

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



School children watch yesterday's Taylor Status Conference by video link in the Temporary Courthouse.

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:

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

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

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Appeals hearing: Prosecution submits...**“AFRC instigated, planned war”***By Betty Milton*

At the ongoing Appeals Trial argument for the three Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) Special Court indictees, the prosecution yesterday submitted that the appellant instigated and ordered crimes in Bombali and Freetown.

In their response to the defence’s submission Christopher Starker on behalf of the prosecution said according to the evidence deduced by the Trial Chamber, the first appellant Alex Tamba Brima was involved in the Bombali and Freetown campaigns.

During the Masofinia address, the prosecutor said, the first appellant

ordered the fighters to commit crimes against civilians. Some of the attackers were called names like ‘Fear No Soul’ and these fighters did things according to orders given to them by Tamba Brima, he said.

The Special Court prosecutor further submitted that, “Brima gave numerous orders and no one would do anything without the orders from Brima and the troops reported back to him”

“He was a driving force behind the campaign of crimes, crimes that were instigated and he was the instigator,” Mr Starker said.

According to the prosecutor after the death of SAJ Musa, Tamba Brima took over the overall command even if he was not part of the planning but he was a mover of making things happen.

For the second appellant, Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, the prosecutor submitted that he was the deputy commander who participated actively in decision making.

Stressing that the second appellant was present when crimes were committed. “He was at the headquarters, he was involved in all of the

*Cont. Page 6***“AFRC instigated, planned war”***From Page 2*

planning and was a senior figure who contributed to the climate of criminality that prevailed in the AFRC troops,” he stressed further.

Christopher Starker also submitted that the second appellant instigated others to participate in the commissioning of crimes.

The third appellant Santigie

Borbor Kanu, the prosecutor went on, was the Chief of Staff, a senior commander in the Bombali and Freetown campaigns.

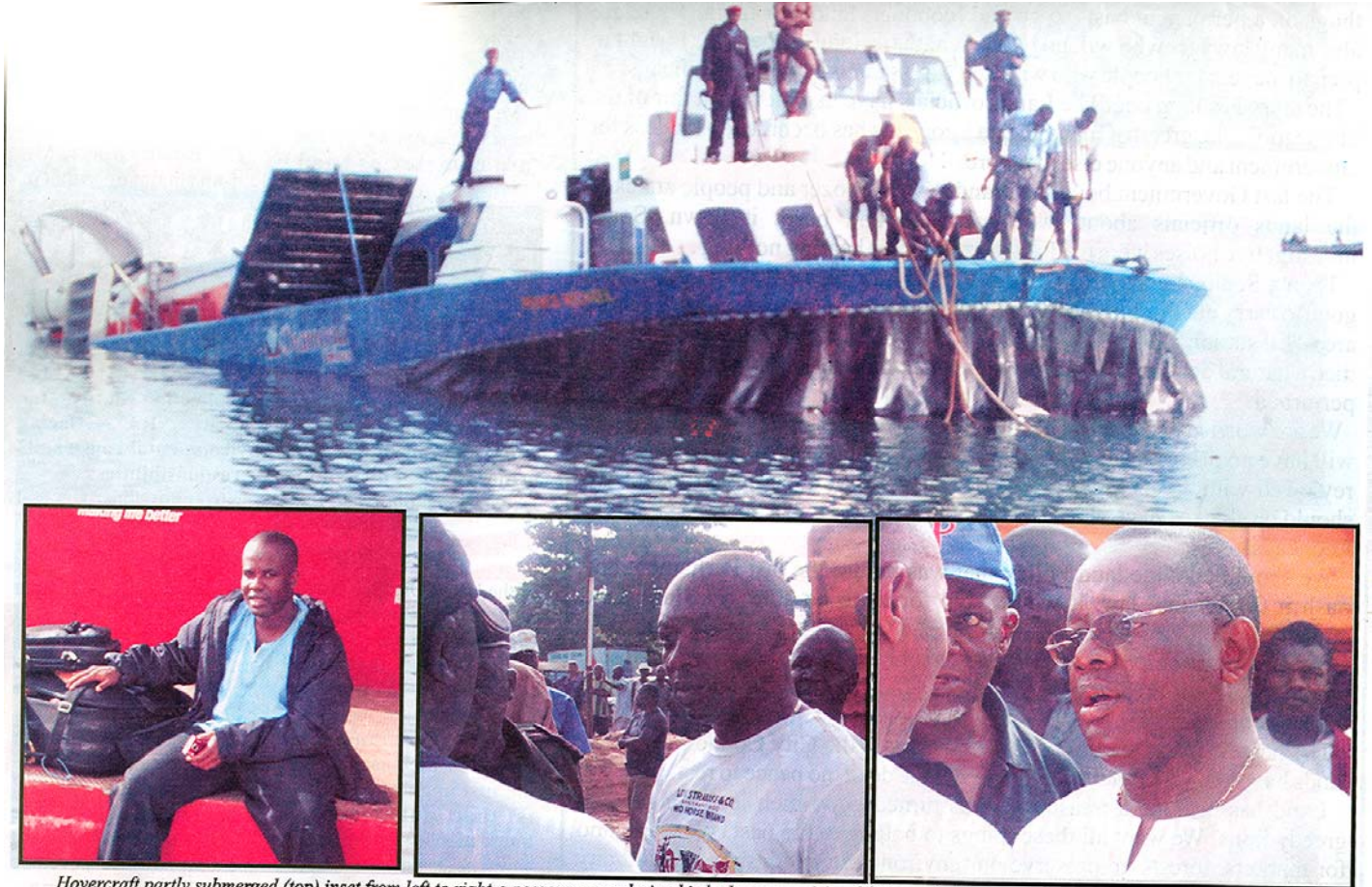
Mr Starker submitted further that Kanu was present when crimes were being committed and that he also committed crimes

