

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Wednesday, 14 April 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Concord Times
Wednesday, 14 April 2010

'Atrocities were committed by Salone rebels'

By Alpha Sesay

After a week-long recess the Charles Taylor trial restarted Tuesday with a defense witness testifying that crimes committed in Sierra Leone during the country's brutal 11-year long civil conflict were perpetrated by its own rebel forces - not by rebel forces loyal to the

former Liberian president.

Charles Ngebeh, a Sierra Leonean national and former member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) - a Sierra Leonean rebel group which Mr. Taylor is alleged to have supported during the country's civil conflict -

insisted that allegations of Taylor's support for the RUF are not true. The exception, he said, was in 1991 when the conflict started in Sierra Leone and Taylor provided some support to the rebel forces in his neighboring country.

Mr. Taylor himself has admitted to providing support for the RUF in 1991, saying that such support was necessary because United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) rebels were attacking his positions in Liberia with support from the government of Sierra Leone, which the RUF rebels at that time were fighting to dislodge. This support stopped in 1992, according to Taylor, after the Liberian rebels fell out with their RUF counterparts. Corroborating the accused's evidence, Ngebeh has testified that Liberian rebels in Sierra Leone indeed returned to Liberia after falling out with the RUF in an operation titled "Top 20, Top 40, and

Top Final."

As he responded to questions from prosecutors under cross-examination, Ngebeh said the Sierra Leonean rebels themselves, of which he was a member, were responsible for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1996. He said Taylor's forces had nothing to do with the atrocities committed in Sierra Leone.

"From 92-96 the atrocities that were going on were terrible, caused by us the Sierra Leoneans, let's forget about Mr. Taylor's issue. That was terrible. You won't compare that at the time that Mr. Taylor was assisting the RUF in 1991. Mr. Taylor's NPFL was not killing, the killing that was going on was caused by us the Sierra Leoneans," Ngebeh told the court.

Taylor's indictment covers crimes committed by the RUF in Sierra Leone from 1996 to the end of the conflict in 2002. Prosecutors have

led evidence to establish that in addition to supporting the RUF within the period covered by the indictment, Taylor also supported the RUF prior to 1996. This, prosecutors hope, will convince the judges that the Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE) in which Taylor and the RUF were allegedly involved, was a continuous process, spanning a period from the early days of the conflict to its conclusion in 2002.

Taylor has denied these allegations. Now in his defense, the former president's witnesses - such as Ngebeh - are telling the judges that apart from 1991, the former president did not have any relationship with the RUF, even prior to 1996 as alleged by prosecutors. It is in this light that Ngebeh sought to exonerate the former president from crimes committed in Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1996. These crimes, the witness said, were committed by Sierra Leonean rebels.

Premier News
Wednesday, 14 April 2010

Salone Rebel Attempts To Vindicate Taylor

After a week-long recess the Charles Taylor trial restarted yesterday, with a defense witness testifying that crimes committed in Sierra Leone during its brutal 11-year long civil conflict were perpetrated by its own rebel forces not by rebel forces loyal to the former Liberian president.

Charles Ngebeh, a Sierra Leonean national and former member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) a Sierra Leonean rebel group which Mr. Taylor is alleged to have supported during the country's civil conflict today insisted that allegations of Mr. Taylor's support for the RUF are not true. The exception, he said, was in 1991 when the conflict started in Sierra Leone and Mr. Taylor provided some support to the rebel forces in his neighboring country. Mr. Taylor himself has admitted to providing support for the RUF in 1991, saying that such support was necessary because United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) rebels were attacking his positions in Liberia with support from the government of Sierra Leone, which the RUF rebels at that time were fighting to dislodge. This support stopped in 1992, according to Mr. Taylor, after the Liberian rebels fell out with their RUF counterparts. Corroborating Mr. Taylor's evidence, Mr. Ngebeh has testified that Liberian rebels in Sierra Leone indeed returned to Liberia after falling out with the RUF in an operation titled "Top 20, Top 40, and Top Final."

As he responded to questions from prosecutors under cross-examination today, Mr. Ngebeh said that the Sierra Leonean rebels themselves, of which he was a member, were responsible for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1996. He said that Mr. Taylor's forces had nothing to do with the atrocities committed in Sierra Leone.

"From 92-96 the atrocities that were going on was terrible, caused by us the

Sierra Leoneans, let's forget about Mr. Taylor's issue. That was terrible. You won't compare that at the time that Mr. Taylor was assisting the RUF in 1991. Mr. Taylor's NPFL was not killing, the killing that was going on was caused by us the Sierra Leoneans," Mr. Ngebeh told the court today.

Mr. Taylor's indictment covers crimes committed by the RUF in Sierra Leone from 1996 to the end of the conflict in 2002. Prosecutors have led evidence to establish that in addition to supporting the RUF within the period covered by the indictment, Mr. Taylor also supported the RUF prior to 1996. This, prosecutors hope, will convince the judge that the Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE) in which Mr. Taylor and the RUF were allegedly involved, was a continuous process, spanning a period from the early days of the conflict to its conclusion in 2002. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations. Now in his defense, the former president's witnesses such as Mr. Ngebeh are telling the judges that apart from 1991, Mr. Taylor did not have any relationship with the RUF, even prior to 1996 as alleged by prosecutors. It is in this light that Mr. Ngebeh today sought to exonerate the former president from crimes committed in Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1996. These crimes, the witness said were committed by Sierra Leonean rebels.

