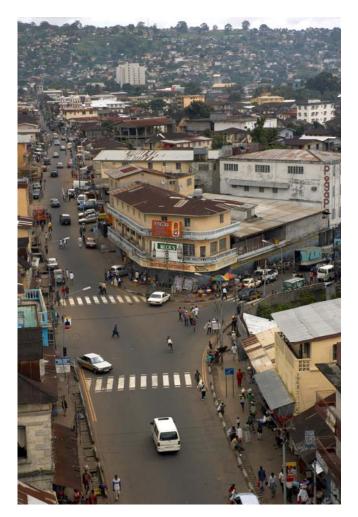
SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



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: Monday, 14 December 2009

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday. Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact Martin Royston-Wright Ext 7217

Local News	
Principal Defender's Brief of Prison Condition of SCSL Convicts in Rwanda / Global Sovereignty	Pages 3-4
Taylor Speaks / The Exclusive	Page 5
Liberian Wants War Crimes Court / Concord Times	Page 6
International News	
Liberia Commission Wants War Crimes Court / Reuters	Page 7
Support War Crimes Prosecutions / Human Rights Watch	Pages 8-9
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / UNMIL	Pages 10-13

Global Sovereignty

Wednesday, 9 December 2009

Principal Defender's Brief of Prison Condition of SCSL Convicts in Rwanda to Civil Society and Relatives of Convicts on 10 November 2009.

The Principal Defender met with civil society and relatives of Special Court's convicts on 8th November 2009 to brief them about the prison condition in Rwanda. Below is a synopsis of what she said to these two groups.

Transfer of SCSL Prisoners

On the 7th of November 2009 eight prisoners were transferred from the Special Court detention facility to the Mpanga Prison situated eight miles from Nya a province southern Rwanda after been completed on various courts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violation of International Humanitarian Law.

The ransferred prisoners were Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao all associated with the RUF: Alex Tamba Brima, Ibrahim Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu associated with the AFRC: Moinina Fofanah and Allieu Kondewa associated with the CDF. They were incarcerated within the stipulated seven days of the outcome of the RUF Appeals judgments which largely upheld the sentences Trial Chamber One. The transfer of the SCSL convicts came about out of the Government of Sierra Leone express wish that they be imprisoned outside of the country citing lack of a UN minimum standard prison in Sierra Leone and other security considerations.

Mpanga Prison Condition

The Mpanga Prison is situated in Nyanza, south of Rwanda and is situated in thirteen acres of land. The Officials of the prison like to refer to it as a correctional facility in which inmates are offered all the opportunity to reform themselves to become good citizens capable of reintegrating into society. The Mpanga prison can accommodate a prison population of over eight thousand inmates. Presently over seven thousand inmates are incarcerated in that prison. The categories of the prisoners are mainly genocides (Those who were convicted for the crime of Genocide in Rwanda) and others who were found culpable for other crimes including financial crimes and corruption.

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Mpanga Prison Facilities

The Mpanga Prison inmates (which now include Special Court's Prisoners) have at their disposal facilities geared towards making their stay a useful one. The prison has

(a) A Skills Training Facility which offers various income generating skills in Tailoring, Carpentry Farming etc.

(b) Opportunity for inmates interested in academic pursuit (as has been expressed by one of our SCSL convicts) as a university is not very far from the prison centre

(c) Social Amenities like a prison football team, eultural and other social Programmes, and a round the clock availability of DSTV satellite TV which they watch on a Plasma TV.

(d) The Mpanga prison also caters for the spiritual needs of its inmates. Prisoners can follow and worship in a religion of their choice.

Special Court Convicts in Rwanda will be enjoying these facilities together with their Rwandan Counterparts..

Accommodation

The Special Court convicts are housed in a separate wing of the Mpanga Prison Facility. Each Prisoner is housed in a spacious room that has a bed with Mosquito net, a study table, a Wardrobe and toilet facilities. They also have a spacious court yard for exercise and other activities.

Food

The prisoners will be having three squaremeals a day which will include West African dishes if they choose.

