

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



SCSL officials and team members after presentation of football jerseys, boots and balls

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:

Monday, 13 October 2008

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

Taylor May Prove Innocent / <i>Concord Times</i>	Pages 3-5
Charles Taylor's Son on Trial / <i>Premier Media</i>	Page 6
Zain's Cooperate Gala Kicks off in Grand Style / <i>Standard Times</i>	Page 7

International News

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 8-10
TRC Completes National Conflict Mapping Survey / <i>Star Radio</i>	Page 11

Special Court Supplement

Saturday's SCSL Football Match in Pictures / <i>CITS</i>	Page 12
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Concord Times

Monday, 13 October 2008

Taylor may prove 'innocent'

Lead defense counsel for former Liberian President Charles Taylor facing war crimes charges at the Special Court sitting in The Hague, Netherlands said there was light at the tunnel.

Courtney Griffiths told Joseph Cheeseman of the BBC World Service Trust that Taylor continues to yield to what he referred to 'the inhumane Dutch security measure' because he's anxious not to derail the trial.

"He's anxious that the trial proceeds smoothly because he's confident that he's able to prove his innocence. And therefore he doesn't want to do anything which might jeopardize the smooth run-

ning of these proceedings," said the lawyer.

Griffiths called Liberians to follow the trial closely because it was of major interest to them since Charles Taylor was their former President.

"What is being done to him (Taylor) is an attempt to criminalize not only him but the whole revolution which he set in train in Liberia to overthrow that despot, President Doe. So, consequently it behoves the Liberian people to ensure that they truly act as his jury, and by following the trial they can come to their own verdict whether he be guilty or not."

He took issue with the concurrent trial of his client's son Charles Chukie Taylor standing trial in the United States for torture in Monrovia.

"And consequently it probably doesn't take a conspiracy theorist to work out that there may well be good reason why Chuckie Taylor's trial just happens to take place at the same time as Charles Taylor's trial. Because by so doing you (America) create this international image of this family of ogres, father and son, both involved in criminal activities so both of them must be guilty- you know."

*Read full interview
on page 6*

Interview

By Joseph Cheeseman

The prosecution in the case against the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor are gradually reaching the end of their submission. They say they believe they have produced "compelling evidence" against Mr. Taylor. Joseph Cheeseman caught up with Courtney Griffiths, the Lead Lawyer for Mr. Taylor and first asked him how he felt the trial was going.

GRIFFITHS: Happily we're close to the end of the prosecution case. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

CHEESEMAN: When are you hopeful of coming out with your side of the case?

GRIFFITHS: Well it looks now as if the defence case won't commence until some time next year. Because after the close of the prosecution case we will need some time to put our witnesses in place, organize our witness order, organize the logistics of transporting witnesses from West Africa to The Hague. All of that is going to take a little time. So we will need a couple of months at least after the end of the prosecution case to organize the defence case.

CHEESEMAN: Mr. Taylor continues to come to court restrained by a leather belt attached to handcuffs and what have you. Why do you think Mr. Taylor continues to yield to such measures?

GRIFFITHS: Because he's anxious not to derail the trial. He's anxious that the trial proceeds smoothly because he's confident that he's able to prove his innocence. And therefore he doesn't want to do anything which might jeopardize the smooth running of these proceedings.

CHEESEMAN: Charles Taylor and his son Chuckie Taylor Jr, are on trial for two landmark cases. The former president as the first African head of state to be put on trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity and, his son as the first American to be put on trial for allegedly committing torture in Africa. What do you think? Is it a coincidence, a misfortune, or is it fate that has driven the two Taylors to this level?

GRIFFITHS: Well one has to bear in mind that the same country which has been the major force behind the setting-up of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the demonisation of former President Taylor is the same country in which former President Taylor's son is being tried.

CHEESEMAN: Which country is that?

GRIFFITHS: The United States of America. And consequently it probably doesn't take a conspiracy

theorist to work out that there may well be good reason why Chuckie Taylor's trial just happens to take place at the same time as Charles Taylor's trial. Because by so doing you create this international image of this family of ogres, father and son, both involved in criminal activities so both of them must be guilty- you know, there must be something genetic about the Taylor family which drives them to crime, hence father and son being tried at the same time.

