

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



Rotation ceremony, as MONBATT VII of the Mongolian Guard Force handed over to MONBATT VIII.  
See more photos in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*.

**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:**

Friday, 14 August 2009

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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## Special Court for Sierra Leone Outreach and Public Affairs Office

# **PRESS RELEASE**

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 14 August 2009

### **Mongolian Guard Force Honoured by Special Court at Rotation Ceremony**

In a colourful handover ceremony in Freetown Friday, the men and women of MONBATT VII said farewell to Special Court officials as they prepared to leave for home.



Acting Registrar Binta Mansaray hailed the work of the UNMIL Mongolian Guard Force, both in securing the premises of the Special Court and for their contributions to the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone.

“Six months ago you arrived in Sierra Leone, far from your homes in Mongolia, with a mission to provide security at the Special Court for Sierra Leone,” Mansaray said. “On behalf of the Special Court, I say thanks. You have served honourably and you have served well.”

Since January 2006, seven contingents of Mongolian peacekeepers have guarded the premises of the Special Court to provide security for the judicial process. As the commander of MONBATT VII handed over to his successor at MONBATT VIII,

Mansaray pledged that the Special Court would provide all necessary support to the new contingent to enable them to do their work.

The Mongolian Guard Force commander, on behalf of the Mongolian Ministry of Defence, conferred upon Binta Mansaray “the Honour of Warrior” for her “valuable support to the Mongolian contingents at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.” Mansaray accepted the award on the Special Court.



#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the  
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Awoko

Friday, 14 August 2009

Friday August 14, 2009

Aw

## Charles Taylor denies being a military terrorist

Mr. Taylor told his war crimes trial in the Hague The Netherlands past Wednesday that his participation in the release of some UN Officials, ECOMOG Soldiers and Journalists from the detention of the West Side Boys in Freetown in 1999 was not secret. The West Side Boys was a dissident group from the Sierra Leone Army loyal to former leader, Johnny Paul Koroma. According to the defence document read in court the West Side Boys held the UN, ECOMOG Soldiers and Journalists in demand for the release of Johnny Paul Koroma who was detained by the RUF.

Mr. Taylor explained to the court how he facilitated the transportation of an RUF Commander from Liberia to Sierra Leone to release Johnny Paul Koroma. He also testified that Johnny Paul Koroma was brought to Liberia to communicate with his boys for the release of the UN and ECOMOG Personnel.

British Ambassador accredited to Liberia and the Ivory Coast wrote a letter to Mr. Taylor on June 10, 1999 and indicated Liberia's involvement in the Sierra Leone war. The British Ambassador's letter to Mr. Taylor preceded the Lome Peace Talks between the RUF rebels and the Sierra Leone Government in 1999, It has been revealed in court.

Portion of the British Ambassador's letter read: **"We therefore welcome your recent positive comment on the Lome negotiation and your assurances that Liberian diplomatic support for the rebels will cease; We hope you will continue to use your influence with the rebels to ensure that the peace agreement is secured and fully implemented."**

Mr. Taylor dismissed the British allegation that he had influence over the RUF rebels. The Lome Peace Talks on Sierra Leone ended on July 7, 1999 with the signing of a peace agreement between the RUF and the Tejan Kabbah government. The Former Liberian Leader said contrary to the Prosecution indictment that he's a terrorist; he advised RUF Leader Foday Sankoh to abandon the war and take the peaceful political path.

"My plan to bring peace to Sierra Leone was not for Foday Sankoh but for the people of Sierra Leone," Mr. Taylor told the court. He explained that when he became president of Liberia in 1997, he was anxious for peace to return to Sierra Leone in order to bring development to his own country. "This has never been for Sankoh but for Sierra Leone. I was in a hurry to do something for my people in Liberia and this cannot move ahead without peace in Sierra Leone," Mr. Taylor said. "If there is no peace in Sierra Leone, there will be no peace in Liberia." Mr. Taylor told the judges that he became very active in efforts to bring peace to Sierra Leone and

he eventually traveled to Togo for the final signing of the peace agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF and after the signing of the peace agreement he advised RUF leader Foday Sankoh to change the RUF into a political machine and seek a mandate from the people of Sierra Leone like he (Taylor) did in Liberia. "Stop the war, go into politics, drop the gun and go into politics. You can't go into politics with a gun in your hand," Mr. Taylor said he told Foday Sankoh.



# Taylor implicates ECOMOG Soldiers



Charles  
Taylor

Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor said he alone did not facilitate the release of some UN Officials, ECOMOG Sol-

*Continued page 7*

## Taylor implicates ECOMOG Soldiers

*From front page*

diers and Journalists held by the West Side Boys on Occra Hill in Freetown in 1999. Taylor came face to face with an incriminating document from the British Government. Mr. Taylor said his advice to Former RUF Leader, Foday Sankoh was far from the Prosecution allegation that he's a Military Terrorist.

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Concord Times  
Friday, 14 August 2009

## 'My interest in Salone was peace, not Foday Sankoh'

### *...Taylor tells judges*

*By Alpha Sesay*

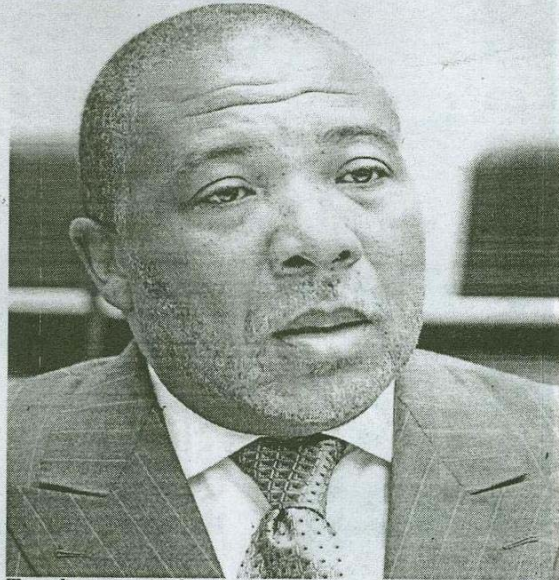
Charles Taylor was only interested in achieving peace in Sierra Leone for the people of the country, not for the benefit of the country's rebel leader Foday Sankoh, Mr. Taylor told Special Court for Sierra Leone judges today at his trial in The Hague.

"My plan to bring peace to Sierra Leone was not for Foday Sankoh but for the people of Sierra Leone," Mr. Taylor told the court today.

