is immune"

Friends see him as a highly compassionate and well-intentioned person, with his only weakness being self-contentment. However, according to one critic, who wishes to remain anonymous, "It is unthinkable that Verdier who just yesterday pushed Taylor to Sierra Leone to answer war crimes charges is now pleading for truth and reconciliation in Liberia." Verdier often retorts, "No member of society is immune to the TRC process. If members of the current government are found to be guilty of human rights violations, especially heinous crimes against humanity, yes, definitely they must be prosecuted."

The prevailing concern now is not really whether Verdier or the TRC will be up to the task, but whether the Government, its partners and the people of Liberia will play their part. At its current pace, it is highly unlikely that the hearings will begin in June as scheduled. It took nearly two months before the Government began expending, in spurts, the \$350,000 which it has committed to the TRC. The United Nations has also pledged \$500,000, yet the logistical and financial needs of the TRC are still glaring. With the assistance of two international experts, the TRC has been moving ahead with the preliminaries-training its staff, conducting public awareness campaigns and most importantly, gathering evidence.

## Houston Press (Texas, USA) (Excerpt)

Thursday, 8 June 2006

### The Plane Truth

*Note: This is excerpted from a long article on Rev. K.A. Paul, who has described himself in the press as Charles Taylor's "spiritual advisor".*

Some time after earning a degree in economics at Bentley College in Massachusetts Charles Ghankay Taylor returned to his native Liberia and became one of the most vicious African warlords in recent history. He also became Kilari's friend.

Kilari says he met Taylor in 2003 and convinced him to relinquish his presidency. That same year the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted Taylor for crimes against humanity. Among the atrocities outlined in the indictment was the assertion that Taylor abducted children under 15 and used them to back rebel forces who were pillaging Sierra Leone's diamond deposits. The court accused Taylor of encouraging rebels to kill untold numbers of civilians and force women into sexual slavery.

Taylor lived in exile in Nigeria until this March when he surrendered to UN authorities. As usual, Kilari was there; as usual, he was ignored.

The Press caught up with Kilari shortly after he returned to Houston. The last 48 hours had been rough. Kilari touched down in Houston around 1 a.m. From there he drove to his home in Huffman, patching an Associated Press reporter in to his talks with Taylor and Taylor's wife, Jewel.

Remarkably sometime around 10 a.m. he slept, which is something the 43-year-old rarely seems to do. Just clearing five feet with a light frame and charming smile, Kilari is a bottle rocket, ready to jump in his plane and blast off to see some notorious leader at a moment's notice. Taylor's isn't the only warlord's number in his cell phone. Kilari claims to have spent quality time with Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic. He considers it a testament to his insider status that he knew Al Qaeda's Abu Musab al-Zarqawi when he was a "nobody."

Kilari is incensed that Condoleezza Rice and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo took credit for inducing Taylor's surrender. Three years ago he says, they also stole credit for Taylor's resignation. Kilari wants them both impeached.

In 2003 on the day Nigerian authorities took Taylor aboard a plane bound for his new home in Nigeria, television footage showed Kilari trying to board the plane as well, only to get shoved away like a nerd attempting to sit at the cool kids' table. They treated him like he was a nobody, and to Kilari, that is the greatest injustice of all.

"How could she do this to this great country, America?" he asks. "How are we turning friends into enemies? Is it because of Condi Rice's failure...in Iraq war? Failure in catching top-ten Al Qaeda? Failure because Hamas being elected for the first time?"

Kilari realizes it might look weird to offer guidance to some of the world's most hated men. But he says, the blacker the soul, the greater the need for redemption. Citing the Book of Acts, he says Taylor is working hard to change "from Saul to Paul."

"Taylor did not cause any problem in the last years I've known him," Kilari says. "Look at him -- he's in Sierra Leone for ten days now. Not a single soul died because he promised me he will not cause any problem. I said, 'The day you cause a problem through your 40,000 troops I'm out. If you are a changed man, show me your fruit.' "

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 12 June 2006**

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

**International Clips on Liberia**

**West African leaders meet on threat to regional security restructuring**

By Ade Obisesan

ABUJA, June 12, 2006 (AFP) - West African leaders will meet Wednesday in the Nigerian capital on measures to tackle threats to peace and security amid the proliferation of small arms in the region, ECOWAS officials said Sunday. The summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) will also draw up a restructuring plan for the secretariat of the regional bloc to make it more efficient, they said. He said the six leaders will stay behind for the meeting after attending the closing session of the ongoing African fertilizer summit in the city. They are presidents Mamadou Tandja of Niger, Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, John Kufuor of Ghana, Faure Gnassingbe of Togo and Yayi Boni of Togo.