CHEESEMAN: Back home in Liberia Mr. Taylor was known to be a deacon in the Baptist Church. The other day he said he is a member of the Jewish

faith, and he stayed away from court. People say he's trying to buy time. What do you think?

GRIFFITHS: Well I can't understand how him declaring himself to be a follower of the Jewish faith suggests that he's buying time. As far as I'm concerned his religious beliefs are a private matter for him and his lawyer. I am not his father confessor, and consequently what religion he chooses to pursue is entirely a matter for him and it's a subject upon which I don't think I'm qualified to offer any opinion.

CHEESEMAN: Finally, is there anything you wish to say, share with the people of

Liberia that I didn't ask you?

GRIFFITHS: I would like to invite the Liberian people to follow this trial closely. It is of major interest to you, because Charles Taylor is your former President and what is being done to him is an attempt to criminalize not only him but the whole revolution which he set in train in Liberia to overthrow that despot, President Doe. So consequently it behoves the Liberian people to ensure that they truly act as his jury, and by following the trial they can come to their own verdict whether he be guilty or not.

Courtesy: BBC World Service Trust

Premier Media
Monday, 13 October 2008

Charles Taylor's Son On Trial In America

Chuckie Taylor, son of former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, who is now standing trial in The Hague for crimes against humanity, is also facing trial in Miami, Florida, for crimes he allegedly committed in Liberia during the Presidency of his father.

By Alpha B. Kamara

Giving testimony in the trial, Mr. Turay, one of the men held prisoner by Chuckie Taylor who is now living in Sweden narrated his ordeal as a prisoner.

He told the court that he was kept in a dirt pit and suffered wounds all over his body from the constant beatings given him by the ATU or "demon soldiers."

He gave an account of the night that two other prisoners decided to escape from the dirt pit and how they tried to encourage him to escape with them but out of fear he decided to stay that night.

He said that once the demon soldiers became aware that the two men had escaped, he was repeatedly beaten while being questioned about their whereabouts. The beating lasted until the men were recaptured.

He said Chuckie Taylor ordered that their punishment should be death of one of the men, to serve as lesson to others who may think of escaping. One of the "demon soldiers" took a 3ft knife and began to saw at the back of the man's head until it was completely severed from his body.

The Defence's line of questioning focused on the witness's life before the war in Sierra Leone and compared this to his current

life in Sweden. He was asked to describe in great detail, the period between leaving Sierra Leone and arriving at the immigration checkpoint in Liberia where he was detained.

Mr. Turay testified that he left his hometown and fled to Liberia after rebels killed his father, who worked for the government, and burned down his home.

According to him, he lived in Voinjama for nearly a year until the city was attacked and World Food Project (WFP) provided trucks to move people to Monrovia.

He said at an immigration checkpoint en route to Monrovia, he was ordered out of the truck by ATU soldiers where he was stripped down to his underwear, questioned for an hour, and ultimately joined about 15 others who had already been arrested.

According to Mr. Turay, after the convoy left, Chuckie Taylor arrived, and without warning, shot three of the arrested men. The ATU guards severed two of the heads and posted them directly on the checkpoint. Chuckie Taylor threatened to kill the rest of them, but they were placed in a cell in the immigration building.

Commenting on the trial,

Elise Keppler of Human Rights Watch, says the opening of the trial of Chuckie Taylor is an important moment for the United States and Liberia.

She believes justice for the horrific abuses that were committed during Liberia's conflicts is essential, both for the victims and to help build respect for rule of law and that Chuckie Taylor's prosecution underscores the fact that more cases for Liberia's past human rights violations are needed, whether before domestic or internationally assisted judicial processes.

Responding to whether the Justice Sector of Liberia will fully collaborate with the proceedings by helping with relevant information, Keppler says her understanding is that the prosecution will work to prove their case by having victims testify.

"These victims are either now living outside Liberia or will travel from Liberia. As the identities of some of the victims have been shielded from the public, it is hard to know their backgrounds," she says.

"As for assistance from the Liberian justice system and other key stakeholders, the US has been very quiet about how they have done their work on the case so we don't know the extent to which the Liberian courts or other key stakeholders have assisted on the case. However, it may become clearer as the trial unfolds."