Mr. Taylor explained that when he became president of Liberia in 1997, he was anxious for peace to return to Sierra Leone in order to bring development to his own country.

"This has never been for Sankoh but for Sierra Leone. I was in a hurry to do something for my people in Liberia and this cannot move ahead without peace in Sierra Leone," Mr. Taylor said. "If there is no peace in Sierra Leone, there will be no peace in Liberia."

Mr. Taylor told the judges that he became very active in efforts to bring peace to Sierra Leone. He told the judges that when the government of Sierra Leone finally decided to hold peace talks with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Togo, which eventually resulted in the 1999 Lome Peace Agreement, Liberia had a permanent delegation based in the



Togolese capital to help Sierra Leone's peace efforts.

"They were there because of my role, we wanted somebody on the ground that could brief me regularly on progress with the peace talks," Mr. Taylor said.

Mr. Taylor himself eventually traveled to Togo for the final signing of the peace agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Committee of Five [a committee set up to facilitate a peaceful end to the conflict in Sierra Leone], he was made to sign the final peace agreement as a moral guarantor to the peace efforts between the two parties.

Mr. Taylor said that after the signing of the peace agreement between the government of Sierra

Leone and the RUF, he advised RUF leader Foday Sankoh to change the RUF into a political machine and seek a mandate from the people of Sierra Leone like he (Taylor) did in Liberia.

"Stop the war, go into politics, drop the gun and go into politics. You can't go into politics with a gun in your hand," Mr. Taylor said he told Foday Sankoh.

The prosecution has accused Mr. Taylor of providing support for the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone through the supply of arms and ammunition as well as provision of personnel for combat against the government and people of Sierra Leone. There have also been allegations that the RUF rebels sought advice from Mr. Taylor and that he used his position of authority to influence the rebel forces.



## The Exclusive

Friday, 14 August 2009

# More Trouble For Taylor

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On Wednesday Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor said he alone did not facilitate the release of some UN Officials, ECOMOG Soldiers and Journalists held by the West Side Boys on Occra Hill in the outskirt of Freetown in 1999. Taylor came face to face with an incriminating document from the British Government. Mr. Taylor said his advice to Former RUF Leader, Foday Sankoh was far from the Prosecution allegation that he's a Military Terrorist.

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Mr. Taylor explained to the court how he facilitated the transportation of an RUF Commander from Liberia to Sierra Leone to release Johnny Paul Koroma. He also testified that Johnny Paul Koroma was brought to Liberia to communicate with his boys for the release of the UN and ECOMOG Personnel.

## Share Your Views

The trial of former Liberian president, Charles Taylor is being broadcast live from Monday to Thursday at The Special Court for Sierra Leone, Jomo Kenyatta Road, New England Ville. Due to the time difference between The Hague and Sierra Leone, the telecast commences between 7.30 am and 8 am. The Exclusive wants to hear what you have to say about the trial. Call or sms with your full name and address to 076 647 178.



# Standard Times

Friday, 14 August 2009

## As Charles Taylor's Trial Continues, We Should Keep Reminding Ourselves of What Happened

### ***PART 2***

*BY IBM KAMARA*

What started in one part of the Country close to Liberia, that is in the Eastern region gradually spread in other regions. It is alleged that at one point before the start of the war that Charles Taylor that Sierra Leone will have a taste of simple because ECOMOG used this Country as a base to intervene in the Liberian crisis. Well if that is true then we should try to understand why the war in this Country started where it did.

"On 23rd October 1994, reinforced by more soldiers and captured villagers, the rebels staged the most audacious attack on a convoy, killing over sixty civilians and soldiers. Many rebels were also killed. The survivors dispersed, and on 31st October having regrouped, attacked the gold mining towns of Kalmaroh and Mansumbirie. On Tuesday 1st November, they moved on to the old and historic town of Mabonto, whose inhabitants had fled the day before, on the same day, the prosperous and populous town of Bumbuna and site of the country's \$100 million hydroelectric project was invaded and several houses burnt.

The rebels then moved with lightning speed destroying the towns of Bendugu and Alkalia, and on the 7th November, they struck Kabala, the principal town of the northern Koinadugu district and home of the famed Tamaboroh warriors.

The rapidity with which the rebels had covered enormous territory all on foot was amazing. Between 31st October, when they attacked Kalmaroh, and 7th November when they eventually hit Kabala in the far north, they had covered a distance of approximately 110 miles of very mountainous terrain.

But perhaps even more intriguing in the attacks on this region were certain salient facts. Firstly, the insurgents had covered a large swathe of territory along open motor roads and familiar footpaths over a considerable distance without any opposition or interception by government forces. The latter had been kept fully informed of rebel movements along a well-defined route. The response to each attack always came a day or more after the rebels had left town.

Secondly, a contingent of heavily-armed soldiers had been stationed rather irrelevantly in the junction town of Matham following the attack on Masanga Leprosy hospital town. The troops arrived days after the attacks and stayed for about a week.

They were eventually deployed in Mabonto; long after the rebels had struck Kabala and disappeared.

Thirdly, it had been observed by many in Kabala, that prior to the attack on the town, a military truck with heavily armed soldiers had passed through Kabala. ostensibly

to interdict rebels in their northward advance. When the truck returned a day after, the soldiers were no longer on board. Two days later these same government soldiers were widely believed, by those who had seen them previously to be part of the rebel force that invaded Kabala.

More telling was the fact that a military officer already a familiar sight in Kabala was to give the signal for the attack on the town at 4.00pm.

Many houses burnt in several towns were often those of specifically targeted individuals or families. In Kabala the attack seemed more out of revenge against the Tamaboroh fighters, for which their leader Dembaso Samura was viciously stabbed and clubbed to death.

The course of the war, its intractable nature, the defiance of the insurgents and the apparent inability of government forces to bring them to heel, produced a mood of deep despair and confusion among many in the military. But among the civilian population who had primarily been the innocent victims of rebel atrocities, and occasionally those perpetrated by government troops, the mood was one of anger and lost confidence in the national army.