**International Clips on West Africa**

**COTE D IVOIRE: Government helps to end water crisis in rebel stronghold**

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

BOUAKE, 12 Jun 2006 (IRIN) - The Cote d'Ivoire government has helped to turn the taps back on in the rebel capital Bouake after a month-long dry spell, with water supplies fully restored to the country's second largest city on Monday.

**Local Media - Newspapers**

**Three Senior Public Officials Dismissed for Impropriety**

*(The News, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Analyst, The Informer, Heritage, New Democrat and National Chronicle)*

- An Executive Mansion press release issued on Sunday announced the dismissal of three senior public officials for acts of impropriety. Those dismissed by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf are Aaron Mathies, Assistant Minister of Commerce, Dr. Benson Barh, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare and Chief Medical Officer, and James Attoh, Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority.

### **Anonymous Source Says Ganta Is Under Security Threat**

*(Daily Observer)*

- In an interview recently, a former member of the security forces who preferred anonymity said that Ganta, a commercial city in Nimba County, is under security threat. The source revealed that disarmed and demobilized ex-combatants from Liberia have crossed the borders in huge numbers into Guinea and Ivory Coast as mercenaries.

### **Human Rights Group Releases Documentary on Firestone**

*(The News and The Analyst)*

- The Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) has launched and screened a documentary which details misdeeds of the Firestone Plantation Company.
- According to the producer of the documentary, Roosevelt Woods, the tape catalogues the hard labor, young ages of many employees and the dehumanizing activities carried out by the management from 1921 to present.

### **Government Retains Moratorium on Timber Exports**

*(The Informer)*

- Speaking to journalists on Saturday, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf declared that the moratorium on timber exports will remain in force until new Liberian laws and regulations on timber exportation are put in place. Consequently, President Johnson-Sirleaf said that the government would refrain from issuing any new concession on timber. Such measure, she said will remain in place until legislation can be passed.

### **Women's Group Opens Shelter for Vulnerable People**

*(The News and The Analyst)*

- The first safe haven for women and children victims of abuse in Liberia has officially been opened. Speaking at the opening program Friday, Mrs. Beverly Goll-Yekeson, founder of the U.S.-based Liberia Crisis Center for Abused Women and Children, said that the opening of the safe house marked the bringing to fruition of her dream of putting the plight of abused women and children to the top of the agenda of Liberian society.

### **UNMIL Officer Confirms Illegal Mining Activities in Gbarpolu County**

*(New Democrat)*

- UNMIL Sector II Pakistani Commander, Brig.-Gen. Syed Nazareth Bashir, said there is a low level of illegal mining ongoing in Komgbor, Gbarpolu County. He however said the activities are being carried out by people who are trying to make ends meet.

### **UN Envoy Visits Examination Center**

*(The Informer)*

- Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss on Friday visited the campus of the William V.S. Tubman High School to inspect the supervision of the senior high school examination administered by the West African Examination Council. Mr. Doss lauded officials of WAEC and the Monrovia Consolidated School System for the conduct of the examinations.

## **Local Media – ELBS Radio**

### **President Encourages Liberians to Get Involved in Business**

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has encouraged Liberians to get involved in running their own businesses and admonished them to keep the premises of their businesses tidy. The President said this over the weekend when she visited Liberian-owned businesses on Camp Johnson Road in Monrovia.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **President Calls for a New Army of International Standards**

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf yesterday called for a new national army which meets international standards. Receiving the report of a Veteran Advisory Committee at the Executive Mansion, the President said that the government would hold appropriate ceremonies and proper retirements for veteran soldiers. President Johnson-Sirleaf had constituted the Committee to draft statutory provisions to create a bureau of veterans affairs.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Government Dismisses Officials for Impropriety**

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Foreign Minister Says Liberia's Image Was Improved**

- Briefing journalists on his return from Greece over the weekend, Foreign Minister George Wallace said that Liberia's international image had improved with goodwill being demonstrated toward the country. He added that the international community's confidence in President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is being manifested through the numerous invitations she receives from other governments.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Government to Continue Moratorium on Liberia's Timber Experts**

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Government Urged to Check Child Labor at Mining Sites**

- A local child rights advocacy group, FOCUS, has called on the Government of Liberia to check the activities of the mining sectors to curb the use of children at mining sites, a press release said yesterday.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Commerce Ministry Reports Increases in Registration of Liberian Businesses**

- In its quarterly report, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that registration of Liberian businesses increased between January and March this year. The report recorded 966 Liberian-owned businesses and 183 foreign-owned businesses.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

### **Agriculture Minister Calls for Support for New Agriculture Policy**

- Speaking at the end of an agriculture policy and strategy workshop, Agriculture Minister Christopher Toe called on government to give direct support to implement the new agriculture policy and strategy. Dr. Toe requested the government to channel its support to the sector through collaborative efforts of its international partners.