Also in his testimony today, the witness told the court that mining activities conducted in RUF-controlled territory in

Sierra Leone during the war were undertaken predominantly by individual RUF rebels, not by the RUF as an organization. Referring to the RUF as a government, the witness explained that when individuals mined diamonds, they would only hand the very big diamonds to the government (RUF) because big diamonds were hard to handle by individuals.

Responding to questions about the ownership of diamonds in RUF controlled areas, the witness explained that "after the coup [1997 coup in Sierra Leone], diamonds no longer were government property. Everybody took his. In spite of the fact that we had centralized areas where we mined for different authorities, but it was not a government property. Everybody had rights to carry it, except if you take a big one that you were not able to be in control of, you would handover that to the government [RUF]."

Prosecutors have alleged that the RUF were involved in organized mining in Sierra Leone propelled by forced civilian labor. They have also alleged that all diamonds mined in the RUF mines were taken to Mr. Taylor in Liberia. The former president, it is alleged, supplied the RUF with arms and ammunition in return. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations. Mr. Ngebeh's testimony appears to suggest that the mining activities in RUF controlled territory were not as organized as prosecutors say. In another development, it was announced today that Justice Teresa Doherty, one of the Trial Chamber judges, will be absent from court for a few days due to illness. The trial will continue in her absence.

*C r e d i t
charlestaylortrial.com*

Premier News
Wednesday, 14 April 2010

Human Rights Group Engages Traditional Leader's

Traditional and religious leaders are starting a capacity building training to enhance their ability to prevent violence against women and girls in the country.

By Alpha Bedoh Kamara

The training programme is being supported by the Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights for 600 participants in various chiefdoms.

The Programme Manager, Abdul Karim Habib said the aim of the project is to engage more traditional and religious leaders to be able to guide their subjects to respect the rights of women and girls in society.

"This is a large scale mobilization of the people to participate in their own affairs and we believe, with its conclusion many among them will see the need to effect the necessary changes based on what they have learnt," he said.

In Freetown, Habib said the training will be held at the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) Hall.

"Religious leaders are capacitated to use verses in the Bible and the

Quran to educate their congregations about the rights of people in society, especially women," he said adding that violence against women is an offence under the Domestic Acts of 2007 Part (II) Section (I).

"Violence against women is one of the most widespread human rights abuses and one of the most hidden evils in Sierra Leone," he stated, noting that the practice cuts across cultures, religion and economic boundaries. "It is inhuman for women to be used as commodities, trafficking or pornography."

Alhaji Bakar Kamara, a Freetown Muslim said Islam has a critical role to play in protecting the rights of women and girls in society, noting that "the protection of women and girls is a divine declaration that must put an end to discrimination against women," he said.

"The whole of mankind is the offspring of a single human soul. Every man or woman has the same descendant and no one is nobler or meaner by birth," he went on.

Kamara said Islam dismisses the notion that man is more honored for being a man and woman is inferior for being a woman, noting that the words are the preamble to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He said Islam promotes equality in obligation and reward, and obligates man and woman to be treated equally. "Islam treats both man and woman equally, in that whoever leads a pious life in accordance with divine guidance is entitled in equal measure to attain salvation and eternal success in the next life," he said. He said the arrangement of marriage under the age of legal consent will constitute to rape when the girl has an affair with the man.

"Girls must be sent to school and not used as sex slaves," he said

As RUFP Braces For 2012

ELDRED COLLINS REBUTS WOMAN LEADERSHIP



RUF Founder Late Foday Sankoh

By Ilyasa Baa

Interim Leader of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP) Eldred Collins has disclaimed rumours that a woman would be the flag bearer of his party come the next Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2012.

Responding to questions bordering on this, Mr. Collins in no uncertain terms pointed out that he is the most befitting person to be the flag bearer of the RUFP, adding that he will make a good use of the opportunity given to him to take the party to the next

polls. According to him, the RUFP has got a stronger political base compared to the previous elections. "APC is afraid of us," he said. Collins ascertained that if they are elected RUFP will bring more sustainable electricity than

the one brought by present government. Collins narrated that as Minister of Energy under the AFRC regime he ensured that he applied persuasive leadership to muster sustainable electricity for the people of Sierra Leone. "I have a clean track record in politics

See Page 3

Eldred Collins Rebuts Woman Leadership For RUFP

in this country, Collins stated. Collins lambasted APC saying that they have not brought any semblance of change in

the country. He boasted that if voted into State House, he will utilize the country's natural resources for the ben-

efit of the people of Sierra Leone. Collins maintained that Sierra Leone will no longer take the war path or military solu-

tion to solve her problems. He explained that the war brought light to the country for which the RUFP stands to be commended.

Charlestaylortrial.org

Tuesday, 13 April 2010

“All Atrocities Committed By The RUF Are Not The Concerns Of Mr. Taylor,” Defense Witness Says

By Alpha Sesay

Atrocities committed by Sierra Leonean rebels during the country’s 11-year civil conflict should not be attributed to Charles Taylor as he had no role to play in them, a defense witness for the former Liberian president told the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Those most responsible for the crimes, he said, have already been punished in Freetown.

Charles Ngebeh, a Sierra Leonean national and former member of the Sierra Leonean rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front, finished his testimony today, telling the judges that allegations of Mr. Taylor’s support to the RUF are false.