Health

The Special Court prisoners have Health Insurance. In addition a Doctor and five nurses are assigned to them to take care of their daily health needs. Welfare

The prisoners will be entitled to a monthly stipend of which 10% will be given to them to enable them contribute to the upkeep of their dependants and other immediate family members. The rest of the money will be handed over to them upon release from prison. Additional funding could be earned also from proceeds of whatever income generating activities from skills they would have acquired.

Visitations

Each Special Court prisoner will be entitled to a visit from a relative of his own choice once every year for the duration of their prison term and such visit will be facilitated by the Special Court i.e. Special Court will provide Air Ticket and Visa for a relative of the prisoner to visit. This does not preclude any arrangements that the family of the prisoners. When such a case arises, Special Court will assist such a visitor to acquire Rwandan Visa.

Special Court Prisoners are entitled to daily visits throughout their stay unlike their Rwandan counterparts. Mpanga prison has very strict laws regarding trafficking of prohibited substances into the prison. Offenders could be subjected to long terms in prison.

Conjugal Visits

Special Court prisoners are entitled to conjugal visits subject to HIV testing of both the prisoner and his partner.

LegalAid

The Special Court Prisoners are now incarcerated under Rwandan and International Law. They have been assigned a Rwandan Lawyer already to take care of all their legal needs whilst in prison.

Residual Office

The maximum year of imprisonment in the Mpanga prison is twenty years. Mpanga Prison authorities can decide to grant a prisoner early release based on his general comportment. If such a situation arises the Special Court Residual Office will take the necessary and appropriate decision.

Information is by curlsy of the outreach section of the special court for Sierra Leone. Mr. Patrick Fatoma, outreach Coordinator.

The Exclusive Monday, 14 December 2009



From last edition

A. That's totally, totally a lie. That's totally false. And

because it's on the record I'm sure that we will have to bring

the documentation if you say that it's wrong. I informed the

Security Council. There was not any discovery. Totally, totally

false. And we held fast to that argument about our right to

doing so under I think it was Article 50, 51 of the Charter. We did. My government did.

NOVEMBER 26 2009

Context: The Prosecution challenging Mr. Taylor on not having done anything during and immediately after the infamous Freetown invasion of Jan. 6 1999 by rebel forces. The Prosecution alleges Mr. Taylor was supporting the rebels.

Q. Did your national security adviser advise you that morning

the RUF and the AFRC have invaded Freetown?

A. I have just answered that, yes. Q. Did you receive reports from any means, your national

security adviser or otherwise, Sam Bockarie was on the air

threatening to burn various parts, embassies, in Freetown?

A. Well, I got a report that Bockarie had made some statements

on the air, yeah. I don't remember the exact details, but I did get a report that he had spoken on

the BBC.

Q. And what did you, the President point man for peace, do

about this while Freetown was literally burning?

A. Nothing. What did you expect me to do except contact other

colleagues to find out what was their take on it, what was ECOMOG

doing. That's all I could have done. DECEMBER 2 2009

Context: Prosecution quoting from a book by former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Harold Cohen, about his visit to see Mr. Taylor, where he indicates Taylor was protected by child soldiers.

Q. Let's continue:"On 20 September, in the most interesting experience of the mission, we flew to the northern Cote d'Ivoire airport at Man.

There, joined by our ambassador to Abidjan, Kenneth Brown, we

boarded four-wheel-drive vehicles and crossed ten miles into

Liberia to meet with Charles Taylor. The most striking, and

frightening, aspect of Taylor's forest hideaway was the

overwhelming presence of heavily armed 14 to 16-year-old boys." Now, that's true, isn't it, Mr Taylor? You have had

teenaged very young boys armed in your forces, correct?

A. That is not correct. That is the very reason why I

suggested that this document be brought forward. These are some

of the difficulties that we have out there in the international

community. In fact, Mr Cohen came into the town of Loguato.

Loguato is within a half kilometre of the border - not even a

half kilometre. It's on the border. He

what struck me to bring - to ask my

counsel to bring this document is that here is Mr Cohen

meeting me, and he is saying individuals around, and he comes up

specifically with two age

groups. Never asked, Why aren't they 19 and 20 or 14 and 15?