<p>In most places affected by the conflict, educational and medical services were now totally non-existent, while several towns had been thoroughly looted or destroyed. In the nation's capital of Freetown which in 1991 had seemed remote and unaffected by the war, a mood of uncertainty about the nation's future stability slowly crept in, as refugees from the war zone began to trickle into the city. There were now the routine helicopter flights bringing slain officers into the capital for burial.</p> <p>It was a result of this deep frustration and a realization that even after two years of the coup, the primary goal of ending the war was still elusive, that the regime tried another solution. It was decided that since this was a rural insurrection, the chiefs who wielded local traditional authority should be formally involved in the war effort. A Conference of the nation's Chiefs was convened on 14th June 1994.</p>	<p>In his formal opening statement, the NPRC Chairman remarked that it was now obvious "that the war has taken an unpalatable twist that needed concerted efforts". He lamented the dubious role of many citizens; "who knows that even in the Western Area and perhaps even in this very hall there may be rebels or rebel sympathizers."</p> <p>In their candid response, the Chiefs expressed frustration at the army's apparent inability to end the war, and the dubious role of the soldiers in the field. In resolutions passed at the end of the deliberations, the Chiefs declared that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "The war should not be reduced to atrocities and feuds aimed at settling scores</li> <li>- Ulimo soldiers should be withdrawn and check points manned by police and not soldiers.</li> <li>- Discipline of soldiers in their fighting efforts should be enhanced.</li> <li>- Chiefs should take active part in recruiting soldiers within their chiefdoms.</li> <li>- Government should ensure that the army personnel at the war front be adequately catered for in order to avoid looting by soldiers."</li> </ul>	<p>The Chiefs also felt strongly that their personal involvement in the war especially in recruiting disciplined youths instead of thugs, could influence in a positive way the course of events. They stated that the fighting men were being neglected by their field commanders and the military authorities in Freetown. This was partially responsible for the unending looting by soldiers.</p> <p>Ironically this fact had been the immediate rationale for the coup as the Junta Chairman on 30th April 1992 stated;</p> <p>"Our soldiers continue to sacrifice their lives on the war front in spite of very poor logistics support provided by the government whose leadership is in Freetown enriching themselves by gross misappropriation of war funds."</p> <p>If the Chiefs Conference was impressive in organization, the result was hardly so, and the depressed mood of these traditional rulers was scarcely affected. Most Chiefs in war devastated areas were now themselves displaced citizens.</p>
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Those in unaffected areas still lived in fear of both rebels and soldiers who behaved with equal banditry. But while many people concluded that only military force could overcome the rebels, others thought differently.

The idea of a diplomatic solution to the conflict had been proposed before but the government had initially rejected it, in a special commentary, the *New Citizen* reflected the views of the proponents for such a solution, saying that:

"We must at all cost, using all our international contacts, identify these rebels and talk to them to see reason...In the name of peace we should talk to those people who have influence over Charles Taylor so that these rebels can tell us what their demands are so that we can come to a point of compromise.."

The article acknowledged that the main intention of the rebels was:

"to drain the country economically, create a reign of terror and in the process make the country ungovernable." For this reason an effort should be made "to locate the leadership of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and pass on a message to that leadership that we in Sierra Leone are tired of the destruction and that we need peace."

This was one more instance of the sort of naiveté that characterized the entire perception of the rebel con-

flict. It was obvious that by mid 1993, very little in the way of concrete information was known about the whereabouts of the leadership of the RUF. And for over a year from late 1993 to all of 1994, the RUF Commander Foday Sankoh had stopped communicating with the BBC. He was by this time variously rumoured to be dead, or had fled to Liberia or was being carried in a hammock due to paralysis. The insurgents were thus apparently lacking in an unidentifiable political leadership that could be contacted or even a central and unified military command structure. The killer commandos in the field often operated as independent units maintaining their links with rogue military officers.

By this time also, it was generally agreed that the Liberian rebels of the NPFL who had formed the bulwark of the initial invasion force were hardly any longer in Sierra Leone. The insurgents were now nationals, forcibly or willingly inducted into rebel ranks. Charles Taylor therefore had little influence over the activities of these groups by this time.

What was even more significant was the fact that by late 1994, Charles Taylor himself was facing mounting military pressure in Liberia from the forces of the Liberian Peace Council and Ulimo.

The latter had laid a crippling siege on Taylor's headquarter at Gbanga, while his NPFL organization was experiencing several defections by former close and trusted companions like his long time Defence Minister Tom Woewiyu. Woewiyu not only abandoned Taylor, but challenged his leadership of the NPFL.

Taylor was fighting not only for the existence of his organization but even for his very life. The war in Sierra Leone which the NPFL had initiated was now of little interest to him.



The Senator  
Friday, 14 August 2009

# Sexual Violence, An 'Invisible War Crime'

By Nirit Ben-Ari and Ernest Harsch

Continued from Monday August 10, 2009 Edition

*The commission urges reforms in Sierra Leone's legal, judicial and police systems to make it easier for women to report cases of sexual and domestic violence.*

It calls for the repeal of all statutory and customary laws that discriminate against women, including in marriage, inheritance, divorce and property ownership. It recommends that the government campaign against the customary practice whereby a victim of rape is obliged to marry the rapist.

All armed groups carried out human rights violations against women and girls, the TRC report finds. These included killing, rape and other sexual violence, sexual slavery, slave labour, abduction, assault, amputation, forced pregnancy, disembowelment of pregnant women, torture, trafficking, mutilation, theft and the destruction of property. While forced conscription was used mainly -- but not solely -- against males, rape and sexual slavery were committed almost exclusively against females.

Because rape and sexual violence were so rife during the war, the country is now seeing a sharp rise in cases of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, the report notes. According to the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), of the 170,000 people between the ages of 15 and 49 estimated to be living with the virus in Sierra Leone in 2001, some 90,000 were female. The largest number of atrocities was committed by fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the rebel movement that started the war. The RUF "was the primary perpetrator of human rights violations against women and girls," the commission reports, and "pursued a deliberate



strategy of violating women." More than 66 per cent of the 2,058 abductions of women and girls were carried out by the RUF, as well as 73 per cent of the reported cases of sexual slavery.

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council -- an army faction that seized power in 1997 and was ousted the following year -- also deliberately targeted women and girls, the TRC reports. The official Sierra Leone Army and an irregular pro-government militia group, the Civil Defence Forces, employed similar tactics, although on a less-widespread scale.

of harmful customary practices and leadership programmes.

The commission notes that the government "has not yet taken the necessary steps to eradicate structural inequality against women." It urges the president, on behalf of the current and past governments, to "offer an unequivocal apology" to women for their suffering during the war. To enhance women's role in decision-making, the TRC recommends that political parties ensure that at least 30 per cent of their candidates for public office are women, and that the government work towards achieving a similar ratio in cabinet and other political posts. The government and parliament should both aim to reach gender parity within the next decade.