“All the atrocities committed by the RUF are not the concerns of Mr. Taylor. They did happen but it doesn’t concern Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor has no hands in it,” the witness said.

When lead prosecutor Ms. Brenda Hollis put to the witness that RUF commander “Sam Bockarie used his SBUs [Mr. Taylor’s Small Boys Unit] to protect government property from being stolen,” the witness responded that “it happened but Mr. Taylor is not responsible for it.”

Referencing the treatment of civilians by the RUF, Ms. Hollis asked the witness that “and indeed some of these civilians were killed when they were accused of stealing diamonds isn’t that correct?”

“All the atrocities you have explained about, is the cause why Issa and others are in prison today but Taylor is not responsible for that. Mr. Taylor is not responsible for it.”

In 2009, three RUF commanders, Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao were sentenced to terms of imprisonment by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown after being convicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by them in their individual capacities as well as those committed by their subordinates under the doctrine of command responsibility. Prosecutors now say that these RUF commanders took their own orders from Mr. Taylor. Like Mr. Taylor, all defense witnesses have said that these charges are false.

As Mr. Ngebeh concluded his testimony today, another Sierra Leonean national and former senior member of the RUF, Mr. Fayia Musa, started his testimony in defense of Mr. Taylor. Mr. Musa told the court about the circumstances surrounding the start of the rebel war in Sierra Leone and how Mr. Bockarie (alias Mosquito) became leader of the RUF after the arrest of the group’s leader Foday Sankoh in Nigeria in 1997. Mr. Musa said that when the war started in 1991, he was appointed by RUF leader Mr. Sankoh as the group’s Agricultural Officer. According to Mr. Musa, after assuming the leadership of the RUF, Mr. Bockarie became what he called “the devil.” He said that all commands in the RUF were handed down by Mr. Bockarie, not Mr. Taylor. In illustrating Mr. Bockarie’s wickedness, the witness took off his shirt in open court to show the judges various scars left on his body due to alleged beatings he received on Mr. Bockarie’s orders.

“We underwent a lot of punishment, torture, we were tortured, almost every day, both mentally and physically,” the witness said.

Asked by Mr. Taylor's defense counsel Courtenay Griffiths to tell the court on whose orders such punishments were administered, the witness said that "on Mosquito's orders. That's Sam Bockarie. He told his boys to tie us until the rope entered my skin and I started bleeding."

"Sam Bockarie, I have started and I will end with this, he was a devil," Mr. Musa said.

Mr. Musa is recorded in the report of Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as being one of the original founders of the RUF. He is the third Sierra Leonean national and the eighth witness who has testified in defense of Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Musa's testimony continues tomorrow

Feature

SIERRA LEONE/LIBERIA

No joy for Taylor's prosecutors

After two years of trial, the prosecution in the Charles Taylor case are still struggling to nail him down conclusively with the 11-count indictment announced to the world amidst great fanfare in 2004. **Lans Gberie** went to The Hague in February to watch the prosecution at work; he found them clutching at straws and apparently bereft of new ideas.

CHARLES TAYLOR WAS TRANSFERRED to The Hague from Sierra Leone in 2006 to fulfill a promise made to Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the new Liberian president, who feared that trying Taylor so close to her fragile country could be destabilising. The Special Court had probably anticipated this: Article 9 of the Court's founding Act states that: "The Special Court shall have its seat in Sierra Leone. The Court may meet away from its seat if it considers it necessary for the efficient exercise of its functions, and may be relocated outside Sierra Leone, if circumstances so require."

The prosecution concluded the cross-examination of Taylor in early February 2010, telling the judges to convict him for the following offences: that he persecuted human rights activists and suppressed press freedom in Liberia; that he executed politicians and rebel commanders who he saw as threats to his quest for political power; that he had ulterior motives when he negotiated the release of UN peacekeepers held hostage by Sierra Leonean rebel forces; and that through his support for rebel forces in Sierra Leone, he brought un-

told suffering to the people of Sierra Leone. Taylor, of course, vigorously denied these charges, and his combative lead counsel – a very experienced British criminal lawyer of Jamaican descent named Courtenay Griffiths – tried hard to play it all down, insisting that the whole trial was a Western conspiracy to humiliate and convict an awkward African leader.

On 8 February, the judges granted Griffiths' request for a one-week adjournment in order for him and his client to reflect on a few issues that came out of the cross-examination. At the same time, the acting prosecutor, the Sierra Leonean Joseph Kamara, announced that the trial would be concluded by the end of this year.

This is, of course, doubtful: the judges have over \$2m to use up in salary, and ditto the prosecutors. Taylor's defence team, too, is paid \$100,000 a month by the Court (the former president pledged he was indigent) – so obviously no one is in a hurry to wrap this whole thing up. I saw this for myself when I visited the Court on 29 February.

Prosecution at work

On that day, as on the previous two days, the prosecution focused on crimes Taylor



allegedly committed in Liberia both as a rebel leader and as president. This was, of course, a deviation from the charges against the former Liberian leader – for the indictment focuses exclusively on Taylor's role in the war in Sierra Leone, as a so-called "godfather" of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

But the intention was clear. Taylor's defence has consistently played down the brutalities of the Liberian war, claiming that it had none of the hallmarks – massive rape, amputations, arson, and pointless and mass killings – that marked the Sierra Leonean war. Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report published last year documented massive atrocities in the country's nearly 15 years of warfare. Citing those atrocities, the latest chief prosecutor (another ex-American military officer), Ms Brendan Hollis, told the Court that the RUF crimes in Sierra Leone were part of a pattern begun in Liberia by Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel forces, of which key RUF members were a part.

