

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



**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Tuesday, 24 July 2007

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

Amnesty Welcomes Sentences of AFRC Indictées / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 3
CGG Hails Special Court / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 4
Two Held Over Rwanda Massacre / <i>For di People</i>	Page 5
Can Bargaining Save An Accused? / <i>Standard Times</i>	Pages 6-7

### International News

Taylor's New Defence Team Includes A Prominent QC / <i>Trial of Charles Taylor Website</i>	Page 8
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 9-12
Joint Statement By the Commissioners of the Liberian Truth / <i>UNMIL</i>	Page 13
U.N. Asks Netherlands to Host Tribunal / <i>Associated Press</i>	Page 14

Concord Times  
Tuesday, 24 July 2007

## Amnesty welcomes sentences of AFRC indictees

*By Abdul Karim  
Koroma*

Amnesty International has stated in a press release issued Friday that the sentencing by the Special Court of three erstwhile leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) should not be the closing chapter in the struggle to achieve

justice for the terrible crimes committed against the people during the rebel war.

"Alex Tamba Brima (sentenced to 50 years), Brima Bazzy Kamara (sentenced to 45 years) and Santigie Borbor Kanu (sentenced to 50 years), all senior commanders of the AFRC, were convicted of crimes against humanity and war

crimes committed in a non-international armed conflict, including unlawful killings, extermination, rape, acts of terrorism, collective punishment, and mutilation. They were acquitted of sexual slavery and other inhumane acts," the release stated, adding that these verdicts and sentencing sent a

positive signal to the people of Sierra Leone that someone will be held responsible for the brutal crimes perpetrated against them and their families. According to the release, this decision by the Special Court marks the first time in history that individuals have been convicted and sentenced for war crimes for conscripting

and enlisting children under the age of 15 into armed forces.

"Thousands of others can and must be held criminally responsible. Reparations must also be provided to the victims in order for justice to begin to prevail throughout Sierra Leone", said Brima Sheriff, Director of Amnesty International, Sierra Leone.

### ***CGG hails Special Court***

Reports say the National Coordinator of Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) Valnora Edwin has on behalf of her organization expressed satisfaction over the Special Court for Sierra Leone-for the trial, verdict and sentences passed on three (3) former members of the defunct Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) for war related and serious crimes against humanity committed by them during the decade civil conflict. She made the statement with the conviction that the entire process was done within internationally accepted legal norms, thus rendering the process fair and transparent; adding that the whole business was the beginning of the end of impunity:

### ***Special Court gets New Registrar***

The Secretary General of the United Nations has reportedly appointed an internationally experienced legal practitioner, Herman Von Hebel as Acting Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Von Hebel until his new appointment was the Deputy Registrar of the court. Assuming his new post, the Acting Registrar instantly named the Court's Outreach Coordinator, Ms. Binta Mansaray as Deputy Registrar, a development that has put a Sierra Leonean in that position for the first time in the history of the court.

For di People  
 Tuesday, 24 July 2007

## Two held over Rwandan massacres

**TWO RWANDAN men wanted for their alleged role in the 1994 genocide have been arrested in France, police there have said.**

W e n c e s l a s  
 Munyeshyaka, a  
 Catholic priest, and  
 Laurent Bucyibaruta,  
 an ex-civil servant,  
 were held on warrants  
 issued in Tanzania last  
 month.

The arrests have been welcomed by the Rwandan government, which has accused France of failing to cooperate fully.

More than 800,000 people died in 1994 massacre of Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Warrants for the arrests

had been issued by the United Nations-backed International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), based in Tanzania.

The two suspects will now face possible extradition to Tanzania.

Father Munyeshyaka was arrested at Gisors, to the west of Paris, and Mr Bucyibaruta near Troyes, east of the capital.

Father Munyeshyaka, 49, is accused of murdering three young Tutsis in his Holy Family parish in the capital Kigali, news agency AFP reported.

He is also accused of raping four young Tutsi women between April and June 1994 and calling for the extremist Hutu Interahamwe militia to commit rape.

## Standard Times

Tuesday, 24 July 2007

### Can Bargaining Save An Accused?

Plea Bargaining was recently introduced into the Criminal Justice System, and has certainly changed the face of both the Criminal Justice System and law. Some of the salient features of plea bargaining are that it is applicable in respect of those offences for which punishment is up to a certain period of time. Moreover it does not apply to cases where the offence committed is a socio-economic offence or where the offence is committed against women or children below the age of 14 years, but it all depends on the jurisdiction and the state. Also when once the court passes an order in the case of plea bargaining no appeal shall lie to any court against that order.