-SIERRA LEONE WEB



## Charlestaylortrial.org (The Hague)

Thursday, 13 August 2009

### **Liberia: RUF Salute Report Made No Mention Of Help Received From Charles Taylor**

Alpha Sesay

A key military intelligence document, written by and for high level Sierra Leonean rebel commanders summarizing their group's activities during a brutal time in the Sierra Leonean war, made no mention of any assistance by the then Liberian President, Charles Taylor, the Special Court for Sierra Leone heard today.

Mr. Taylor's lead defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, today read from a 'Salute Report' written by former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commander Sam Bockarie to his returning leader, Foday Sankoh. The report was written after Mr. Sankoh's absence from the rebel group between 1997 and 1999, while he was imprisoned by Nigeria. The document provided a detailed account of the RUF's activities while Mr. Sankoh was gone.

Reading from the report, the defense sought to rebut prosecution allegations that the RUF was controlled by Mr. Taylor during Sierra Leone's war while Mr. Sankoh was imprisoned in Nigeria, and that during this time, Mr. Taylor promoted RUF commander Sam Bockarie to the rank of Brigadier General. Witnesses have further testified in the trial that diamonds mined by the RUF were taken to Mr. Taylor and that in return, he supplied the rebels with arms and ammunition. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations.

Asked by his defense counsel whether there was any mention in the report of him giving orders for the RUF to join the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) a group of Sierra Leonean soldiers who overthrew the government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah in May 1997—Mr. Taylor said "No. I was not privy to any of this information. From what I got, this was an instruction from Sankoh on tape that was played on radio."

On his promotion to the rank of General in the RUF, the Salute Report quoted Sam Bockarie as saying "I was promoted to General by Johnny Paul Koroma [former leader of the AFRC]." Mr. Taylor buttressed this point by saying he never promoted Mr. Bockarie to such rank, saying that "in fact to the best of my recollection, when I met Bockarie, he was already a General."

In his testimony today, Mr. Taylor told the judges that the Salute Report detailing the RUF's activities in Foday Sankoh's absence makes no mention of diamonds handed over to him.

"If they are sending diamonds to Taylor, why did they not say so in the Salute Report? This is because it never happened," he said.

Mr. Taylor also told the judges that the Salute Report submitted to Mr. Sankoh talks about arms and ammunition that were purchased from United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO)—another Liberian rebel group which fought against Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL); the sale of diamonds to Lebanese businessmen; and Mr. Bockarie's order to fellow RUF commander, Superman, to move with rebel fighters as reinforcements for the January 1999 attack on Sierra Leone's capital Freetown. Mr. Taylor said that all these issues fall within the prosecution's allegations against him but that there is no mention of his involvement in them based on the Salute Report.

Mr. Taylor again blamed Western Powers for the state of affairs in Liberia after he became president in 1997. He said the western powers encouraged him to disarm all fighting forces in Liberia, burning all



arms and ammunition and thereby rendering him powerless only for the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebels to launch an attack against him.

"It ended up with an insurgency by LURD after we were led to burn our arms. After we burnt all our arms, LURD attacked," Mr. Taylor said.

The young men and women who had been disarmed became vulnerable since they had no jobs or food.

"We did not have job for these young men and women who had fought. They had not been properly demobilized. They were available to fight. There is nothing to do when people take advantage of these young men and women," he said.

Mr. Taylor said that Liberia therefore became a ground for mercenaries and many of these former fighters became recruits for conflicts in Sierra Leone , Angola and Congo. He said that with all these events, the issues he faces now were bound to happen. "The Charles Taylor incident was an accident waiting to happen," he said.

Mr. Taylor's testimony continues on Monday. For the duration of Mr. Taylor's testimony, there will be no court hearings on Fridays.



Charlestaylortrial.org

Thursday, 13 August 2009

## **Videolink Streaming Problems: Explanation from the Special Court**

By Tracey Gurd

Dear Readers,

A number of people noted on the site that they have experienced problems with the live streaming of the trial in the past few days, and asked us to check to see what was wrong.

Our questions were kindly answered by Solomon Moriba, the Press and Outreach Officer at the Special Court. It seems the problem comes from so many people trying to watch Mr. Taylor's testimony through the Special Court's site - it is overloading the system.

From the Special Court: "We increased the bandwidth to accommodate more viewers before the start of the Defence case. We understand that the network is currently overloaded as many people are following the Taylor testimony online. As a result, we also now carry the English signal on LINK 2 which used to be the Krio channel."

That said, it seems readers will still be able to access the Krio channel from the link on our [www.charlestaylortrial.org](http://www.charlestaylortrial.org) site (you will see the button for live streaming on the right hand side of our homepage – go to Channel 2). Going through the Special Court's links on its website provides both channels in English.

For those who are able, the Court suggested upgrading to a faster internet connection might also help alleviate some of the problems viewers are experiencing.



## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 13 August 2009

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

#### **Clinton throws support behind Liberia leader**

MONROVIA, Aug 13, 2009 (AFP) - US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Thursday hailed Liberia's post-war transition to democracy and backed President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf against calls to resign over alleged links to a warlord. Clinton enjoyed one of the most rousing welcomes she has received so far in her seven-nation Africa tour, with hundreds of people braving pouring rain to cheer her as her motorcade entered the war-battered capital. Young people danced to drums and female activists held a banner reading, "Hillary Clinton - Woman of Substance" as the top US diplomat drove past. And in a speech to a meeting soon afterwards, Clinton offered a ringing endorsement of Africa's first woman president. "We are supportive and will continue to be so because we think that Liberia is on the right track, as difficult as that path may be," she said.

#### **Clinton backs Liberian leader despite resignation calls**

Africa News Aug 13, 2009, 16:33 GMT Nairobi/Monrovia - US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Thursday threw her weight behind Africa's only female leader, Liberian President Ellen Johnson, who is facing calls to leave politics. The West African nation's Truth and Reconciliation Commission recently recommended Sirleaf be banned from politics for backing former warlord Charles Taylor at the beginning of the country's two bloody civil wars. However, Clinton said that Sirleaf's entire record had to be considered. 'Today Liberia is a model of successful transition from conflict to post-conflict, from lawlessness to democracy,' Clinton said after meeting Sirleaf in the capital Monrovia. 'We are supportive and will continue to be so because we think that Liberia is on the right track.' Clinton, on the penultimate leg of her seven-nation trip around Africa, arrived in Monrovia to a rapturous reception from well-wishers and traditional dancers, who lined the streets despite a downpour. The US has long had strong links with Liberia, which was founded 150 years ago by freed American slaves. Clinton's support comes as a welcome boost to Sirleaf as she fights to shake off the commission's recommendation that she be banned from politics for 30 years.