demonstrating to the fighters how to do “long and short sleeves” on civilians. “The function he played aided and abetted in the crimes,” he stated. In his submission the prosecutor said, “instigation does not mean that the accused involved actively but instigation can also be done by a group of people including the accused.”

Premier News

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Hoover Craft Sinks



Hovercraft partly submerged (top) inset from left to right—a passenger pondering his lucky escape, Min. Of Trans. & Aviation at the scene, and Chief Tony Chinyere

Just 48 hours to the Presidential Inauguration on Thursday, passengers on the early morning crossing by Hovercraft from Lungi, yesterday morning narrowly escaped death as the craft caught fire and partly sank at Aberdeen.

The incident which took place around 5a.m attracted the attention of top Government

functionaries including President Ernest Koroma who rushed to the scene, the moment he heard the

news.

Our reporter, who was at the scene, spoke to some of the passengers who explained, that the Hovercraft first started having problems when it arrived at Lungi late on Monday night, instead of

the scheduled 10pm; as it was said to have stalled midstream before it finally managed to reach Mahera Beach Lungi.

The passengers had to walk halfway through the water before boarding the Hovercraft for the crossing

to Freetown. According to one Indian National Mr. Patel of Nenshaw Timber Enterprises, the 34 passengers noticed that the engine was not working properly and that only one engine was working. By

Contd. P4

Hovercraft sinks

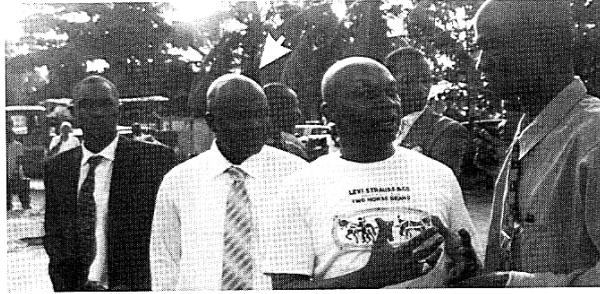
From Front Page

the time they reached Aberdeen back of 'Lagoonda' nightclub, the craft ran out of fuel and stopped.

He explained that the Hovercraft was emitting smoke which had even come into the cabin. The visibly shaken passengers also said that they tried to find out from the 7-man crew what the problem was but were assured that it was a minor clutch problem.

It was while they were wondering what was happening that a local fishing boat came with about 6 buckets of fuel. They then poured it into the engine and as soon as the engine was restarted, there was a loud explosion and it caught fire.

The passengers then started screaming and



Hon. Kemoh Sesay with Dep. Min. Of Information, Mohamed D Koroma, (arrowed) at the scene

scrambling for safety. Most of the passengers had to be rescued by the local fishermen as they jumped overboard into the water.

Meanwhile news of the near disaster had reached the Mayor of Freetown, Winstanley Bankole Johnson, who alerted the Transport and Aviation Minister, Ibrahim Kemoh Sesay, who rushed to the scene around 5 a.m.

Speaking with Premier

News at the scene, Kemoh Sesay explained that he boarded a boat and went to the Hovercraft to ensure that the passengers were safe before checking for their personal effects. President Ernest Koroma also arrived with the Chief Justice and other Government officials when they heard the news and praised the fishermen for saving the situation telling them that this was

Contd. P17

Hovercraft sinks

From P4

what was expected of good citizens.