It can be defined as pre-trial negotiations between the accused and the prosecution during which the accused agrees to plead guilty in exchange for certain concessions by the prosecution. Further it could be seen as an agreement in which the defendant pleads guilty to a lesser charge and the prosecutors in return drop more serious charges. The object of

serious charges. The object of plea bargaining is to reduce the risk of undesirable orders for the either side. Another reason for introducing the concept of plea bargaining is the fact that most of the criminal courts are over burdened and hence unable to dispose off t cases on merits. Criminal trial can take days, weeks, months and sometimes years while guilty pleas can be arranged in minutes. In other words, a plea bargaining is a deal offered by the prosecutor to induce the defendant to plead guilty. Plea bargaining' can be of two types. Charge bargain and sentence bargain. Charge bargain happens when the prosecution allows a defendant to plead guilty to a lesser charge or to only some of the charges framed against him. Prosecution generally has vast discretion in framing charges and therefore they have the option to charge the defendant with the highest charges that are applicable. Charge Bargain on the other hand gives the accused an opportunity to negotiate with the prosecution and reduce the number of charges that may have been framed against him/her. As far as sentence bargain is concerned, it happens when an accused or defendant is told in advance what his sentence will be if he

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# Can bargaining save an accused?



Law Court Building

pleads guilty. A sentence bargain may allow the prosecutor to obtain a conviction in most serious charge, while assuring the defendant of an acceptable

wisely. It always takes more time and effort to bring a case to trial than to negotiate and handle a plea-bargain. Incentives for accepting plea-bar-

incompetence of the traditional procedural laws. Some of the major drawbacks of the concept of plea bargaining as is recognized are as under

pass the following minimum requirements:

- A) The hearing must take place in court
- B) The court must satisfy itself that the accused is pleading guilty knowingly and voluntarily.
- C) Any court order rejecting a plea bargaining application must be kept confidential to prevent prejudice to the accused.

The plea bargaining concept no doubt undermines the public's confidence in the criminal justice system and as a result of this; it will lead to the conviction of innocent, inconsistent penalties for similar crimes and lighter penalties for the rich.

To Conclude, plea bargaining is undoubtedly, a disputed concept. Few people have welcomed it while others have abandoned it. It is true that plea bargaining speeds up caseload disposition, but it does that in an unconstitutional manner. But perhaps one has no other choice but to adopt this technique. The criminal courts are too overburdened to allow each and every case to go on trial. Only time will tell if the introduction of this new concept is justified or not

## The criminal courts are too overburdened to allow each and every case to go on trial. Only time will tell if the introduction of this new concept is justified or not

sentence. Therefore one can safely say that Plea Bargaining is nothing but a contract between the prosecution and the defendant or accused and both the parties are bound by this contract. For most defendants the principal benefit of plea-bargaining is receiving a lighter sentence than what might result from taking the case to trial and losing. Another benefit which the defendant gets is that they can save a huge amount of money which they might otherwise spend

gaining, as far as judges and prosecutors are concerned are obvious. Over crowded courts do not allow the judges to try every case that comes before them. It also reduces the caseloads of the prosecutors. This article would be incomplete if it does not discuss the flaws that are hidden beneath the whole concept. No doubt, plea bargaining is nothing but a cover up of the inadequacies of the government in dealing with each and every case that comes before it. It indirectly shows the

A) Involving the police in plea bargaining process would invite coercion.

B) By involving the court in plea bargaining process, the court's impartiality is impugned.

C) Involving the victim in plea bargaining process would invite corruption.

D) If the plead guilty application of the accused is rejected then the accused would face great hardship to prove himself innocent.

Therefore to ensure fair justice, plea bargaining must encom-

## The Trial of Charles Taylor Website

Monday, 23 July 2007

### **Taylor's New Defence Team Includes A Prominent QC**

Charles Taylor's newly appointed defense team includes Courtenay Griffiths, QC, as well as Andrew Cayley and Terry Munyard. The appointment follows Taylor's request for QC-level representation. Vincent O. Nmehielle, Principal Defender for the Court, stated after consultations with Taylor that "[Taylor] pointed out to us that his team requires a leading senior counsel at the rank of QC to properly lead the case because of its complexity and the magnitude of the case." Taylor also requested a senior counsel and two co-counsel, all to ensure his fair trial rights under Article 17 of the Special Court's statute.

Presiding Judge Sebutinde stated in Court on June 25, 2007, that she did not understand "this fixation with Queen's Counsel" because "we have had very able counsel, senior counsel, from other jurisdictions, who are just as capable and who are willing to work for the remuneration that the Special Court can afford." Nonetheless, Taylor's new defense team includes a QC with significant criminal law experience.