"Crimes committed by all factions in Liberia including your NPFL were widespread and systematic in nature," Hollis



The International Criminal Court building in The Hague is located in an area that looks like a mild industrial blight

“Taylor’s counsel tried hard to play it all down, insisting that the whole trial was a Western conspiracy to convict an awkward African leader.”

told Taylor. “That is incorrect,” Taylor responded. The prosecution has alleged that Taylor bears “the greatest responsibility” for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, committed in the territory of Sierra Leone between 30 November 1996 and 18 January 2002.

Taylor has pleaded not guilty to all the charges. In appearances at the Court, he does look the part. In his immaculate suit, Taylor looks less like the alleged colourful buccaneer who press-ganged children into delirious brutality, as painted by the prosecution, than a retired banker who has been harassed for some old unpaid loans.

“There were no amputations in Liberia. That is a blatant and diabolical lie,” Taylor

said. Hollis countered: “You yourself had armed children, some as young as eight years old,” Taylor responded: “That is total nonsense. Every child that I held I put in an orphanage.” And so it went, Taylor not conceding any ground.

Naomi Campbell’s diamond

There was the matter of Taylor allegedly presenting, as a gift, a large diamond to the British model Naomi Campbell. When this evidence was submitted in January 2010, the Western media – including the *New York Times* and *ABC* – carried stories about this “blood diamond” gift.

Brenda Hollis tried to introduce a signed statement from the American actress, Mia Farrow, who alleged that Naomi Campbell had informed her that Taylor had sent his men to give her a rough-cut diamond after they had all attended a dinner in South Africa hosted by Nelson Mandela. Not missing a beat, Taylor’s lead counsel Courtenay Griffiths objected that there was nothing indicating that the declaration was made under oath or whether it was a sworn affidavit. He noted further that the document was prejudicial, and that the best person to have made any

statement about the transfer of the diamond should have been Naomi Campbell herself, not a third party.

Griffiths called the document “hearsay”. “This document is complete nonsense. It is ridiculous. It should not be allowed in a court of law. It has no probative value and it is highly prejudicial, and in that situation, any tribunal of fact has the discretion to exclude it on that basis, and I invite you to do so,” Griffiths told the judges. And he was obliged. The judges threw out the document. Perhaps not surprisingly, none of the major news media outlets reported the judges’ decision.

There are three judges sitting over the trial: Judges Richard Lubrick (from Samoa), Teresa Doherty (UK), and Julia Sebutinde (Uganda). There is a fourth judge, called an “alternate judge”, El Hadji Malice (Senegal) who is acting as a sub – to be deployed in case any one of the judges is incapacitated.

A key strategy of the prosecutors has been to prove that Taylor enriched himself through his involvement in the conflict in Sierra Leone. In other words, that his involvement in the war was predicated not on politics or diplomacy, however

Feature
SIERRA LEONE/LIBERIA

Lead prosecutor Brenda Hollis (right) and her deputy Joseph Kamara (middle) have struggled to make a conclusive case against Taylor. Far right: Under escort: Charles Taylor on his way to The Hague on 20 June 2006

depraved (for this would be perfectly legal in international law), but that he did so for criminal appropriation – a “criminal enterprise”.

The prosecution has argued that Taylor received diamonds from RUF rebels and in return supplied them with arms and ammunition which were used to commit atrocities in Sierra Leone. Taylor has vigorously denied the allegations, stating that he made no money as a result of his involvement in Sierra Leone. His involvement, he said, was in fact sanctioned by Ecomog and approved by the UN and other key Western nations.

He even went further to state that he had no personal account in which “millions of dollars” were stashed as alleged by the prosecution in several out-of-court press conferences, and challenged them to produce evidence to that effect.

On 11 August 2009, Taylor told the Court: “I will tell anybody, if a bank account is found anywhere in the world that has any money belonging to Charles Taylor, then Charles Taylor has lied. His whole life is a lie.”

He continued: “There is no such thing as me lining my pocket. I will say it again before these judges: I ask anyone on this planet, if you are a banker in Europe, if you are a banker in any part of the world, if you know of any account that I spoke to you about or opened, if you know anybody that represents my interests, come forward and tell the world the truth.”

In a move clearly meant to call Taylor’s bluff, the prosecution lawyer Nicholas Koumjian (another American) came to court just before Christmas 2009 with several documents detailing records of a bank account supposedly operated by Taylor at the Monrovia-based Liberian Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI).

Koumjian read from an LBDI document dated 8 December 1999 showing the opening of a new bank account, number 00201-32851-01. The “personal, checking account” was in the name of “Charles G. Taylor”, home address “Congo Town”,



business address “Executive Mansion”, with an initial deposit of US\$1,000. The signature was Taylor’s. “It is my signature,” Taylor agreed.

But there was a second authorised signatory: Kadiatu Diarra, a lady who worked for the Government of Liberia (GOL) as personal assistant to Taylor while he was president. Taylor accepted that Kadiatu was a co-signatory, and told the Court that the prosecution had in fact interviewed Kadiatu in 2004 and she had told them that the account belonged to the Government of Liberia (GOL), and that it was not Taylor’s. But the prosecution, Taylor said, had hidden this fact from the Court.