The President also consoled the passengers for their mishap and promised that government will look into the matter.

The Transport and Aviation Minister also promised that a thorough investigation on the incident will be carried

Chief Tony Chinere, Proprietor of the Diamond Hovercraft services told our reporter on the scene that the craft was seaworthy, insured and was in good working condition before yesterday's accident.

He described the incident as a mystery to him and

said he was going to make a formal report to the Police, while promising that the situation will be dealt with appropriately.

Head of the Maritime Wing of the RSLAF, Commander Mansaray, who was at the scene with some IMMATT officers, to assist in the rescue operation said that the operators of the craft needed to be properly trained, regularly boat checks need to be done and safety gears should also be available always. The Hovercraft was towed to shore by the Maritime officers.

Meanwhile the Presidential nominee for Deputy Information Minister, Mohammed

Koroma told Premier News that he had done everything to control the situation and appealed to the press not to blow the incident out of proportion.

He disclosed that since the Hovercraft was now out of order and the ferry was also not very reliable, plans are being made for the SLRA to grade the Port Loko/Freetown Road from Lungi so that visitors for the inauguration will travel by road to Freetown.

Meanwhile on Monday, passengers who had been waiting since Friday went berserk after the Belview and SLOK air planes failed to show up for their scheduled flights.

Standard Times

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

The Unbearable Lapses in Sierra Leone's Judicial System

Even the most peaceful country in the world has the unlimited proclivity to metamorphose into a very lawless state, if there is an overt perversion of justice. When ever the issue of the Sierra Leone legal system comes to mind, three major institutions are always promptly thought of at a glance and these are the judiciary, the Bar Association and the Justices of the Peace (JPs).

The former and latter entities are always considered to be one and the same, complementing the services of each other. However, one would safely say that the justices of the peace are integral part of the judiciary. From a holistic perspective, the legal system of Sierra Leone has been engulfed with numerous deficiencies, most of which have been principally unfolding as a result of the existence of certain personnel and their operations within its ambits. These persons have seriously contributed in eroding some of the gains that the judiciary of Sierra Leone might have made over the years under the stew-

ardship of Dr. Ade Renner Thomas. It is however worth pointing out that, it is not only the existence of certain personnel and their operations that have caused the problems within our legal system but also the lack of the much needed man power resources, coupled with the vicious acts of unpatriotism and dishonesty that have become the order of the day at the law court.

As it is presently, numerous acts of injustices have been reported, and some of these reports are against the justices of the peace (JP's) as stipendiary magistrates within the courts system, of the jurisdiction of Sierra Leone. It should be unequivocally pointed out that these are persons that have not been trained as barristers or solicitors and as well do not have the requisite expertise and experiences to undertake such tasks. Even were some of them would have been trained, as barristers and solicitors in other jurisdictions because they would not have acquired a ten year practice in the said field, they should not in any way be allowed to neither operate in the

Bar Association nor serve as magistrates in the lower bench. If at all some of them have been allowed to operate in such capacities, which is what is ongoing, it means that Sierra Leone's legal system has seriously been undermined.

What is presently in operation with regards the existence of the justices of the peace is considerably disheartening to the majority of Sierra Leoneans, whose ambition is to see this country grow to an enviable height. In the wisdom of Dr Ade Renner Thomas and the caucus of the judiciary of Sierra Leone, certain justices of the peace successfully certified the conditions of a stipendiary magistrate and have therefore been officially appointed to administer full courts.

Those competent justices of the peace have now been equally equipped with the powers that are conferred on principal and senior magistrates in the execution of their unprofessional duties. Candidly, the people of this country would like to know the reason for the decision to allow unqualified, inexperienced and mediocre personnel in constitutional and legal matters to perpetually handle such issues.

Sierra Leoneans would further like to know whether

these incompetent justices of the peace like those at the court number five of the Central Police station that have been employed to serve as stipendiary magistrates cannot be replaced by willing, competent and determined barristers and solicitors. It is unclear whether or not some lawyers were turned down for the magisterial appointment during the last intake in November 2006, whilst allowing the unprofessional justices of the peace to mostly wreck havoc on innocent persons that are arraigned before them for various offences. One can't imagine how many innocent victims that are currently languishing at the Pademba Road Prison as a result of the unprofessional and amateur behaviour of these justices of the peace (JP's)