According to Griffiths's biography, "His criminal practice ranges from fraud to terrorism, murder and serious public order to drugs." Griffiths received his LL.B. from the London School of Economics, an Honoray LL.D. from Leeds Metropolitan University, and an Honoray LL.D. from Coventry University. He has served as Legal Assistant to the Greater London Council Police Committee Support Unit (1981-1984) and as a Revson Fellow in the Urban Legal Studies program at City College in New York (1984-1985). He offers the unique perspective of a Jamaican-born attorney trained in England, whose "experience has taught him the social importance of practice in the provinces, where the sight of a black man in a white wig and black gown then often generated looks and sentiments of amazement."

Andrew Cayley received his LL.B. from Brighton College and his LL.M. from University College London. He has served as Senior Prosecuting Counsel to the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, where he provided legal direction on the ICC investigation into the situation in the Darfur region of Sudan. Cayley has also served as Senior Prosecuting Counsel to the Office of the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, supervising the investigation against General Mladic, and Legal Officer to the British Army.

Terry Munyard received his LL.B. from Kings College. Munyard practices civil and criminal law, specifically working on public order and political activist cases. He began working in employment and discrimination law while he was an active trade unionist.

Taylor's new defense team possesses relevant and extensive expertise in criminal law issues. It remains to be seen whether the defense team will ask for additional time or if the trial will proceed as planned on August 20.



## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 23 July 2007

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

**VOA** 23 July 2007

#### **Whistle Blower of Liberia's Alleged Coup Plot Speaks**

By James Butty, Washington, D.C.

Last week, the Liberian government arrested a former general, the speaker of the former National Transitional Legislative Assembly and others for plotting to overthrow the government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Now the man who might have blown the whistle on the alleged plotters has been giving details of the plot. Jucontee Thomas Woewiyu is a former Defense Minister in Charles Taylor's rebel National Patriot Front of Liberia movement. He made the revelations in a memorandum to Liberia's Justice Minister Frances Johnson-Morris, the U.N. Mission in Liberia, and the State Department. In the memorandum, entitled: "A Plot to Overthrow the Liberian Government by Force of Arms", Woewiyu revealed the plot details in email communications between him and George Koukou, the speaker of the former National Transitional Legislative Assembly of Liberia. Woewiyu explains to VOA English to Africa reporter James Butty how he came to the conclusion that this was a plot to overthrow President Sirleaf.

**BBC** Last Updated: Saturday, 21 July 2007, 01:04 GMT 02:04 UK

#### **Liberia charges 'coup plotters'**

Liberia's court has charged a former army chief and a former speaker of the parliament with treason, officials say. They say General Charles Julu and ex-House Speaker George Koukou will remain in custody pending a trial. They were arrested in connection with an alleged coup against the government of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who took power in 2006 after years of war. Under Liberian law, the two men could face the death penalty or life in prison, if convicted.

#### **News of coup plot chills war-weary Liberians**

By Zoom Dosso

MONROVIA, July 21, 2007 (AFP) - The Liberian government appealed for calm on Saturday amid heightened concern in Monrovia over an attempt to overthrow the Government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Charles Julu, a former army chief of staff and George Koukou, a former parliamentary speaker, were charged Friday with treason on suspicion of masterminding the plot. "We are calling on the population to remain calm," said Information Minister Lawrence Bropleh.

**VOA 22 July 2007**

## **Liberians in US Face Possible Deportation**

By Akwei Thompson

There is a deep sense of anxiety these days in the Liberian community in the United States. About 3,500 Liberians could face deportation come October 1, when a temporary protection status that allows them to stay here expires unless President Bush or Congress intervenes. The U.S. government contends Liberia is now a stable country and these migrants could return home. Christiana Tah is an immigration lawyer in the Washington, D.C. area.

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

**VOA 21 July 2007**

## **UN Suspends Moroccan Peacekeepers after Sexual Misconduct Allegations in Ivory Coast**

The United Nations has suspended a Moroccan peacekeeping unit in Ivory Coast following an investigation into allegations of widespread sexual abuse committed by U.N. peacekeepers in the nation. U.N. officials said Saturday the Moroccan contingent of at least 732 soldiers has been confined to its barracks in the northern city of Bouake. Soldiers from Morocco, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ghana make up the U.N. peacekeeping force of about 9,000 U.N. troops in Ivory Coast.