However, Koumjian went ahead and told the Court that on 17 July 2000, Natura Holdings, a timber company operated in Liberia by the Dutch businessman, Guus Kouwenhoven, deposited nearly US\$2m into the account. In 2006, Kouwenhoven was convicted in a Dutch court on charges of “arms smuggling and complicity in war crimes in Liberia”, but was acquitted on appeal in March 2008. Taylor responded: “What the prosecution seeks to impeach is the fact that I said I had no personal account, and I had no personal account. If you look at [another document] in the

“No-one has been able to establish that any amount in the single bank account under question came from Taylor’s dealings with the RUF rebels.”

bundle that [the prosecution] gave us, you will see there Your Honours, that Kadiatu Diarra and Charles Taylor have the same bank account... Now what does that tell us? This account is a Government of Liberia account. I am a signatory to that account. Kadiatu is a signatory.

“If Your Honours look at the top of that page... you see there ‘Anyone’. There are two signatories on this account. ‘Anyone’ of the two [can sign and make withdrawals]. It is an operational account being operated by the Government of Liberia (GOL). It is not mine. So when you look at the deposit from Natura, and the prosecution has exhibited documents that showed that, that deposit went through the Finance Ministry ... in the box, it states ‘GOL’ on Line 1. As we go through, it further indicates for the second time ‘GOL’



[which] means Government of Liberia. It was not my personal account. Never was and never will be. That's why even on the deposit, it is stated Government of Liberia."

Taylor's response rattled Koumjian, but the American pressed on nonetheless. "If this account belonged to the Government of Liberia, why is it that it is in your name as your personal account?" Koumjian asked.

Taylor replied: "[It is]...very, very clear. I have explained this and I'm sure these financial records will be understood. Mr Koumjian, this account is opened by the president on authorisation and counter-signed by Kadiatu Diarra [who] is not my wife; she is not my lover; she works for the Government of Liberia. The only reason why she is signing and is capable of signing – that's what that form said, 'Anyone' [of the two signatories] is capable of signing – is because she is acting on behalf of the government under instructions. That's the only reason why she is on the account..."

"This, Your Honours, is a covert account opened by the Government of Liberia during this period... and you will get to see where the Government of Liberia is finding means to purchase arms and

"In all, from December 1999 till the account was closed in April 2001, a total of \$14,493,268.93 passed through it."

ammunition to fight our war after we have informed the United Nations.

"And so it [had] to be opened in my name as President Charles Taylor but it [was] operated by a government official for the purpose intended as a covert account. So the fact that it says here 'United States dollars or checking [account]', the document will show monies going into the account as Government of Liberia... That's why it is covert... The Ministry of Finance was involved."

The account, Taylor said, was necessitated by the fact that there was an international sanctions regime on Liberia, so the government needed to set aside secret funds to break the sanctions in order to buy arms to fight the American-supported and-armed LURD rebel forces who were fighting to overthrow his government.

In all, from December 1999 till the account was closed in April 2001, a total of US\$14,493,268.93 passed through it. But, despite telling the world in various press conferences since Taylor's arrest in March 2006 that he had "millions stashed in bank accounts around the world", the prosecution have not been able to produce in court any more accounts beyond the LBDI account.

In fact, details of the LBDI account had been published years back by the United Nations Security Council on its website as part of a separate investigation conducted by the UN Panel of Experts [on Liberia]. Its introduction in court certainly did not clinch the case against Taylor – in fact no one, including the prosecution, has been able to establish that any amount in the account came from his dealings with the RUF rebels of Sierra Leone. By bringing the account to the attention of the Court and the public, the prosecutors hoped to undermine Taylor's credibility as he was testifying in his own defence.

Prosecution problems

So, has the prosecution successfully proven their case against Taylor? To be able to do so, the prosecutors should have been able to tie Taylor down to specific crimes in the indictment, either as ordering the crimes himself or as being in a position, as a superior agent, to prevent those crimes – the notion of vicarious liability. So far, the prosecution has not been able to prove that Taylor, at any point during the time of the indictment – 1996 to the end of the Sierra Leonean war in 2002 – was present anywhere in the territory of Sierra Leone where the RUF was operating. The problem for the prosecution is that they do not have serious collaborating witnesses, people who were in a leadership position in the RUF, to testify that they got orders from Taylor to do what they did in Sierra Leone.

The most significant of these would have been Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie; but both are dead. Bockarie and his family were killed at the Liberia-Ivorian border after his indictment by the same Special Court trying Taylor. And Foday Sankoh died in the detention of the same Special Court.

The trial continues – and will probably go on until the end of 2011. ■ NA


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
13 April 2010

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

UN News in Liberia

UNMIL

Liberians Are Following Path Of Reconciliation, Peace Consolidation – UN Envoy Expresses Optimism

[Heritage, The News, The Analyst]

- The Special Representative of the Secretary General, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj has expressed optimism that Liberians are determined to thread the path towards reconciliation and consolidation of achievements already made in maintaining peace in Liberia.
- She made these comments yesterday when she awarded UN peacekeeping medals to 35 Staff Officers and 31 Military Observers from 28 different nations for their contributions to peace consolidation and nation building in Liberia.
- UN Envoy Løj commended senior military officers of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) on the significant role they have played in creating a stable security environment in Liberia, thus, enabling a long-term solution for consolidated peace in Liberia.
- “It is now up to all actors to take advantage of this window of opportunity and build on it to develop prosperous and peaceful living conditions for all Liberians”, she emphasized.
- Despite challenges along the way, success depends largely on the support and the confidence of the local population, Ms. Løj told the Staff Officers and Military Observers.