Sadly, what bothers most thinking and legal minded Sierra Leoneans is the kind of punishments that these unprofessional and mediocre JP's give out to accused persons and even plaintiffs at times as sentences. One of these legally handicapped and economically shattered, professionally incompetent and above all a mediocre was very bold to have given a judgment that demanded the plaintiff of an action to pay the sum of

three million Leones (Le 3,000,000) as an award of damages and cost. This was a complete madness and we are still pondering over the source of his authority that he exerted few days ago. The irony sometimes people enjoy is to see trained, qualified and experienced Barristers and Solicitors bowing before these untrained, unqualified and inexperienced justices of the peace and addressing them as "My Lord". This is clearly a mockery of the legal profession for somebody who has gone through the rudiment of a profession to honour somebody who is not part of it.

It would be recalled that the last parliament passed an act forbidding these non legal minded individuals to sit in courts in the Western Area of greater Freetown, but the Chief Justice, Dr. Ade Renner Thomas should be in a better position to explain why he has allowed them to be a source of embarrassment to him, the judiciary and the people of Sierra Leone. We are truly disappointed and every effort must be exerted by the Chief Justice to reconsider his original decision and find an acceptable solution to this embarrassing situation.

It is no joke that the over crowded nature of the

Pademba Road Maximum Prisons could be linked to the unprofessional and unjust judgments that are always delivered by our justices of the peace. If a survey is to be conducted on the individuals that are currently serving an unjust sentence at the aforesaid prisons, the findings that would be unearthed would definitely be incredible and human rights organizations, along side government institutions must endeavor to do something soonest.

There is also the burning problem of the non-existence of magistrates in most parts of Sierra Leone. The willful absence of stationed magistrates have seriously increased the levels of crime rate in some parts of our jurisdiction and the Chief Justice needs to address this unbearable issue, not by sending justices of the peace, some of whom are walking corpses to these places, but legally trained and qualified magistrates.

Importantly, the number of barristers and solicitors that are annually produced in this country is abysmal and this in turn is seriously undermining the administration of justice in Sierra Leone. It is sad that the council of legal education in Sierra Leone is only able to produce twenty (20) barristers for the whole country. The unfortunate situation is that a significant proportion of them would end up taking jobs in other private institutions avoiding the court rooms.

The issue of the willful refusal on the part of magistrates and judges to issue bail without money is still a serious problem. There have been several reports of this nature and this has been undermining the productivity of the judiciary. As a matter of urgency, the Chief Justice must institute very robust methods to correct the existing anomalies and rescue Sierra Leoneans from this judicial bondage.

The New Citizen

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

WITNESS TO THE TRUTH The TRC and the Special Court for Sierra Leone

“...So even though the Judge conceded that Chief Norman had a right to testify upon condition that he had been warned, and clearly stated that he was satisfied that Chief Norman had been “expertly” warned, he still refused to allow him to testify. It would seem to us on the Chief’s legal team that the position taken by both the Trial Chamber and the President of the Court is full of conflicts, inconsistencies and Contradictions, all leading to one final result — to stop Chief Sam Hinga Norman from testifying before the TRC. That goal has been achieved, albeit for reasons which are not clear to us, and which certainly do not augur well for whatever the Special Court sees itself as having been mandated to do.

Chief Sam Hinga Norman entertains no doubt that he has been unfairly treated, unnecessarily targeted and unjustly deprived of his legal and constitutional rights, by reason of which he now seriously doubts whether he will get real Justice from this Special Court. He further believes that this unfortunate episode of a head-on clash between the TRC and the Special Court has done much to obstruct the course of peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone, and has clearly demonstrated the short-sightedness and skewed thinking behind the policy of setting up both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court at the same time.

The President [of the Special Court’s ruling is regarded by Chief Sam Hinga Norman not only as an unwarranted attempt to silence him but also as a challenge to the very Act creating the TRC, which was ratified by [the] Sierra Leone Parliament in 2000.

Finally, Chief Sam Hinga Norman wishes to say to the people of Sierra Leone that Notwithstanding the treatment he has received at the hands of the Special Court, and the unduly belligerent, provocative and intimidatory utterances of the Prosecutor himself, he still believes in the rule of Law and to this end will continue to advise his people to remain law-abiding and be patient, as he knows that at the end of the day he will be vindicated and will walk free from this nightmare.
May God continue to bless our beloved Country Sierra Leone.”

The Commission did invite Chief Hinga Norman and the other detainees to make written representations in order to supply their versions of the conflict. Sadly, none of the detainees responded to the requests. The Commission finds this to be highly regrettable. The Commission, however, acknowledges that the preference of the detainees was for public hearings and, by the time this option was finally shut down in December 2003, there was little time left to prepare and finalise written submissions.