Standard Times
Monday, 13 October 2008

ZAIN Cooperate Football Gala kicks off in grand style

BY MOHAMED KONNEH

Zain Mobile Phone Company on Saturday October 11, 2008 started a week long cooperate gala at the Saint Edwards Secondary School football field. Eight teams are battling for the Championship. The gala kicks off with staff of the Sierra Leone Special Court taking on Sierra Leone Commercial Bank in Freetown.

The most fancied Special Court struck their first goal 10 minutes into the first half through the efforts of Salieu Turay. The tally was extended to 2 with Francis Kelfala slotting home a beautiful header in the

dying minutes of the first half.

The Second half started with the replacement of new legs but the low rated Commercial bank was not able to push through the hard-rock defence of the Special Court. By mid Second half the match was 3-0 in favour of Special Court with Sulaiman making no mistake in pushing the ball into the net with a long range strike. The match ended 4-0 in favor of the Special Court.

In the other engagement, Union Trust Bank defeated NASSIT by 2-0 in a one sided affair. The gala will continue next Saturday with another set of teams.



United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
10 October 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Germany Gives Liberian National Police 13 Vehicles

(The Informer)

- The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has donated 13 vehicles to the Liberia National Police (LNP). Making the presentation Thursday at the National Police Training Academy in Paynesville, the Deputy Chief at the German Embassy, Mr. Joem Semmler said the donation was part of his government's way of strengthening the LNP.
- He said the police needed to be visible in the streets following months of training so that they can protect citizens and residents of the country. Mr. Semmler then urged authorities of the Police to prioritize the maintenance of the vehicles. Receiving the vehicles, LNP Commissioner of Intelligence Kabina Kamara said the donation will go a long way in helping the police fight crime. The vehicles valued at over US\$300,000 include two buses and 11 pick-ups.

Liberia's Auditing Commission Presents First Audit Report to Legislature

(Heritage, Public Agenda, New Vision, The Informer)

- In fulfillment of its statutory mandate, the General Auditing Commission (GAC) on Thursday forwarded copies of one of its completed first audit report to the National Legislature. Making the presentation to the lawmakers on behalf of the Auditor General of Liberia, GAC Communication Officer James Jensen, in separate remarks, told both Houses of Senate and Representatives of GAC's unbending commitment in making sure that public monies are truly accounted for the general good of the public.
- According to GAC press release, the entity has thus far completed the audits of several government institutions, including, the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation(NASSCORP);National Housing Authority(NPA),National Lotteries, Independent human Rights Commission(IHRC) and the Ministry of Finance Fiscal Outturn Consolidated revenues. Ministry of Finance, as well as Youth and Sports Recreational and Vocational Centres are inconclusive.

Former Rebel General Apologizes For Role in Civil War

(Daily Observer, Heritage, The Inquirer, The News)

- Testifying at the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), thematic hearings, the former spokesman of the defunct rebel Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) apologized for his role in the civil war.
- Mr. Boi Bleaju Boi said he regrets the death, destruction and displacement of Liberians as a result of the war but said MODEL was formed to topple the regime of Charles Taylor. Mr. Boi said Liberians and foreigners in the diaspora supported the defunct rebel group, which did not carry out any summary executions.

President Sirleaf Grand Gedeans Strengthen TiesAs Julu President Meet

(Heritage, The Inquirer)

- A meeting aimed at strengthening ties between President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the people of Grand Gedeh has taken place in Monrovia at the Foreign Ministry. The meeting was also meant to enable Retired General Charle Julue express appreciation to President Johnson Sirleaf for the recent clemency granted him. During Thursday's meeting, Retired General Julue thanked the President for his release from detention and praised her for working tirelessly in bringing peace to Liberia.
- "I am convinced that your initiative has opened a great corridor for the respect of the rights of every citizen," the General admitted, adding that "this is clearly manifested in the freedom of speech, freedom of movement of all citizens and the respect for the rule of law and due process."
- The former General then urged the President to be mindful of individuals bent on falsehood for their personal gains, adding 'lies and hatred will not build this country.' Responding, President Johnson Sirleaf acknowledged that all Liberians have suffered in one way or another as a result of the civil crisis. The President said it was important the all Liberians strive for a country in which every Liberian can feel like they have equal opportunity.
- The President assured the people of Grand Gedeh that their county remains high on her priority list whenever she engages Liberia's development partners for support.