Other UN News

WHO Africa Region Director In Town, Donates To Health Ministry

[Daily Observer]

- World Health Organization (WHO) African Regional Director, Dr. Luis Gomes Sambo, has arrived in the country on a four-day mission.
- Dr. Sambo is in the country to form part of the launching of the Commission on Women Health in the African region.
- The Commission, according to the Health Ministry, will be charged with the responsibility of generating evidence of key factors influencing the current state of women's health in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The Commission, which is the first of its kind in Africa, will also recommend appropriate mechanisms to decrease or minimize maternal mortality rate on the continent, according to the Ministry.
- Dr. Sambo, who met with Health Minister Dr. Walter Gwenigale yesterday, donated one ambulance and several assorted items to the Ministry.

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 09:00 am)*

IOM Official Wants Capacity Building For Officers

- A Counter Trafficking Expert at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has called for more capacity building for law enforcement officers.
- Mr. Freddie Goe said capacity building for law enforcement officers will help in the fight against human trafficking.
- Mr. Goe believes building the capacity of law enforcement officers would enable them effectively respond to human trafficking across the country.
- He said the provision of logistics and other equipment to law enforcement officers was crucial to the fight against human trafficking.

- The IOM Counter Trafficking Expert spoke Monday in Gbarnga, Bong County at the formal opening of a weeklong capacity building workshop for law enforcement officers.

Local News on Liberian issues

GAC Completes HIPC Audits

[Front Page Africa, Heritage, The News, New Democrat, The Analyst]

- The General Auditing Commission (GAC) says it has finally completed the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries or HIPC audit reports.
- A GAC release said the HIPC audits were conducted on specified institutions including the Ministries of Finance, Education, Public Works, Health and Lands, Mines and Energy.
- According to the GAC, the release of the HIPC audit reports brings to 32, the total number of audits conducted so far by the Commission.
- The GAC described the completion of the HIPC audits as very crucial to the economic recovery of post-war Liberia.
- The Commission said government would now be able to get direct budget support and complete debt waiver.
- The GAC said as a result of the first HIPC audits, government was able to get US\$18 million of direct budget support from the World Bank and African Development Bank.

Postal Affairs Opens Up On US\$75,000 Saga

[The Inquirer, The Analyst]

- The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has opened up relative to a US\$75,000 saga that has evolved at the Ministry.
- In a Posts and Telecommunications statement issued in Monrovia late Monday.
- The Ministry said in March 1997, it entered into an agreement with the New York-based Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation (IGPC).
- The statement noted that under the agreement, the IGPC assumed an agent role for Liberia, taking responsibility to arrange for the production, promotion and sales of Liberian stamps worldwide.
- The Ministry said the agreement was consummated nearly ten years before Minister Jeremiah Sulunteh took over the leadership of the Ministry in March 2008.

Six Still Being Held For “Ritualistic” Activities In Harper

[The Inquirer]

- Latest reports from Maryland County say six persons including a Nigerian pastor are still being held by the government in connection to the commission of alleged ritualistic activities in the county.
- They were arraigned in court yesterday to answer to the charge of murder.
- Those still been held following the release of Ambassador Dan Morias and former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Fulton Yancy include Francis Dender, a self-proclaimed Nigerian pastor and Mr. Lintlot Clark, the acting Administrator of the J.J. Dossen Memorial Hospital in Harper, Maryland County.
- Others are Alfred Thompson, District Commissioner of Harper City; William Wallace, Youth President of the county and Tartu Clark, the General Manager of the Harper Branch of Elysian Airline.
- According to the reports, when the six accused were arraigned in court yesterday for preliminary hearings of the case was heard, state prosecutors led by former Montserrado County Attorney Samuel Jacobs, pleaded with the general public to help the state with any evidence they may have to prosecute the accused.
- Monday's proceedings according to the reports, was presided over by Associate Magistrate Jean Jacques who adjourned and reassigned for further proceedings Wednesday.

Court Detains Man, 42 For Disseminating Pornographic Material

[Front Page Africa, Heritage, national Chronicle, daily Observer, New Democrat]

- The Monrovia City Court has detained the man who allegedly disseminated pornographic recording of himself and his ex-fiancée, Peterlyne Tarley.
- The Court jailed Mr. Varney Adonis Bartener Monday following his first court appearance. Police charged Mr. Bartener with disseminating obscene material, a first degree misdemeanor.
- Police investigators said he admitted producing the x-rated recording but denied releasing it on the internet.

- According to the police, the 42-year old man was charged because he did not delete the recording as mutually agreed.

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 09:00 am)*

President Sirleaf Welcomes All Africans To Liberia

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has called on Africans to join in rebuilding Liberia.
- Addressing a predominantly black University in Brazil, the President said Liberia remains receptive to all men and women of color of African origin.
- President Sirleaf urged Africans everywhere to bring their talents, skills, and expertise in rebuilding Liberia as a haven for Africa.
- The Liberian leader told the students, the National Legislature is considering passing a bill to “recognize the dual citizen rights of people of African descent.”
- President Sirleaf also held talks with several firms including Odebrecht International, a construction company working with Acelor Mittal to reconstruct the Yekepa-Buchanan highway.
- The President and delegation are currently in Tripoli, holding consultations with Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi.