THE ROBERTSON DECISION ANALYSED

Judge Robertson wrote that the question before him was one that was “novel and difficult”. However, the question was far from novel. The immediate and local precedents were part of the written records before Judge Robertson, namely the numerous instances in which the Commission had interviewed or held hearings in public with detainees facing multiple-count criminal indictments before the Sierra Leone courts.

Moreover, the most publicised Commission in the world, the South African TRC, worked side by side with a criminal process that saw awaiting-trial and convicted prisoners appearing publicly in the TRC

hearings on a routine basis) It may be added that fair trial protections are just as jealously guarded by the South African judiciary as they are by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

In the Sierra Leonean and South African precedents overlooked by Judge Robertson, the elaborate concerns and travesties of justice as postulated by the Special Court simply did not arise.

One of the distinguishing factors is that the justice bodies referred to in these examples were national bodies; whereas the Special Court is better described as a hybrid creature, an amalgam of both national and international legal systems. It is implied in the thinking of the Special Court — and in the decision of Judge Bankole Thompson it was stated explicitly — that the international character of the Court poses special problems that justify its stance. In reality, though, the practical considerations and legal issues entailed in the administration of justice are no different, whether the body in question is national, international or quasi-international.

Primacy over the TRC

In providing his “historical background,” Judge Robertson made the point that the Special Court possesses “primacy” over the Commission:

“The Special Court was given, by Article 8 of its Statute, a primacy over national courts of Sierra Leone (and, by implication, over national bodies like the TRC).”

In fact, Article 8 of the Statute of the Special Court provides no support at all for the popular contention that the Special Court has primacy over the TRC. It reads:

Article 8: Concurrent jurisdiction

“The Special Court and the national courts of Sierra Leone shall have concurrent jurisdiction. The Special Court shall have primacy over the national courts of Sierra Leone. At any stage of the proceedings, the Special Court may formally require a national court to defer to its competence in accordance with the present Statute and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.”

It is clear from the title of Article 8 that the ‘primacy’ bestowed on the Special Court is limited to cases of ‘concurrent jurisdiction’ between courts. The Commission is not a court. It is equally trite to point out that the Commission does not have any criminal proceedings before it. The provision merely requires deference from the national courts in instances where both the Special Court and the national courts wish to lead prosecutions against the same individual, or on the same matter. This means that following a formal application by (the Special Court, a national court is obliged to halt its own criminal proceedings in respect of an Accused that the Special Court wishes to act against.

Notwithstanding the clear meaning of Article 8, the provision was invoked by Court spokespersons and other commentators to assert “superiority” over the Commission.

The ‘Spectacle’ of a TRC Hearing

The Commission has already expressed its consternation at Judge Bankole Thompson’s misconstruction of the institutional character of the TRC as a court of law. Such misconstruction led Judge Thompson to erroneous conclusions. Judge Robertson viewed the Commission in similar terms. Judge Robertson feared that the Commission would set itself up as a mock court performing the “special duty” assigned to the Special Court. He seemed particularly affronted that the proposed hearing would happen in a courtroom within the Special Court’s own precinct. Judge Robertson characterised the request of the Commission as an unwarranted straying onto Special Court territory:

“But the TRC has not, significantly, given any undertaking to suspend judgement on individuals awaiting trial in this court.”

“...I have been given no assurance that indictees awaiting or undergoing trial will not be ‘judged’ guilty or innocent by the Commissioners (who are not qualified judges)...”

“The spectacle of the TRC sitting in court may set up a public expectation that it will indeed pass judgement on indictees thus confronted and questioned, whose guilt or innocence it is the special of the Special Court to determine.”

“I cannot believe that the Nuremberg Tribunal would have allowed its prisoners to participate in such a spectacle, had there been a TRC in Germany after the war...”

In building his argument that the Commission ought to have refrained from proceeding with its requests to hear the detainee publicly, Judge Robertson relied on an opinion that was no longer held by its authors:

“The initial expectation in this respect of informed persons well-disposed to both processes was expressed in an illuminating report by the International Centre for Transitional Justice (“ICTJ”):

In the case of persons indicted by the Special Court, the TRC should decline to interview them altogether until the proceedings against them are concluded.

This absolute position (which the ICTJ authors no longer maintain) at least gave full force to the universal value that nothing should be done to endanger fair trial. The TRC, by this application, wishes to go towards the other extreme: it seeks not only to interview indictees, but to do so in public, in a courtroom over several days, in a form that will permit them to broadcast live to the nation, and then face sustained questioning shortly before their trial.”