### **International Clips on West Africa**

#### **Ghana's ambassador to Guinea briefly kidnapped: Guinea minister**

CONAKRY, Aug 13, 2009 (AFP) - Ghana's ambassador to Guinea was kidnapped for several hours by armed men who robbed him and beat him up, a Guinean government minister said Thursday. Witnesses confirmed the incident to AFP and added that the attackers were wearing military uniforms. The Guinean government expressed "profound concern" Thursday about an outbreak of violence targeting diplomats. The Ghanaian diplomat, Dominic Boagye, was driving through the Hamdallaye suburb of Guinean capital Conakry on the night of Saturday, August 8, when a vehicle rammed the back of his Toyota Land Cruiser, Communications Minister Justin Morel Junior said in a statement. Boagye was "kidnapped by armed men who took away his vehicle", added the minister. The Ghanaian ambassador was beaten up during the attack, according to the statement. Police officials told AFP the diplomat was "confined in his 4X4 and taken to Wanidara (a Conakry suburb),

beaten up, robbed of all his belongings (watch, mobile phones, money, shoes, etc) before being abandoned late at night." Witnesses said that when Boagye left his vehicle to check if it was damaged, uniformed men ordered him back into the Land Cruiser with them. **Guinea** has been under military rule since last December, when the army seized control shortly after the death of long-time president Lansana Conte.

## **SLAJ Chair Cautions Kenema Journalists**

Freetown, Aug 13, 2009 (Concord Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Chairman of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists eastern region has admonished media practitioners in the district to remain focused on their duties and responsibilities as the ethics of the profession demands. Mohamed Vandí reminded his colleagues that journalists are expected to work in the interest of the country and people and therefore should not allow politicians to influence their professional work. "From the look of things there are indications that some unscrupulous politicians intend to use certain journalists to achieve their selfish desires," he observed. Mr. Vandí described the development as unfortunate, stating that Sierra Leoneans and the international community rely on the media for proper dissemination of information and for exposing the corruption practices of some officials. He said people also look up to the media to speak out against human rights and other violations in the society.

## **Local Media – Newspaper**

### **U.S. Secretary of State Clinton Visits Liberia**

(The News, The Analyst, New Democrat, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer, National Chronicle, Heritage, The Independent, Liberia Journal)

- U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in the country today as part of her seven-nation tour of Africa aimed at promoting democracy and development.
- Addressing a joint news conference with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf today, the U.S. Secretary of State hailed Liberia's post-war transition to democracy saying the American Government was supportive and will continue because Liberia is on the right track.
- The backing by the U.S Government comes amidst calls for President Sirleaf to resign over her "links" to the former rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia final report released some time ago recommended public sanction for President Sirleaf and others.
- The report also recommended the prosecution of former warlords for their role during Liberian civil war.

### **Civil Society Frowns at Exclusion from U.S. Secretary of State Itinerary**

(Heritage)

- Civil Society Organizations in Liberia have reported their exclusion from the itinerary for the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.
- Addressing a news conference in Monrovia yesterday, the Civil Society groups said their exclusion came as a surprise as they form part of the democratic governance of the country.
- The organizations said any discussions held with Secretary of State Clinton without their input would be considered the incomplete views of the Liberian people.
- The Liberian Civil Society Organizations however said they would submit a statement to the US Embassy for onward submission to the Secretary of State.
- Meanwhile, several media institutions announced a boycott of the coverage of the visit citing the "stringent" restrictions the U.S. Embassy here had adopted against the local media.

### **Amidst Global Witness Report, Citizens Pressure Government to Open Forest Sector**

(Plain Truth, The Inquirer, The Parrot, Liberia Journal, The Monitor, National Chronicle)

- [SIC]Reports say Government is under severe pressure mainly from the rural poor to re-open the forestry sector of the country.



- The report said citizens mainly from Lofa, Gbarpolu, and the South-eastern counties say re-opening the forest sector will create job opportunities for the impoverished citizens of these areas.
- The report comes a day after the Campaign group, Global Witness restated its concerns that two firms linked to Malaysian timber giant Samling, a company notorious for illegal logging and conflicts with local communities are being considered for major logging contracts in Liberia.
- The group said Government and its international partners have spent five years and millions of dollars reforming the country's forest management system and efforts are now being undermined citing inadequate vetting of companies bidding for new forest management contracts.

### **Information Ministry Dismisses Claims of Attempts to Muzzle the Press**

(The Monitor)

- Information Minister, Laurence Bropleh has dismissed claims by the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) that there are attempts to muzzle the local media.
- In a statement issued recently, the Press Union protested attempts by the Ministry of Information to hold back the publication of two local newspapers.
- The Press Union alleged that the Ministry of Information had ordered two printing Houses in the country not to print the New Broom and The Bilingual newspapers saying it was a gross violation of the Constitution.
- The Ministry denied ordering a halt to the printing of the Bi-lingual but justified the action against the New Broom citing the failure of the paper to register in keeping with the ministry's regulation.

### **Armed Robbers Attack Firestone Plantation**

(New Democrat, Daily Observer)

- Police and Plant Protection Officers of the Firestone Plantation Company have launched a manhunt for a group of armed robbers that attacked two senior officials of the plantation on Tuesday.
- A source at the plantation said the company Public Relations Manager, Rufus Karmo and the Chief of Administrative Affairs at the Du-side Hospital in Firestone were attacked leaving them wounded with several valuable items taken away by the robbers.

**Local Media – Star Radio** (*culled from website today at 09:00 am*)

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

### **3 Liberian Female Students Get Scholarship for Graduate Studies**

- Three Liberian female students have been awarded scholarship to undergo graduate studies at the Sunny Brook University in Toronto, Canada.
- The students are Mamuyah Cooper, Sianneh Sackie Juah and Frances Cecelia Morgan are going for studies under the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Scholars Programme.
- The programme is supported by the Women Defense Fund of the United States.
- The latest recipients bring to five beneficiaries who have been awarded scholarship under the programme.

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

### **President Sirleaf Dissolves Special Economic Zone**

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has dissolved the secretariat and Steering Committee of the Special Economic Zone set up to attract investments for export.
- An Executive Mansion release said President transferred the functions of the Steering Committee and secretariat to the National Investment Commission.