Mr Cohen has the audacity to specifically state ages of

individuals that he's just seen, has never asked a question. I

just thought it was stupid.

DECEMBER 3 2009

Context: The Prosecution questioned Mr. Taylor on the kind of leader he is, and about how he did not share the hardships of his soldiers, that he never went to the front lines and was never under fire. Taylor admitted he'd never been on the front lines, but argued that it was false that he never shared the hardships of his soldiers or hadn't been under fire. Q. I'm not talking about trained in Sierra Leone. When Thomas

Quiwonkpa - first of all, Thomas Quiwonkpa was admired, and in fact, you could even say, would you agree, loved by many of the

soldiers under him? A. Oh, yes, I agree.

A. On, yes, I agree.

Q. And that is because soldiers admire and respect those

leaders who share the hardships and risks of combat with them, correct?

A. I would agree.

Q. You are not that kind of leader,

A. Incorrect.

Q. You don't share the hardships of

your soldiers, do you?

A. No, but you were talking about soldiers. In the first

place, I'm not a soldier; never taken military training. You

spoke about soldiers caring for their men; I agree. Now you've

put me - I have not, have never been - have never taken military

training, so I'm not a soldier. Q. Mr Taylor, please answer my question. I'll repeat it. You

do not share the hardships of your soldiers, do you?

A. Oh, I do. Oh, I do.

Q. You stay behind the lines in your Executive Mansions while

you send the young men and women to fight, correct?

A. Totally incorrect.

Q. Have you been to the front line?

A. Totally, totally incorrect.

Concord Times Monday, 14 December 2009

President Johnson-Sirleaf inspects a guard of honour at the Cardinal Bernardin Gantin international airport in Cotonou

By Alphonso Toweh Liberia's truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) has recommended that a special court be set up to prosecute those accused of war crimes committed during a 1989-1996 civil war, its chairman said on Friday. Former Liberian president

Charles Taylor is being tried in The Hague for war crimes because of his alleged role in

Reuters.

the intertwined war in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

Taylor, who denies backing Sierra Leonean rebels, was a warlord in Liberia's civil conflict, which started when he launched a rebellion. The twin conflicts killed a quarter of a million people between them.

The commission does not have the power to enforce but Contd page 4

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From page 1 can present recommendations to parliament which may then enact them. A tribunal would be likely to open old wounds as Liberians try to rebuild a nation shattered by years of war.

It could also prove a headache for president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first women president who enjoys strong Western backing. The commission wants her barred from office because of her support for Taylor in the war.

iberia wants war crimes

"The TRC has recommended an extraordinary criminal court to prosecute alleged perpetrators during the civil war," commission chairman Jerome Verdier told The commission was established in 2005 to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity. Johnson-Sirleaf is trying to rebuild a ruined economy, buying back \$1.2 billion of outstanding government debt earlier this year, a key step towards attracting investment in key sectors like rubber and iron ore. Reuters Saturday, 12 December 2009

Liberia commission wants war crimes court

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA (Reuters) - Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation commission has recommended that a special court be set up to prosecute those accused of war crimes committed during a 1989-1996 civil war, its chairman said on Friday.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor is being tried in The Hague for war crimes because of his alleged role in the intertwined war in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

Taylor, who denies backing Sierra Leonean rebels, was a warlord in Liberia's civil conflict, which started when he launched a rebellion. The twin conflicts killed a quarter of a million people between them.

The commission does not have the power to enforce but can present recommendations to parliament which may then enact them. A tribunal would be likely to open old wounds as Liberians try to rebuild a nation shattered by years of war.

It could also prove a headache for President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first women president who enjoys strong Western backing. The commission wants her barred from office because of her support for Taylor in the war.

"The TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) has recommended an extraordinary criminal court to prosecute alleged perpetrators during the civil war," commission chairman Jerome Verdier told Reuters.

The Commission was established in 2005 to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity.