## **Sierra Leone leader warns against pre-election violence**

FREETOWN, July 23, 2007 (AFP) - Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah has vowed to get tough on violence after political clashes marred the start of campaigning for next month's landmark elections. I want to make it clear that as commander-in-chief, I would not sit by and allow anyone or group to disrupt the peace which now prevails," Kabbah told state radio late Sunday.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **Ex-Army Chief and a former Interim Speaker Charged for Coup Plot**

*(The News, Public Agenda, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Analyst, National Chronicle, New Democrat, Liberian Express, Heritage, The Informer and New Vision)*

- The Liberian Government has charged two of the individuals arrested last week with treason for their alleged involvement in plans to overthrow the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's Administration.
- A former army general Charles Julu and former Transitional Speaker George Koukou were taken to court and charged and will go through court proceedings to determine their guilt or innocence.
- A range of newspapers published today that former Grand Bassa County Senator Thomas Woewiyu supposedly admitted that Koukou, who is now being held for treason, sought his [Woewiyu] support for the coup plot, an accusation the family of the accused denied.
- *Public Agenda* and *Plain Truth* newspapers continued to portray the arrest and detention of the suspected coup plotters as a witch hunt, although the Government says it has "hard" evidence of a coup being plotted against the administration.

### **Press Union President Asked to Resign**

*(New Vision and Plain Truth)*

- A member of the Press Union (PUL) says he and other members of the Union are soliciting one-third of the membership's signature, in line with their constitution, to seek the resignation of the PUL President George Barpeen.
- Journalist Philip Sande said the move is to deter another leader of the union against issuing ultimatum to the United Nations Security Council without valid cause and also to redeem the organization from the embarrassment caused by Barpeen.

### **UL Resumes Classes Today**

*(The Inquirer, National Chronicle and Heritage)*

- Classes at the State-owned University of Liberia are due to begin today following a violent student demonstration which led to the indefinitely closure of the institution.

**Local Media – Radio Veritas** *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

### **President Says Government will not rename Major Sports Stadium**

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said that the Government had no plan to rename the famous Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex when the Chinese Government that renovated it, turned over the facility to the Government of Liberia Saturday.
- Thanking the Chinese during the ceremony over the weekend, she was confident that the glory of Liberian football would be manifested around the world with the renovation of the complex. President Johnson Sirleaf also disclosed that the Government of France provided some US\$55,000 to the Government of Liberia for the construction of a gymnasium.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Liberians Begin Independence Day Celebration with Intercessory Prayer**

- In his sermon to commence celebration for the 160<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary of Liberia, the Rev. Dr. Herman Brown challenged Liberians to support the President and her Government as the Government was making remarkable effort to develop the Country.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Government Renames Army Training Base**

- The Government of Liberia over the weekend renamed the Voice of America site it uses as the new training ground for the new Armed Forces of Liberia to the Camp Sande Weh Training Base. Sande Weh is a Retired Maj./Gen. of the Armed Forces of Liberia and one time Minister of National Defense in the Interim Government of National Unity – one of the transitional governments characterized the civil war era.
- Meanwhile, correspondents said that the second batch of 500 recruits of the new AFL were sworn-in at the new Training Base with Vice President Joseph Boakai who administered the Oath cautioning them to be submissive to the Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Force of Liberia and the State.
- Moreover, the Governments of Liberia and China signed an agreement for the latter to rebuild the military barracks in Gbarnga, Bong County costing US\$3.5 million.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Lawmakers Set to Debate Asset Seizure Bill Today**

- The National Legislature Press Bureau Director Isaac Reed told reporters that the House of Representatives would today commence public hearing on the bill to freeze assets of corrupt government officials which the Executive Branch sent to the House. Justice Minister Counsellor Frances Johnson Morris, the President of the National Bar Association and other human rights lawyers have been invited to witness the debate.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

**Catholic Group to Give Free Legal Services to Plantation Workers**

- Speaking at the induction of the newly elected officers of the Firestone Agriculture Workers Union of Liberia, Catholic Justice and Peace Commission Executive Director Augustine Toe announced that it would give free legal services to the organization, adding that he wanted to ensure that is empowered to protect the rights of Firestone workers as conditions on the Firestone Plantation were still deplorable. He cited lack of safety gears, low salaries and wages as some of the terrible conditions still visible at Firestone.
- The head of Green Advocates, Attorney Alfred Brownell who installed the officers reportedly cried as he recounted the alleged inhumane treatment of Firestone workers and assured the public that his group would remain engaged with the plantation's management to improve the conditions of the workers.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

**Ex-Combatants in Buchanan Call Off Planned Riot**

- The Chief Police Superintendent of Grand Bassa County Emmanuel Freeman told correspondents that the riot planned for 26 July by some former combatants in the County in demand for outstanding benefits has been called off because payment of the arrears commenced last week through an implementing partner of the United Nations Development Programme.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LIBERIAN TRUTH AND  
RECONCILIATION COMMISSION AND THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONTACT GROUP ON LIBERIA**

Reconciliation is vital to a successful future for Liberia's people. Only by uniting around a shared national identity and ensuring fair access to opportunity for all can Liberia's old divisions be put behind it.