*(Also reported on Star Radio)*

**Human Rights Group Launches Television Documentary on Firestone Workers**

- Speaking during the launching of a documentary on the conditions of workers of the Firestone Rubber Plantation Company over the weekend, Foundation for International Dignity Regional Program Officer Dixon Gblah said that the video would create awareness about labor practices.

*(Also reported on 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](mailto:armahj@un.org).*

## Associated Press

Monday, 12 June 2006

### **Hussein co-defendant wrestled from court**

Defense at 'serious disadvantage,' attorney claims

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) -- Saddam Hussein's former intelligence chief was dragged out of court and manhandled by guards after arguing with the judge Monday.

Meanwhile, an American lawyer blasted the trial, saying unfair treatment was putting the defense at a "serious disadvantage."

Chief Judge Raouf Abdel-Rahman ordered Barzan Ibrahim removed after he accused the court of "terrorizing" the defense.

Iraqi guards grabbed Ibrahim by the arms and pulled him out, and when he tried to shrug them off, they held his left arm and pushed him into a wall as they tried to hustle him out the door, causing an uproar among the defense lawyers.

"This is dictatorial," Ibrahim shouted as he was pulled out. "You know dictatorship," Abdel-Rahman sneered.

"They are beating him in front of your eyes. Right at the door," defense lawyer Mohammed Munib shouted to the judge. "How can we ask you to protect the defendant when they beat him right in front of you?"

Abdel-Rahman banged his gavel and lectured the defense to be quiet.

After the uproar, Hussein stood and sarcastically suggested the defense and defendants leave "if this will bring you calm and quiet and give you the opportunity to reach your verdicts. ... If my presence bothers you, then I can withdraw and ask the defense team to withdraw as well."

"You are before the world, which sees through this place, whether they hear from the so-called defendants or defense or the attackers," he said, referring to the prosecution.

"People, Iraq's money is being stolen," he said. "Bloodshed is taking place every day, four times as much bloodshed in Dujail -- I mean those who were sentenced to death."

Hussein and seven former members of his regime are on trial for charges of crimes against humanity in a crackdown against Shiites in the town of Dujail after a 1982 assassination attempt on Hussein. They are accused of torturing women and children and wrongfully killing 148 Shiites sentenced to death for the attack on the former Iraqi leader.

It was the second time in two weeks that Ibrahim has been thrown out for arguing with Abdel-Rahman.

The court has gotten more chaotic in recent sessions as the defense stepped up its arguments that the prosecution case is fundamentally flawed -- and possibly forged -- and its complaints that the defense team is being treated unfairly.

Two weeks ago, four defense witnesses were arrested after giving their testimony, and the defense team said they were beaten by Iraqi police as U.S. soldiers watched. Abdel-Rahman accused the four of committing perjury.

An American on the defense team, Curtis Doebbler, accused the court of discriminating against the defense Monday, saying it had ignored its requests, intimidated witnesses and rushed the defense while giving the prosecution all the time it needed to present its case.

"We are at a serious disadvantage to the prosecution because of the way we have been treated by the court," Doebbler told Abdel-Rahman. "We want to work for justice. But that must start by having a fair trial. But under the current circumstances, that doesn't seem possible. We ask that the trial be stopped to allow us adequate time to prepare our defense."

He pointed out that the prosecution took more than five months to present its case, while the court is rushing the defense, which began its arguments in April. Abdel-Rahman has repeatedly demanded the defense present full lists of witnesses.

"Our witnesses have been intimidated by the court and have been assaulted," Doebbler said. "Several lawyers were assaulted as well."

Doebbler is one of two American lawyers, along with former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark, who have joined the defense team, though they have not attended every session. Doebbler is an international lawyer who is working as a visiting professor at Najah University in the West Bank town of Nablus.

"We have not received one reasoned opinion in response to our enormous written submissions," he said. "We've not been able to visit the place where the Dujail events took place. I have asked to visit the place for a year and I haven't received any answer."

Among the defense motions are ones questioning the tribunal's legitimacy, but others are more substantive, seeking documents the defense says are key. It has asked the court for the entire records of the 1984 trial by Hussein's Revolutionary Court that sentenced the 148 Shiites to death.

That trial is key to the case because the prosecution has claimed it was a cursory show trial in which the Shiites had no chance to present a defense. Hussein's lawyers have contended it was a fair legal proceeding and a justified response to the shooting attack on Hussein. The chief judge of the Revolutionary Court, Awad al-Bandar, is among the seven co-defendants in the Dujail case.

The defense has also sought an inquiry into claims by three of its witnesses that some of the 148 Shiites supposedly killed in the crackdown are still alive. Abdel-Rahman ordered an investigation, but there is no sign that one has begun and the three witnesses were among those he ordered arrested on perjury charges.

The defense argues that if some of the 148 are still alive, it casts the entire prosecution case in doubt and has demanded all the prosecution's documents be reviewed for authenticity.