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Human Rights Watch

Thursday, 10 December 2009

Liberia: Support War Crimes Prosecutions

Act on Truth and Reconciliation Panel's Recommendation for Trials

(New York,) – The Liberian government should investigate and prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during Liberia's brutal armed conflicts, Human Rights Watch said today. Key international partners – including the United Nations, European Union, and United States – should support efforts to ensure accountability, the organization said.

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which released its final edited report on December 1, 2009, recommends prosecutions for serious crimes in violation of international law committed in Liberia. Human Rights Watch released a briefing paper today on this recommendation.

"The Truth and Reconciliation Commission took an important step in acknowledging that Liberia's countless victims deserve justice," said Elise Keppler, senior counsel for the International Justice program at Human Rights Watch. "The government and Liberia's international partners alike should pursue these prosecutions without delay."

Between 1989 and 2003, horrific abuses were committed against civilians in Liberia, including summary executions and numerous large-scale massacres; widespread and systematic rape; mutilation and torture; and large-scale forced conscription and use of child combatants. The commission's report describes the root causes of the armed conflict, concludes that all warring factions were implicated in serious abuses, and makes recommendations about how to bring accountability for these crimes.

The commission recommends a hybrid international-national tribunal to try individuals for serious crimes that violate international law as well as several domestic crimes, including economic crimes. The tribunal would have both Liberian and foreign judges appointed by the Liberian government and international actors, including the UN secretary-general. The court would have a majority of internationally appointed judges in each chamber, and the international and Liberian judges would work together to try cases.

In its briefing paper, Human Rights Watch expressed support for a hybrid tribunal for Liberia with a majority of internationally appointed judges. The paper nevertheless highlights Human Rights Watch concerns about the proposal that should be addressed to ensure prosecutions in accordance with international standards.

"The commission's proposal for prosecutions is very positive, although it would need to be substantially bolstered to ensure fair, credible trials," Keppler said. "Trials in accordance with international standards can make a vital contribution to rebuilding respect for rule of law in Liberia, which in turn can help promote a sustainable peace."

Human Rights Watch said that the proposed court does not clearly focus on bringing to justice those most responsible for serious crimes and that it lacks explicit provisions for a number of crucial fair trial protections. Human Rights Watch also expressed concern that under the proposal, the prosecutor would not be appointed by international actors and that the death penalty would be available as a punishment for some crimes.

In addition, the commission recommends that nearly 40 individuals who cooperated with it should not be prosecuted, which is inconsistent with its recommendation, as required by international law, that nobody alleged to be responsible for committing serious crimes in violation of international law should benefit from an amnesty for those crimes.

The commission's report names and recommends over 120 individuals for prosecution by the tribunal, including persons associated with all the major warring factions. It also makes a series of recommendations to ensure wider accountability, including domestic prosecutions of certain "lesser" crimes, reparations, public sanctions, and the use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms.

Liberia's legislature is expected to consider the commission's recommendations early in 2010. Human Rights Watch urged the legislature to back prosecutions for serious crimes during the conflict era in accordance with international standards and for key international partners to provide relevant support, including technical and financial assistance.

"Armed conflict in Liberia blighted the lives of tens of thousands of civilians, displaced almost half the population, and virtually destroyed the country's infrastructure," said Corinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. "The victims of these crimes deserve to see justice done."



United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 11 December 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia Government And the United States Sign Increased Annual Assistance Agreements

Dec 11, 2009 (Liberia Government/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The Governments of Liberia and the United States have signed an agreement under which the United States will increase its annual assistance to Liberia. The United States will provide nearly US\$220 million in funding and technical assistance to support every pillar of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, otherwise referred to as the "Lift Liberia" Initiative. Of the total, \$164 million is provided through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and another \$55 million will support the training of security forces through the Department of State. The United States Ambassador to Liberia, H.E. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Foreign Minister Olubanke King-Akerele, signed the four amended Assistance Agreements at a ceremony Thursday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia. The Agreements support: (1) Governing Justly and Democratically; (2) Investing in People (health and education); and (3) Promoting Equitable Economic Growth (agriculture and food security).