### **House of Representative Rejects Distribution of Money**

- The House of Representatives has rejected reports that the lawmakers might have received kickbacks in the passage of three mineral development agreements.
- On Tuesday, journalist covering the Legislature said they had uncovered the secret distribution of an unspecified amount of United States dollars following the passage of the mineral development agreements.

- The media said Representative Koukou Dorbor was spotted disbursing the money to several lawmakers but the House says the funds in question was Montserrado County Representative personal money and was not intended for distribution.

**“Citizens’ participation limited in PRS”, says LDW**

- The Liberia Democratic Watch says citizens’ participation in implementing the poverty reduction strategy is still limited.
- The Executive Director of the group, George Williams says the participation of every Liberian is required to ensure the success of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Mr. Williams spoke at the third Edition of the Lift Liberia Quarterly Discourse organized by his group.
- The discourse is intended to support government’s effort by creating awareness on the Poverty Reduction Strategy and encouraging citizens’ participation.

**Radio Veritas** *(Monitored today at 9:45 am)*

**Information Ministry Dismisses Claims of Attempts to Muzzle the Press**

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Agence France Presses

Thursday, 13 August 2009

## UN, Cambodia agree on tackling corruption at KRouge court

By International Justice Desk



*Phnom Penh, Cambodia*

The United Nations and Cambodia have agreed to tackle corruption at a court set up to try former Khmer Rouge leaders, according to a joint statement released here Wednesday.

The deal to establish an independent counsellor to oversee the issue was reached after detailed consultations with the tribunal's donor countries, which fully supported the move, the statement said.

"It represents a further step to help strengthen the human resources management in the entire (tribunal) administration, including anti-corruption measures," it said.

The agreement will "boost confidence of the friends (donors) of the tribunal to contribute more funds," said Phay Siphon, a spokesman for the cabinet.

The tribunal, which is trying former Khmer Rouge prison chief Duch, has faced controversy over allegations of political interference by the government and claims that Cambodian staff were forced to pay kickbacks for their jobs.

The UN has withheld funds to Cambodian operations at the court, and its talks with senior government officials to stop the alleged graft ended without agreement in April.

Several senior officials from the 1975-1979 Khmer Rouge regime face trial. The regime's leader, Pol Pot, died in 1998.

Up to two million people were executed or died of starvation, disease and overwork as the Khmer Rouge emptied cities and enslaved the population on collective farms in its bid to to create a communist utopia.

*Source: AFP*

## Reuters

Tuesday, 11 August 2009

### War criminals finding "safe haven" in UK

By International Justice Desk



*London, United Kingdom*

Inconsistencies in the way Britain applies international law are allowing war criminals to visit the country with impunity, a parliamentary committee said on Tuesday.

The government has not fully implemented international conventions to give British courts maximum jurisdiction over crimes such as genocide and torture, added the report from parliament's joint committee on human rights.

"The UK must not become a safe haven for evil," said Committee Chairman Andrew Dismore.

"The message to those who have perpetrated the most heinous crimes imaginable must be clear: they are not welcome here -- not to visit, not to live, not to holiday, shop or get medical treatment."

British courts are also unable to allow torture victims to sue the foreign states responsible for their abuse, the report said.

The government said last month that it was proposing changes to legislation to force British citizens or residents accused of war crimes in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s to face trial.

British courts have the power to try people for war crimes committed since 2001, but the proposals would extend this back to 1991.

The committee welcomed the change but said the aim should be to extend jurisdiction as far back as 1948 for genocide and 1949 for war crimes.

Campaign group Aegis said the law should be tightened so that anyone present on British soil could face trial rather than limiting action to those who have legal resident status.

"We too commend the government for the bold progress made last month, and call on it to finish the job by closing remaining loopholes which benefit suspected war criminals in the UK," said Aegis Head of Campaigns Nick Donovan.

*Photo: Flickr [Philipp Klinger](#)*

*Source: Reuters*



## Time

Friday, 14 August 2009

### Burma: Justice for All

By ANDREW MARSHALL



#### Democracy's martyr

A protester in Paris holds up a portrait of Burma's Suu Kyi  
Olivier Laban-Mattei / AFP /Getty Images

Last week, two famous defendants — one despised, the other adored — appeared in courts over 5,000 miles apart. Charles Taylor, Liberia's former President, is on trial in the Hague for murder, rape, torture and other war crimes allegedly committed during the decade-long conflict in Sierra Leone. Taylor used his first appearance on the stand to dismiss the charges as "disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumors." **(Read "'Lies and Rumors': Liberia's Charles Taylor on the Stand.")**

Meanwhile, and much more convincingly, Aung San Suu Kyi was declaring her innocence before a court in Rangoon — alas, in vain. On Aug. 11, the iconic and much admired democracy leader was found guilty of violating the terms of her house arrest, a verdict that everyone, including Suu Kyi herself, had predicted. Also predictable was the apparent imperviousness of the ruling Burmese junta to the global outrage it generated by putting her under house arrest for another 18 months just as her last spell in detention was expiring. U.S. President Barack Obama called it "unjust." British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called it "monstrous." Out of sheer frustration, some Burmese will turn to the Hague for solace. Taylor is the first African head of state to face an international war-crimes tribunal. Could junta chief General Than Shwe be the first Asian? **(Read "Burma Court Finds Aung San Suu Kyi Guilty.")**

The prospect is admittedly remote. But a renewed focus on military atrocities in Burma could increase pressure on the regime and re-energize Burma's embattled democracy movement in the wake of the gloomy Suu Kyi verdict. A compelling case for a Burmese war-crimes trial is made in a May 2009 report by the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School. Its authors, who include one former judge and two former prosecutors from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, detail systematic and widespread atrocities committed in Burma in recent years: killings, torture, rape, "epidemic levels" of forced labor, a million people homeless, the recruitment of thousands of child soldiers and the displacement or destruction of more than 3,000 villages. The report urges the U.N.

Security Council to establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma, while warning of "the painful consequences of inaction." (See **pictures of 19 years of protest in Burma.**)

With Burma, however, inaction is probable. The international community has long groped for effective measures — be they carrots or sticks — to persuade the generals to behave better. Last month U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hinted that Suu Kyi's release could encourage Washington to lift its ban on new investment in Burma. That's obviously off the table for now. Post verdict, it has been replaced by growing calls for the U.N. Security Council to approve a global embargo on arms sales to the regime and investigate its atrocities allegedly committed in its long-running war against ethnic insurgents in eastern Burma. But the Security Council can do neither without the support of permanent members China and Russia, both Burma allies.