GAC Completes HIPC Audits

Over US\$2M Health Package For Liberia

- The African Humanitarian Action (AHA) International has announced a health package valued at US\$2 million for Liberia.
- AHA Medical Director Raymond Kromah said the package will cover the construction of a health centre in Kpayeh-Quollie, Gbarpolu County.
- According to Dr. Kromah, the health package also includes training of health staff and the provision of basic drugs.
- He said the project will last for 27 Months and will be implemented by two NGOs, Child Fund and TAPA.
- Dr. Kormah said funds for the project were provided by the Ministry of Health through the Pull Funds.

Opposition Swells For Newly Appointed Commissioner

- The House Committee on Internal Affairs says it would launch an investigation into claims of malpractices linking Commissioner Jonathan Garnett.
- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf recently appointed Mr. Garnett as Commissioner of Mount Coffee Township but some citizens of the area opposed the appointment.
- The concerned citizens accused Mr. Garnett of financial misapplication and incompetence, but Mr. Garnett has repeatedly rejected the claims.
- The Chairman of the Committee, Representative Richard Holder said there was a need to thoroughly investigate the claims before Mr. Garnett takes office.
- Representative Holder believes the investigation would establish whether Mr. Garnett was actually guilty of the charges brought against him.

Five Armed Robbers Get 10-year Sentence

- Criminal Court "D" has sentenced five men to 10 years in prison for armed robbery.
- Jurors found the men Prince Momofoe, Prince Mayou, Alex Tamba, Amos Fallah and Anthony Wetteh guilty early April following a trial in keeping with law.
- They reportedly armed robbed the home of a lady in June 2009 and took away valuables worth thousands of United States and Liberian Dollars.
- The prosecution excepted to the judgment claiming the court reduced the sentence by four years and contended that the men serve the 14-year as prescribed by the statute.

Court Detains Man, 42 For Disseminating Pornographic Material

IRC Transport Manager Held For Theft

- Police in Lofa County have charged and sent to court the Transport Manager of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for theft of Property.
- Mr. Lewis Jallah is accused of stealing a Honda motorbike valued at US\$2,000 during the February violence in Voinjama.
- Police discovered the stolen motorbike in the home of Mr. Jallah in Yanni-molahun, Kolahun District, about eighty kilometers from Voinjama.
- Mr. Jallah said he took the motorbike because the IRC Management owes him benefits totalling nearly US\$2,000.

- Mr. Jallah explained an agreement entered into with IRC provides that employees be given certain benefits after three years of service.
- But the Field Coordinator of IRC in Lofa County, Raphael Mbum denied the existence of such an agreement.

International Clips on Liberia

Simba Energy Inc. Reports on Liberian Oil Seep Survey

http://www.marketwatch.com/story/simba-energy-inc-reports-on-liberian-oil-seep-survey-2010-04-13?reflink=MW_news_stmp

VANCOUVER, BC, Apr 13, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- Simba Energy Inc. advises it has submitted its Oil Seep Survey Report for the Field Reconnaissance Work undertaken in January, 2010, to the National Oil Company of **Liberia** (NOCAL). In accordance with requirements in its Onshore Hydrocarbon Reconnaissance License NR-001, the Company's report concludes as follows: The Bassa Basin area is either deep enough for maturation of desired hydrocarbons or connected to the offshore sediments. The entire Seep Survey area can be regarded as one continuous seep, as the survey encountered multiple seeps in 9 separate localities. Also, under calm conditions such as early morning, oil sheen is seen on all the rivers within the entire area of the seep survey.

The Government of the Republic of Liberia Selects FreeBalance Government Resource Planning (GRP) System

<http://callcenterinfo.tmcnet.com/news/2010/04/12/4723373.htm>

FreeBalance, a global software company that helps governments leverage robust Government Resource Planning (GRP) technology to accelerate country growth, has been selected to implement the FreeBalance Accountability Suite for the Government of the Republic of **Liberia**. FreeBalance has recently announced agreements with the Government of Uganda and MCA Namibia. FreeBalance is uniquely positioned to support public financial management reforms in Africa. FreeBalance has successfully rolled out modern public financial management systems in challenging circumstances: limited connectivity, low bandwidth, lack of electrical power, and low capacity. The Government of the Republic of **Liberia** will deploy the FreeBalance Accountability Suite to drive government modernization through effective fiscal management.

Liberia: Atrocities In Sierra Leone Were Committed By Sierra Leoneans Rebels, Not Charles Taylor's Forces, Witness Says

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201004130952.html>

After a week-long recess the Charles Taylor trial restarted today, with a defense witness testifying that crimes committed in Sierra Leone during its brutal 11-year long civil conflict were perpetrated by its own rebel forces — not by rebel forces loyal to the former **Liberian** president. Charles Ngebeh, a Sierra Leonean national and former member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)—a Sierra Leonean rebel group which Mr. Taylor is alleged to have supported during the country's civil conflict — today insisted that allegations of Mr. Taylor's support for the RUF are not true. The exception, he said, was in 1991 when the conflict started in Sierra Leone and Mr. Taylor provided some support to the rebel forces in his neighboring country. Mr. Taylor himself has admitted to providing support for the RUF in 1991, saying that such support was necessary because United Liberation Movement of **Liberia** for Democracy (ULIMO) rebels were attacking his positions in **Liberia** with support from the government of Sierra Leone, which the RUF rebels at that time were fighting to dislodge. This support stopped in 1992, according to Mr. Taylor, after the **Liberian** rebels fell out with their RUF counterparts. Corroborating Mr. Taylor's evidence, Mr. Ngebeh has testified that Liberian rebels in Sierra Leone indeed returned to **Liberia** after falling out with the RUF in an operation titled "Top 20, Top 40, and Top Final."