Justice for Country - the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Recommendation for an Internationalized Domestic War Crimes Court

Dec 10, 2009 (Human Rights Watch/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- On December 1, 2009, Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) issued its final report detailing its findings on the causes and impact of that country's social turmoil between 1979 and 2003. The TRC's report represents a major undertaking on the part of the commission to expose the abuses committed against civilians during Liberia's two devastating armed conflicts, which lasted from 1989 to 1996 and 1999 to 2003. One of the key recommendations included in the final report is the establishment of an internationalized domestic criminal court to ensure justice for the worst crimes committed. Human Rights Watch fully supports the use of a hybrid international-national accountability mechanism to hold perpetrators of past crimes in Liberia to account. Prosecutions for serious crimes in violation of international law-including war crimes and crimes against humanity-are crucial to ensuring redress for the countless victims of Liberia's brutal armed conflicts.

Liberia : Vulture funds poised to grab Liberian millions

Dec 10, 2009 (MENA News from AI-Bawaba via COMTEX) -- So-called vulture funds that took over a Chemical Bank loan to Liberia now stand to recoup \$20 million from the struggling West African nation. The original loan, which dates back to 1978, was for \$15 million. The two funds, registered in the Caribbean, had asked London s High Court to grant summary judgement in the case making Liberia liable for the debt without a full hearing. The court ruled in their favor and ordered payment to Hamsah Investments and Wall Capital Ltd. of the amount of the loan plus accumulated interest. Twenty million dollars is equal to 105 percent of the country s education budget and 155 percent of its health budget in 2008. Liberia accused the firms of profiting from poverty.

Guinea

Guinea: Guinea's No. 2 warns military that lack of discipline won't be tolerated

Source: Canadian Press Date: December 11, 2009

CONAKRY, Guinea _ The No. 2 of Guinea's military junta said Friday that the army has to change and a lack of discipline won't be tolerated. Gen. Sekouba Konate addressed the Guinean army more than a week after a renegade soldier tried to assassinate military junta leader Capt. Moussa "Dadis" Camara. "We are told that the large part of our society's delinquents is found in the army," Konate said. "We need to show that the army has a different face ... We need to show an army that is ready to secure its people." Human rights groups say Guinean soldiers killed at least 157 pro-democracy demonstrators and raped dozens of women at a rally in September. The violence prompted the African Union and the European Union to impose an arms embargo on Guinea and to impose sanctions, including a travel ban on top members of the junta.

Prof. Abudllahi Not Envoy to Guinea - NBTI

Abuja, Dec 11, 2009 (Leadership/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI) has spurned reports that its Director-General and Chief Executive Officer, Prof. Gambo Laraba Abdullahi, is the ambassador of Nigeria to Guinea. The Public Relation s Officer, of NBTI, Malam Uthman Abubakar, in a press statement, said: "the gentleman columnist, who had apparently just returned from a new gathering foray in that ECOWAS country, wrote that while there, ...I paid my first visit to the Nigerian Embassy in Conakry... it was my first meeting with the ambassador, Dr. Gambo Laraba Abdullahi.' The NBTI management has so far refuted the information and has referred to it as'an erroneous reference' stating that 'Prof. Laraba Abdullahi has being so solid and firm as bridge stone at helm of affairs of the NBTI in the Director- General and CEO capacity since many years before Malam Is'haq's July visit to Guinea.

Cote d'Ivoire

UN Peacekeepers Plant Trees to Fight Climate Change Parliamentary Standing Committee team on Defence Affairs visits Ivory Coast, Congo

Dec 10, 2009 (MENA News from AI-Bawaba via COMTEX) -- Dhaka, Dec. 10 -- A 13-member delegation team of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence Affairs led by M Idris Ali MP left here on Wednesday night on a 14-day visit to UN Peacekeeping Mission areas in Ivory Coast and Congo. During their visit the delegation, which comprising of members from Bangladesh Army, Foreign Ministry, Defence Ministry, Parliamentary Secretariate and Media, will witness the Operational and Administrative duties of Bangladesh contingent deployed in UN Peacekeeping Mission in Ivory Coast and Democratic Republic of Congo. They will also visit various military installations and call on high officials of UN Peacekeeping Operations and talk on bilateral issues, said an ISPR release Thursday.