Not only did the ICTJ change its view on this matter; it said as much in the very submission that Judge Robertson himself invited the organisation to make. The Commission was later informed that “the ICTJ authors” had outlined their new position explicitly in a submission to Judge Robertson in November 2003: “ICTJ, in communications to both the Court and the TRC, subsequently took the view that it would indeed be possible to hold a public hearing of the TRC without violating the fundamental rights of the Accused or the integrity of proceedings before the Special Court, provided certain conditions were met, namely:

- (1) defence counsel would be present to advise the Accused (who would be participating on a voluntary basis) before and during the public hearing; and
- (2) there would be a delayed transmission, to allow any threats to witnesses or to general security to be deleted from public broadcasts... .

If these conditions were met, ICTJ was of the view that a public hearing would not hinder a fair trial for the Accused, nor would it pose an additional substantial risk to witnesses or security.

[...] ICTJ stressed the importance of distinguishing a public hearing by the TRC from a Court hearing; for instance, if the hearing were to be held in a courtroom, the Commissioners should not sit where the judges would sit...

The Trial of Charles Taylor Website

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

<http://charlestaylortrial.org/>

Another short status conference held

Today, a status conference was held in the Taylor case. The Trial Chamber set out the agenda as follows:

1. Update regarding preparation of the trial;
2. Any issues regarding the administration of the case

Sub 1 - Both parties stated that the preparation of the trial is going well, but the Defence submitted one issue to the Trial Chamber. The issue concerns the electronic disclosure of materials by the Prosecution in the period June 4, 2007 until September 25, 2007. Outside this period, the Prosecution has electronically provided documents which is very convenient for the Defence since defence lawyers are in different places. The Prosecution stated that it does not have an electronic disclosure obligation under the Rules and that documents in this particular period had not been disclosed as confidentiality had not been secured in respect of these documents. However, the confidentiality concern no longer applies and, as the Prosecution has set out in a letter to the Defence, electronic disclosure will be made insofar as the workload of the Prosecution permits. The Prosecution estimated this will take several weeks. The Defence confirmed that confidentiality agreements were signed in September 2007 and it requested the Trial Chamber to set a deadline by which electronic disclosure should be completed. The Prosecution opposed such deadline, also pointing out that the Defence itself has the ability to scan documents. Furthermore, the Prosecution pointed out its workload in connection with its written disclosure obligation within certain time limits under the Rules.

The Trial Chamber denied the motion for a deadline, pointing out there is indeed no obligation for electronic disclosure under the Rules. The Trial Chamber did point out the availability of the Registry, as before, to assist the Prosecution in making speedy electronic disclosure. The Trial Chamber also referred to the importance of good faith cooperation between the parties.

Sub 2 - Defence counsel requested a closed session to discuss a further issue, which is of vital importance to the preparation of the case. It concerns various documentation sent to the Trial Chamber and the Prosecution. The Prosecution confirmed receipt of the documents in question and submitted that instead of a closed session, a private session would be held. With the agreement of the Defence, the Trial Chamber so ruled. We note that such private or closed sessions may happen throughout the trial in view of the sensitivity of the information discussed, or the need to protect certain persons.

After the private session, the Trial Chamber considered two closely related matters raised by the Prosecution, namely (i) whether on January 7, 2008 the trial will commence with the presentation of Prosecution evidence and (ii) whether there will be a status conference in December 2007. The Trial Chamber pointed out that earlier this year it had wanted to hold a status conference every month, but that at the time the parties stated this was not necessary. The Prosecution responded that it had only intended for status conferences to be held insofar as necessary. The point of its current submission is that if the Defence has issues that need to be addressed, a status conference can be arranged now so that the trial can start properly on January 7, 2008. The Defence agreed with the Prosecution and stated that a status conference would be necessary to "clear the decks" so that the trial can properly go ahead as planned. The Defence proposed December 11, 2007 as the next date for the status conference. This was agreed to by the Prosecution and so determined by the Trial Chamber.

The Defence raised two additional issues. The first concerned a Trial Chamber decision, dated November 5, 2007, on an ex parte motion by the Prosecution. The motion concerned the production of incriminating documents. The Trial Chamber had dismissed this motion. The Defence indicated that while it was grateful for this decision, it was concerned about the use of ex parte proceedings as this could affect the quality of the decisions. In this respect, the Defence stated it would have been able to submit several grounds on which the Prosecution's motion in point would have to be dismissed. Therefore, the Defence requested a "practice directive" by the Trial Chamber on the use of ex parte proceedings. While the Prosecution stated that it would have no problem with any ex parte guidance, the Trial Chamber ruled that it would not issue such guidance. This is because each case is unique and must be dealt with by the Trial Chamber on its own merits. Judge Lusick added that if the motion in point would have had any merit, then the Defence would have been invited to make submissions.