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast

UNOCI's new force commander visits the troops in the field

<http://appablog.wordpress.com/2010/04/13/cote-d%e2%80%99ivoire-unoci%e2%80%99s-new-force-commander-visits-the-troops-in-the-field/>

The new Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in **Côte d'Ivoire** (UNOCI), Major General Abdul Hafiz, conducted, on Friday 9 April 2010, his first visit to UNOCI military and civil staff based in the town of Divo. Presenting the security and military situation in the Sud Bandama and Fromager regions to the Force Commander, the mission's military observers and officers of the Moroccan battalion, supported by the heads of UNOCI sections in Divo, stressed the efforts made in the field to accompany **Ivorians** in the crisis-resolution process. Major General Hafiz encouraged them to continue these efforts and to maintain good relations with their hosts. "Remain on good terms with the people, political leaders, administrative authorities such as the prefects and sub-prefects, the heads of the Defence and Security Forces and youths leaders in order to explain our mandate and foster trust between the population and UNOCI," he said. The Moroccan contingent, military observers and UNPOL carry out daily patrols, observe the embargo, escort humanitarian convoys and monitor the observance of the ceasefire in the region. Additionally, the Moroccan soldiers provide free medical care to area residents.

Ivory Coast: Drivers` strike enters day two

http://www.africanews.com/site/l_Coast_Drivers_strike_enters_day_two/list_messages/31294

For the second day on Tuesday, **Ivory Coast** is without taxis and other major transport means following a national strike declared by the National Transport Union on Monday, engendered by a 200% rise in fuel prices. According to Africa News reporter, early Monday morning, **Ivorians** woke up to see their streets and boulevards dry and devoid of taxis and inter-urban buses making it impossible for the majority to go to work, marketplaces and schools. He said people had to trek long kilometres under scorching sun to their places of call and did same back home in the evening. Consequently, schools have been shut down and marketplaces are practically not functioning for lack of supplies of foodstuff. The transport union is calling on the government to cut off the new increase and restore the former prices of fuel for it to call off the strike, but the government said the hike is due to international economic crises. The Union resolved to be on indefinite strike following a deadlock with the Ministry of Transport.

BBC Online

Wednesday, 14 April 2010

Radovan Karadzic toys with judges at Hague trial

By Peter Biles
BBC News, The Hague

With a nod towards the public gallery, Radovan Karadzic looked distinctly businesslike as he entered courtroom one in The Hague.

His grey and white hair was longer than when he appeared here last year. It was more as he wore it during the Bosnian War in the early 1990s.

Mr Karadzic exchanged a few smiles with one of the security guards deployed to stand over him.

While the judges readied themselves for the appearance of the first prosecution witness, the former Bosnian Serb leader put on his reading glasses and paged through his briefcase of documents.

At last, this trial is properly under way.

Judge O-Gon Kwon outlined the timetable for the remainder of April: the tribunal will sit for three days a week as the first witnesses testify against Mr Karadzic.

'Responsible and reasonable'

The judge signalled that Radovan Karadzic was still trying to stretch out the proceedings.

The prosecution team had said they needed just one hour to question today's witness, Ahmet Zelic. Mr Karadzic however, had told the tribunal that he required four hours for his cross-examination.

Looking ahead to the fourth witness on the list, prosecutors say they need three hours to hear from Herbert Okun, a former United Nations adviser.

Mr Karadzic, on the other hand, wants 14 hours set aside for the cross examination. And so it goes on.

Judge O-Gon Kwon said the chamber expected Mr Karadzic to be "responsible and reasonable".

The message was clear. He should not expect to be granted all the time he has asked for.

The first witness, Ahmet Zelic, has given evidence at three previous trials in The Hague, including that of the late Slobodan Milosevic.

This is also his third journey to the Netherlands for the Karadzic case. The two earlier journeys had apparently been fruitless because of legal postponements. So it was no doubt with some personal relief that Mr Zelic eventually made it into court.

His evidence was made up of written testimony as well as answers to the questions from the prosecution.

The evidence was certainly harrowing, though strangely not as compelling as it might have been. It was not clear to what extent he believed that Mr Karadzic was directly involved in the events in Sanski Most in 1992.



Radovan Karadzic insists he needs more time to prepare his defence

Spirited cross-examination

Mr Zulic seemed to be challenged by both the technology and the geography of Bosnia as he was asked to identify points on a computer map. He showed little emotion as his evidence was translated by the court interpreters.

He concluded his testimony by saying he was physically disabled as a result of his treatment at the hands of the Serbs in 1992, and the psychological stress was still having its effect on him.

The cross-examination, however, was a rather spirited affair, as Radovan Karadzic began to warm to the task of defending himself.

But the day ended with several minutes of instruction to Mr Karadzic from another of the trial judges, Howard Morrison.

The judge told Mr Karadzic that he needed to be more concise, and suggested several ways in which he could sharpen his skills when cross-examining witnesses.

Mr Karadzic seemed to accept the advice in the right spirit, nodding his head in agreement as he was offered tips for the next session.