What else might move the generals? Conceivably, the threat of prosecution. Words alone aren't enough. The Suu Kyi trial proves again how little they care about world opinion. But don't be fooled by common depictions of them as blinkered, paranoid and xenophobic. "These caricatures ignore the fact that the regime contains intelligent officers who are close observers of the international scene," observes Andrew Selth of Australia's Griffith University. There is evidence that Burma's rulers are concerned about retribution. Just look at the military-drafted constitution. "Approved" by a sham referendum in the wake of last year's Cyclone Nargis, it reserves for the military a quarter of seats in the new parliament after elections scheduled to be held next year. Tellingly, it also grants junta officials immunity from prosecution. "This clause won't protect them from international prosecution," says Mark Farmaner, director of the advocacy group Burma Campaign U.K., "but it shows they're worried about it."

Not worried enough to let Suu Kyi go free. Another 18 months of house arrest is enough time to prevent her from meddling in a 2010 election that the military hopes will legitimize its grip on power; it's also enough time to dream up more excuses to detain her, as the junta has done for nearly 14 of the past 20 years. A British diplomat who attended the trial described her demeanor in court as "calm, dignified [and] upright, exuding quiet authority but no hint of bitterness towards the prosecution." She retreats into isolation once again, leaving one question unanswered. If Than Shwe and his men are ever brought to trial, how calm and dignified will they be?



ToTheCentre.com

Sunday, 9 August 2009

### **U.S. Should Reconsider Its Attitude toward ICC**

On Thursday, while on a tour of Africa, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that it was a “great regret” that the United States was not a member of the International Criminal Court, Breitbart.com reported.

This is basically the most support that has been shown by the U.S. for the court since the Clinton administration, before the court was even formally set up in 2002. Under Bush, the U.S. was almost suspicious of the international tribunal, which is a permanent body that prosecutes individuals for war crimes and has global jurisdiction.

Our supposed interest in the International Criminal Court seems to correlate with our general interest in the world outside of ourselves. With the Bush administration, we were focused inward. Instead of engaging in dialogues with other countries, we would call them evil. In fact, according to The Guardian, one of Bush’s main motivations in refusing U.S. membership on the court was his fear that U.S. officials could be subjected to war crime prosecution. Yet we generally professed to support the court’s goals. Hypocritical much?

Now we are in the era of Obama, who has repeatedly emphasized a more diplomatic approach and a greater use of “soft power.” He has also set the goal to close Guantanamo Bay in the near future and is tampering down our operations in Iraq. While we were still engaged in these two areas, Obama’s foreign policy advisers had said it would be difficult to reconcile that with membership on the court.

So now that our policies are changing, why don’t we join? As abstainers, we are currently in the company of the more defiant states of the world: Russia, China, and Israel, states that we often complain about for their lack of cooperation with us (Israel not so much, although the recent Netanyahu administration does have its fingers in its ears over the settlements issue).

Joining the court would signal to the world that, with the Bush days behind us, we truly are ready to enter a new era of cooperation and mutual respect. Instead of acting with the disregard that characterized America’s early 2000s, we should be embracing the opportunity to both lead and participate in the global community through diplomatic means.

## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Thursday, 13 August 2009

### MPs launch website to gain support for tribunal

By Saskia van Huijgevoort

*Nairobi, Kenya*



Kenya's Members of Parliament (MP) are asking citizens for suggestions on the creation of a special tribunal to try those suspected of inciting violence

following last year's election.

"Here is your chance to fight against Impunity in Kenya. Impunity or exemption from punishment is a dangerous cancer affecting negatively on the citizens and spreading like bush fire in Kenya. Say no to impunity and demand action against all criminals. Support by joining the cause to end impunity in Kenya," says Member of Parliament Gitobu Imanyara.

The MP's launched a website asking for public support for a special tribunal to prosecute perpetrators of the 2007-2008 post election violence and proposed a new bill in parliament. Kenyan citizens can help improve it by commenting on it at the website.

"We want to make the process as interactive as possible," said Imanyara during the website launch. "Signing and assenting to the amendment is the last chance for the government to prove that it will deal with the ongoing culture of impunity."

The bill is the only way for the Kenyan government to stop the ICC in its bid to take over the prosecution.

Former UN –Secretary General Kofi Annan urged Kenya to set up a tribunal by August. If not, he will ask the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague to bring proceedings against those most responsible for last year's violence.

The passionate and sometimes personal interest in the issue by many top Kenyan politicians makes it difficult to come to a consensus about the tribunals.

Also in attendance at conference was former Minister President Paul Muite. He expressed his support for the bill and vowed to lobby his fellow MPs for the required two-thirds majority in parliament.

Legal experts will help to fine-tune the bill, the first version was rejected by parliament in February.

The riots started shortly after opponent Raila Odinga accused elected President Mwai Kibaki of electoral manipulation. The violence escalated and turned directly against the Kikuyu community, of which Kibaki is a member. The ethnic violence peaked with the killing of over 30 unarmed civilians in a church on New Years Day. In total, 1.133 people were killed.



## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Thursday, 13 August 2009

### Congolese warlord might await ICC trial abroad

By International Justice Desk



*The Hague, Netherlands*

Former Congolese warlord Jean Pierre Bemba might await his war crimes trial abroad. The International Criminal Court on Friday ordered the conditional release of former Democratic Republic of Congo vice president Jean-Pierre Bemba ahead of his war crimes trial. However, he first has to await a determination where he will be released and under which conditions.

"The continued detention of Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo did not appear necessary ... to ensure the appearance of Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo at trial," the court said in a decision published in The Hague.

The court added that there was no reason to believe Bemba would obstruct the investigation or continue to commit the crimes he is charged with.

## Voice of America

Thursday, 13 August 2009

### **DRC Forces Capture Major Rwandan Genocide Suspect**

By Alan Boswell  
Nairobi

Congolese forces have arrested one of the major remaining suspects for crimes committed during the Rwandan genocide. The indicted former mayor of a Rwandan town will be put on trial at the special tribunal for genocide suspects in Tanzania.

Congolese government spokesman Lambert Mende confirms the Congolese army has captured fugitive Gregoire Ndahimana in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

"Yes, Gregoire Ndahimana was arrested by our troops in North Kivu within a group of FDLR who were fighting against our troops there," Mende said.