Information Minister Clarifies President's US\$100,000 to PUL

(New Vision, Public Agenda, The Parrot, Heritage, The Inquirer)

- The media reports that Information Minister, Dr. Laurence Bropleh has clarified that the US\$100,000 donation given to the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) is a 'gift' from the Liberian government and not Burkina Faso's President Blaise Campaore' as being speculated in some section of the Liberian media. Speaking at a news conference Thursday at his MICAT office on Capitol Hill in Monrovia, Dr. Bropleh said the money was government's way of assisting the PUL in its headquarters construction because the media have an integral part to play in the country's development.
- The Heritage and Inquirer newspapers report that the Press Union yesterday received the deposit slip for the US\$100,000 from President Sirleaf. Making the presentation, the President said she received the donation from friends since government did not have the money.
- She assured that while she anticipate additional donation from outside sources, government was contemplating including the media in the next budget. Receiving the amount, PUL President George Barpeen thanked President Sirleaf for the donation adding it was a manifestation of government's commitment to developing the media.

Radio Summary

Star Radio (News culled today from website at 9:00 am)

Former MODEL's General Seeks forgiveness for his Role in Civil War

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Court Hears Senator Kaine's Bail Motion

- Criminal Court 'B' will on today, Friday, hear the motion to admit Senator Roland Kaine to bail.
- Defense lawyers filed the motion to admit Kaine to bail on September 10 claiming that the prosecution has not been able to prove the presumption of Kaine's guilt.
- According to them, state witnesses during the pre-trial hearing failed to link the detained Senator to the Kolleh Town massacre.
- Judge Korboi Nuta Wednesday dismissed the state's latest motion to stop him from presiding over the trial.
- The prosecution had filed a recusal motion accusing the Judge of bias claiming he destroyed his neutrality by granting the motion before assigning it for hearing.

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

More Dismissal at Commerce Ministry

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has dismissed the Assistant Commerce Minister for Trade, Mrs. Adorkor Coleman, for her role in the release of a container from the Freeport of Monrovia.

- Acting Commerce Minister, Dr. Frederick Norkeh told a news conference that the President's action followed findings from an investigation conducted into the container saga.
- An employee the ministry was dismissed early this week for forging the signature of the Assistant Minister.
- According to Minister Norkeh, although the dismissed Assistant Minister signature was forged she the still allowed the container to leave the Freeport.
- Two other employees of the Ministry, Ramphel Harris and Harry Ragland have also been dismissed in connection with the forgery case.
- Meanwhile, President Sirleaf also dismissed the Chairman and members of the Board of Directors of the Liberia Electricity Corporation for mismanagement of revenue of the entity.

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Liberia's Reform Highlighted as IMF/WB Meeting Opens

- The Annual IMF report from Africa Group One shows the achievement of strong reforms for Liberia since 2005.
- The report released at the IMF/World Bank meeting in Washington highlighted a stable political and macroeconomics environment and increase in GDP growth.
- It also highlighted the recovery of the export sector though still at a narrow base with rubber accounting for ninety percent of exports.
- The report attributes the recovery to sound micro-economic management, turn around in agriculture and high donor presence in services.
- Despite the reported growths the IMF acknowledged that the rehabilitation of infrastructure and delivery of basic social services remain a priority.

NEC Consults Women Groups

- The National Elections Commission has held public consultations with women groups in the country.
- The forum focused on three draft electoral bills that were tabled by the House of Representatives until next year.
- The Co-chairman of NEC, Cllr. Elizabeth Nelson said the forum was part of efforts to keep stakeholders abreast of unfolding development within the commission emphasizing that the failure of the House to pass the bills is hindering the work of the NEC.

Star Radio (Liberia)

Sunday, 12 October 2008

TRC completes National Conflict Mapping Survey

Written by Moses Wenyoun

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission says it has completed a National Conflict Mapping Survey to identify the threat to peace in Liberia.

According to the TRC, the survey focused on looming issues that have the potential to endanger the Country's long term stability.

The TRC said the survey was conducted in seventy-five percent of the administrative districts of the fifteen political sub-divisions of Liberia.

It said the survey was followed by consultations with government officials, civil society organizations, political leaders and the traditional Councils.

A TRC statement said the findings of the survey would be released on Monday.

The TRC said the report will be presented by the European Commission to for comments, endorsement and the appropriate action.

SPECIAL COURT SUPPLEMENT

Saturday's SCSL football match against Sierra Leone Commercial Bank