Local Media – Newspaper

U.S. Announces US\$220M Bilateral Package to Liberia

(Daily Observer, The Inquirer)

- The Governments of Liberia and the United States have signed a US\$220 bilateral agreement.
- The agreement is geared toward supporting the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) in the country.

- Speaking at the signing ceremony, United States Ambassador to Liberia, Linda-Thomas Greenfield said the agreement supports her Government's assistance goal to Liberia which encompasses the maintenance of peace, security and the establishment of democratic governance.
- Also speaking at the ceremony, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf intoned that despite increased assistance to the country by the U.S. Government and other partners, there are still challenges including the proper use of the country's natural resources that need serious attention.

Ex-Soldiers Demand "Salary Arrears" Ahead of Holiday Season

(National Chronicle)

- Reports say ahead of the holiday season, ex-soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia are demanding five months salary arrears allegedly owed them by Government.
- This is not the first time that retired and demobilized soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia have claimed salary arrears and benefits from Government.
- The disbanded soldiers have on a number of occasions taken to the street to demand "salary arrears".
- On Monday, Defense Ministry authorities said despite efforts by the government to pay the ex-soldiers some of them are making threats and creating the impression that the government is doing nothing to address their demands.
- The authorities said government has given much priority to the payment of ex-soldiers' benefits and arrears than any other civil servants in the country.
- Ex-AFL soldiers led by Retired Col. Wolo Nagbe last week launched a media campaign compelling the government to pay them all it owes them.

TRC Dubs Entire NPP Regime Criminals

(New Democrat)

- [SIC]The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) say nearly all government ministries, along with public corporations that functioned during the rule of former President Charles Taylor were criminalized.
- The TRC lists the Government of Liberia, the office of the Presidency and former President Charles Taylor in particular as actors responsible for committing economic crimes against the Liberian people.
- The commission which was formed to undertake the study of abuses in the country dating from 1979 to 2003 singled out the government of the National Patriotic Party, amongst its predecessors, for the most abuse of basic human rights and national resources.

US Government Dedicates Media-Robertsport Highway

(The News)

- United States Ambassador to Liberia, Linda-Thomas Greenfield has dedicated the Media Robertsport highway in Grand Cape Mount County.
- The 40-kilometer stretch of road was rehabilitated by the Liberia Community Infrastructure Programme (LCIP) with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
- USAID Mission Director Pamela White said the road like other roads rehabilitated by the US Government would improve the livelihood of the locals, provide access to market and reduce travel time and cost.
- Meanwhile, Grand Cape Mount Representative has lauded the US Government for the initiative saying it would make travel easier.

UNMIL Force Commander Applaud Nigerian Troops

(The Informer, The Inquirer)

• The new Force Commander of UNMIL, Lt. General Sikander Afzal have applauded Nigerian Troops saying they have greatly contributed to peace keeping efforts in Africa.

• Speaking when he visited the Nigerian Contingent headquarters in Camp Abuja in Monrovia, he described the soldiers as well trained professional who have contributed a lot not only in Liberia but also Africa.

Justice Minister Calls for Specialized Court to Try Corruption Cases

(National Chronicle, New Democrat)

- Speaking during programmes marking this year's International Anti-Corruption day, the Minister of Justice, Counsellor Christiana Tarr called for the setting up of a specialized court to handle cases of corruption in both the public and private sector.
- Minister Tarr said the court would ensure that those accused of stealing state or private funds would be speedily tried and transparent justice rendered without manipulation.

Liberians Travelling to Guinea Face Security Harassment

(New Democrat)

- [SIC] Reports say Liberians traveling to Guinea by road are encountering series of security harassment mostly in the Guinean territory.
- According to sources, Guinea authorities are doubtful of Liberian youths mostly males who are travelling to that country.

Local Media – Star Radio (culled from website today at 09:00 am) Ex-Soldiers Demand "Salary Arrears" Ahead of Holiday Season

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

U.S. Announces US\$220M Bilateral Package to Liberia

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

<u>Truth F.M.</u> (News monitored today at 10:00 am) US Government Dedicates Media-Robertsport Highway