In order to achieve that reconciliation, the Liberian people need to understand the truth about the causes of the conflict of the past. Liberians need an opportunity to tell their own experiences of that conflict. The creation of a just society in the future requires that the injustices of the past are examined and acknowledged.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has a central role in achieving this goal. It was conceived as an essential part of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Chairman and Commissioners of the TRC and the members of the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) are united in our desire to ensure that the reconciliation process succeeds for the people of Liberia.

As a reflection of our commitment, the ICGL and TRC decided to set up a joint Working Group in March 2007, to revitalise the process and to assist the TRC in addressing some challenges in managing its programmes and resources. We also wanted to ensure that partners have the confidence in the TRC in order to lend the necessary financial support for its vital activities.

The Working Group has proved a productive partnership. The TRC and ICGL welcome the contributions made by the Working Group. It has provided guidelines on policy issues that are vital to the successful completion of the TRC's work. It has ensured that the TRC has a comprehensive work programme for the months ahead, focusing on its engagement with the Liberian people. It has reinforced the training provided to assist the TRC staff in its work. And it has worked on a revised budget that will ensure the best use of resources provided to the TRC by the Government of Liberia and by donors.

We welcome the recruitment of staff to fill key management positions within the TRC Secretariat, and the intention to seek International Technical Advisers with a range of expertise to assist with the effective management of the TRC's work. This will allow the Commissioners to focus on public outreach and implementation of the TRC's mandate.

We also welcome the commitment shown by the Government of Liberia to the TRC, as reflected by the allocation of funds in the national budget to meet certain operational costs of the TRC, including the salaries of Commissioners and staff.

The Working Group also commissioned a financial audit of the TRC, with assistance from the United States Government. The ICGL welcomes the commitment made by the TRC to implement the recommendations of the audit in full by 12 September 2007.

We, the TRC Commissioners and the members of the ICGL, look forward to the re-invigoration of the TRC's work with renewed determination and commitment. We encourage the widest possible participation by the Liberian people in statement taking, public hearings and the other activities of the TRC. We emphasise our shared commitment to a process that provides genuine justice and reconciliation, and renewed hope for Liberia's future.

The TRC Commissioners and the members of the ICGL encourage the Government of Liberia and its international partners to engage with the TRC on the basis of the revised work programme and budget, and therefore urge them to provide timely and adequate financial assistance.

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## Associated Press

Monday, 23 July 2007

[http://www.mercurynews.com/nationworld/ci\\_6444834](http://www.mercurynews.com/nationworld/ci_6444834)

### **U.N. asks Netherlands to host tribunal**

UNITED NATIONS—U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sent a letter to the Netherlands on Monday asking the country to host a tribunal to prosecute suspects in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, Ban's office said.

The U.N. Security Council voted to establish the international tribunal in May at the request of current Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora after the Syrian-backed opposition blocked Lebanese parliamentary approval for the tribunal.

U.N. officials have said the tribunal could take up to a year to establish, and with the investigation ongoing, it remains unclear who would face trial.

A massive suicide truck bomb in Beirut killed Hariri and 22 others in February 2005. Hariri's supporters have blamed Syria, but Damascus has denied any involvement in the bombing. Four Lebanese generals, top pro-Syrian security chiefs, have been under arrest for 20 months, accused of involvement.

In his letter to Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, Ban stressed the fact that the Netherlands already hosts a number of special courts and tribunals, including the war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Court.

The country is also currently hosting the tribunal trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor in The Hague on charges related to atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war. Robert Dekker, a spokesman for the Dutch Foreign Ministry, said Balkenende had spoken with Ban on Sunday about the request, but a decision had not yet been made on whether to host the tribunal.

"We will respond constructively," Dekker said. "What will come next is talks with the U.N. about practical issues like funding, location, security—all those sort of things. When that picture is complete, we will make a definitive decision."

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Zalmay Khalilzad, said the request to the Netherlands indicates the tribunal is making "progress."

Hariri was one of several prominent anti-Syrian Lebanese figures slayed in recent years. The issue of the tribunal is at the core of a deep political crisis between the Western-backed Lebanese government and the Syrian-backed opposition led by the Hezbollah militant movement. The tensions have erupted into street battles in recent months, killing 11 people.