The wanted suspect was hiding within the rebel Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, known as FDLR. The DRC and Rwanda have been engaged in joint military operations this year against the FDLR, which is largely comprised of ethnic Hutus responsible for the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Ndahimana was caught as he was looking for food among the local population. He will be tried in Arusha, Tanzania, at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The court has indicted Ndahimana for genocide, or complicity in genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, and crimes against humanity. He is accused of conspiring with a church priest and the local ethnic militia to exterminate his town's minority Tutsi population.

Nearly all of the 6,000 Tutsis living in the former mayor's town are thought to have been killed during the outbreak of ethnic violence. More than 2,000 died when the church in which they were seeking refuge was bulldozed, allegedly upon the local priest's request.

The court indictment details the suspect's alleged pre-violence meetings with the priest and others to plan the massacre.

The indictment says local authorities first launched attacks against the Tutsi to drive them from their homes to the church. The authorities then weakened the refugees through poor sanitation conditions and continual attacks against the church until they leveled the building.

The indictment alleges that after the destruction of the church and the death of those inside, the suspect enjoyed a beer with the priest and other authorities to celebrate.

Twelve indictees of the special tribunal remain at-large.

The president of Rwanda's main association of genocide victims has called for the DRC to step up efforts to capture the remaining fugitives, many of whom are still in eastern

Congo and whose whereabouts he says the Congolese government has known for a long time.

Congo spokesman Mende admits other genocide suspects are in Congo among the FDLR, and expressed hope that with the new military offensive against the group, others too would be caught and sent to the court in Tanzania for trial.

"We hope that those genocidaires that are hiding among them [the FDLR] will be caught, but we can not locate them as by now because they are hiding and they are moving here and there," Mende said.

Reelations between Congo and Rwanda have markedly improved in the past year. The two are now working together to help root out the FDLR and have formally re-established diplomatic ties for the first time in more than a decade.

The FDLR forces operating in eastern Congo have been a thorn in the side of Rwanda and DRC relations for years. After the genocide, Rwanda launched military operations into DRC territory to go after genocide suspects who fled there.

Congolese President Joseph Kabila and Rwandan President Paul Kagame met on the border last week to signal the two countries' improving relations.

More than 800,000 Rwandans died in 1994 during just three months of violence.



## ABC News

Thursday, 13 August 2009

### Ruling Could Free 'Merchant of Death'

#### Appeal by Thai Authorities Could Keep Viktor Bout Behind Bars

By **JUSTIN ROOD** and **JASON RYAN**

A surprise ruling by a Thai judge Tuesday could free one of the world's most notorious weapons dealers, who has been held in jail since his arrest more than a year ago, although a Thursday filing by Thai prosecutors is expected to delay that.



Russian alleged arms dealer, Viktor Bout is escorted by Court security guards following his verdict... ▼  
(PORNCHAI KITTIWONGSAKUL/AFP/Getty Images/Getty Images)

The decision, to deny an extradition request by the U.S. government, was a victory for the Russian government, which has been working to free its citizen, Viktor Bout, since he was busted in a joint U.S.-Thai sting operation

that was years in the making.

"To say I was shocked would be an understatement," said Michael Braun, the former senior Drug Enforcement Administration official who masterminded Bout's capture, one of the biggest arrests in the agency's history.

U.S. officials said Thursday they were informed that Thai authorities had filed an intent to appeal the ruling with the court. That appeal could delay Bout's release by months, pending a possible reversal by a higher Thai court. Officials at the Thai embassy in Washington could not be reached for comment.

While U.S. authorities worked hand-in-glove with the Thai government to engineer Bout's arrest, detention and extradition proceedings, the Russians had deployed emissaries to negotiate for Bout's release. Braun and others believe a series of favorable oil and weapons deals cut recently between the two countries were also part of a high-level campaign to free the Russian. "I think they were trying to buy his way out," he said flatly.

#### Related

"Bout has been working for the Russians for a long time," said Douglas Farah, a former journalist who co-wrote the definitive tome on Bout's career, "Merchant of Death." Farah said the Russians have recently used Bout's services in Iran and Beirut.

Vanda Falbab-Brown, an expert at the Brookings Institution, concurred. "Bout has knowledge of Russia's military and underworld," she said. His testimony in a U.S. court, or cooperation with U.S. prosecutors, "would make a lot of people in Russia quite uncomfortable."

Officials at the Russian embassy in Washington, D.C. could not be reached for comment.

The State Department has said it was leaving the matter in the hands of Thai authorities, who have been arguing the case for extradition before the Thai judge.

Privately, some U.S. officials say they are concerned Thailand may never turn Bout over to them. One case still fresh in their mind is the 2008 arrest of Jamshid Ghassemi, an Iranian Air Force officer, for arms trafficking and money laundering by Thai authorities with a U.S. warrant.

Although Ghassemi was arrested with very sensitive guidance missile systems that were part of an alleged arms trafficking conspiracy, a Thai appellate court refused to release him to the U.S., where federal prosecutors wanted to put him on trial.

Bout made his fortune in the 1990s selling Soviet-era weaponry to Third World despots and insurgent groups. Using a network of intertwined corporations, Bout dispatched fleets of Cold War-era Soviet cargo planes to some of the most inhospitable corners of the earth, running guns for dictators, including Liberia's Charles Taylor and Zaire's Mubuto Sese Seko, as well as rebel leaders in Angola, Sierra Leone and beyond. By 2000, U.S. government officials considered him one of the leading threats to the United States, on par with Osama bin Laden and global warming.

### **"Lord of War"**

Bout was the inspiration for the 2005 film, "Lord of War," starring Nicolas Cage as an international arms dealer who will sell to all sides of any conflict. Bout reportedly rented his planes to the movie's producers for use in the film.

Arrested Arms Dealer's Planes Flew U.S. Missions in Iraq Bernard Madoff's Right Hand Man Pleads Guilty, Will Tell All Bernie Madoff's Other Secret: His Hadassah CFO Mistress Bout's net worth is not known, but has been conservatively estimated "in the tens of millions of dollars." Before his arrest, Bout lived in Moscow, Russia, and reportedly traveled on false passports because of an international travel ban.

Shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, Bout -- whose arms shipments to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan were believed to have aided al Qaeda -- pitched the CIA a multi-million dollar proposal to help rout the Taliban from the country and capture Osama bin Laden, according to Douglas Farah and Stephen Braun. Bout has denied selling arms to al Qaeda.

From 2003 through at least 2005, Pentagon contractors paid \$60 million to air cargo companies known to be connected to Bout to fly an estimated 1,000 supply trips into and out of Iraq on behalf of U.S. forces there.

Special Court Supplement  
MONBATT Rotation  
Friday, 14 August 2009