The second additional issue raised by the Defence concerns a letter, dated November 8, 2007, from the Prosecution to the Defence regarding the alleged interference with witnesses by "persons associated with the Defence". The Trial Chamber stated that it was not aware of the letter or the issues raised therein. The Defence then agreed to take this matter up at a later stage.

Associated Press

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

Sierra Leone war crimes court refuses to allow seizure of Charles Taylor's personal archive

THE HAGUE, Netherlands: Judges in the war crimes trial of Charles Taylor have refused to allow the seizure of the Liberian president's personal archive, despite the possibility that it contains documents implicating Taylor in atrocities in Sierra Leone.

At a hearing Tuesday at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde said prosecutors had given no valid reason for the documents to be seized.

Prosecutors argued that the archive likely contains documents that would incriminate Taylor, who is charged with arming and supporting rebels who murdered thousands of civilians and hacked off the limbs of thousands more during Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war, which ended in 2002. Taylor has pleaded innocent.

Sitting in court Tuesday in a dark blue suit and yellow tie, Taylor looked relaxed, sometimes chatting and laughing with his lawyers. He is being tried in The Hague because of fears that holding the case in Sierra Leone could re-ignite violence there.

In a motion, prosecutors argued that it was "highly probable that the accused's personal archives' contain relevant material which will materially assist the prosecution case."

But judges who are to restart Taylor's trial on Jan. 7, rejected the request as too vague, saying it "has all the hallmarks of a fishing expedition."

In a written ruling, judges said prosecutors had "not identified the information sought, nor even described it by its general nature."

Taylor's trial began in June but was immediately suspended after he boycotted the hearing and fired his attorney. He has since appointed a new legal team.

Sebutinde said prosecutors will begin presenting evidence on Jan. 7.

Prosecutors have said they will call former members of Taylor's inner circle to testify against him as well as victims and survivors of atrocities in Sierra Leone. The trial is expected to last 18 months.

(mcc)

SABC (South Africa)

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Charles Taylor's legal team prepares for trial



Taylor is accused of instigating murder and rape in a quest for diamonds during Liberia's civil war

Crystal Orderson

The legal team of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor and the International Criminal Court's team met in The Hague for a special status report on the trial to finalise all the details for the court case. Taylor has been charged with arming and supporting rebels during the decade long brutal civil war in Sierra Leone.

People in Sierra Leon bore the brunt of the decade long war that ended in 2002. It left thousands dead and maimed. Five years on, they are putting some hope on the Sierra Leone Special Court- where some of the perpetrators are tried and the hope that some wounds will heal with the Charles Taylor trial.

The building has tight security, with people entering having to go through several gates before they are allowed into the compound. Mongolian UN soldiers stand guard all over the compound, some of the Revolutionary

United Front (RUF) soldiers are also held here. But people are also watching the events eagerly thousands of kilometers away in the Netherlands.

Atrocities

Taylor will now have to answer for some of the atrocities that saw people's limbs being hacked off and mass rapes of women. He was arrested, taken to the International Criminal Court and faces 11 charges. Some of the charges include, terrorizing the civilian population, murder, sexual violence, which includes rape and using child soldiers.

The case started in June, but there are still some outstanding issues. A spokesperson of the court says the matter will again be heard in December and then its all systems go for the case in January. It has not been an easy case with Taylor firing his lawyers and then new lawyers demanding more time to prepare.

But Sierra Leoneans are all eager to hear the former Liberian leader's fate. Taylor will face several charges of crimes against humanity. He has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

The New People website

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

<http://www.thenewpeople.com>



JUDGE TURNS DOWN PROSECUTION'S REQUEST FOR ACCESS TO CHARLES TAYLOR'S PERSONAL ARCHIVES.

Judge Sebutinde presiding over the trial of Charles Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, has refused the prosecution's call to have unlimited and unmediated access to Charles Taylor's personal archives and files, which they think may contain incriminating evidence linking him with his alleged crimes. In a written ruling, judges said prosecutors had "not identified the information sought, nor even described it by its general nature." Charles Taylor looked relaxed in court as the judgement was passed. Taylor has since appointed a new legal team. The prosecution lacks real hard documentary evidence against Charles Taylor, but they have argued that they will get former Taylor officials to testify against him in court when trial resumes in January.

The judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone's Trial Chamber 1 comprising Justices Itoe (presiding), Thompson, and Boutet has granted a defence motion in the matter of the RUF 3 (Sesay, Kallon, and Gbao) that the prosecution disclose to the defence the unredacted statements of all witnesses and the defence further contact witnesses for follow-up interviews if they announce their intention to the witnesses. This judgment means that the defence team of the RUF 3 can directly question witnesses about their statements which the prosecution is using as the basis of its charges against the RUF 3.



Heritage (Liberia)

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

Special Court Embarks On Taylor's Trial Awareness



Former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor

OFFICIALS OF THE OUTREACH UNIT of the United Nations (UN) backed Special Court for Sierra Leone are in the country to conduct a week-long sensitization training workshop for university students, the military and police.

According to the Outreach Coordinator Patrick Fatorma, the workshop will provide basic information on the activities of the Special Court, the trial of imprisoned Liberian leader Charles Ghankay Taylor, and the promotion of the rule of law and human rights.

He disclosed that 80 university students, 100 officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), and 100 officers of the Liberia National Police (LNP) will participate in the workshop.

The sensitization workshop officially began yesterday at the St. Theresa Convent Pastoral Retreat Center in Monrovia with 40 students from the University of Liberia and 40 from the African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) participating.

Mr. Fatorma informed the Heritage that the workshop will continue on Wednesday with 100 officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia going through the process. He revealed that on Friday, the Outreach unit of the Special Court will begin a two-day training session for 100 officers of the Liberia National Police and officially closed on Saturday, November 17, 2007.

Explaining the relevance of the exercise and its expected output, Mr. Fatorma said the workshop will provide the framework for participants to embark on outreach campaign aimed at informing the Liberian people on the trial of former President Charles Taylor.

See Page 6

Lauding The Special Court's Initiative

A TEAM OF trainers from the Outreach unit of the United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, yesterday began a weeklong training workshop for university students, officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberia National Police (LNP) on the activities of the Special Court, Charles Taylor's trial, human rights and the rule of law.

THE TRAINING WHICH is ongoing at the St. Teresa Convent Pastoral Retreat Center, targets 100 AFL officers, 100 LNP officers and 80 students from the University of Liberia and African Methodist Episcopal University.

THE TRAINING, WE are told will build the participants knowledge and help them better understand the operation of the Special Court. The training will also help the participants to understand how the Special Court is proceeding with the trial of the imprisoned former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

FRANKLY, THE INITIATIVE of the Outreach unit of the Special Court, particularly so when it seeks to provide major information on the Taylor's trial, is one that needs commendation. The Outreach Unit of the Special Court must surely be commended by the Liberian people for this informative initiative which we think will provide clear understanding on the trial of Charles Taylor.

WITH THE TRAINING of these groups by the Outreach unit of the Special Court, we think much can be achieved in terms of publicity and awareness about the trial of Charles Taylor. We also think that such training initiative if continue, would erase the misconceptions that Mr. Taylor is not being treated fairly and that he is already being judged guilty.

ON THIS NOTE, we like to commend the Outreach unit of the Special Court for the initiative which in our own mind, would address the often misconceptions concerning the Taylor's trial.

Special Court

From Front Page

"A court which has the authority to prosecute heads of state and ministers must be spoken about to the Liberian people. The Liberian people need to be told that

their former head of state is considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of competent jurisdiction," Mr. Fatorma added.

By Theophilus Seson

Human Rights Watch

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Press Release

Sierra Leone: New Leader Must Combat Injustice, Corruption

President Koroma Should Adopt and Implement a Concrete Human Rights Agenda

(Dakar, November 14, 2007) – Sierra Leone’s new president, Ernest Bai Koroma, should urgently address pressing human rights concerns in Sierra Leone, particularly striking deficiencies in the judicial system and ongoing corruption, Human Rights Watch said today in a letter to the president on the eve of his inauguration.

Since the end of its 11-year civil war in 2002, Sierra Leone has made limited progress in addressing the issues that gave rise to the conflict: endemic corruption, weak rule of law, crushing poverty, and the inequitable distribution of the country’s vast natural resources.

“The people of Sierra Leone have long suffered from a vicious cycle of corruption, economic decline, violence and impunity,” said Peter Takirambudde, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. “President Koroma must articulate and implement a bold vision for improving Sierra Leone’s chronic human rights problems. There is no time to waste.”

Human Rights Watch urged Koroma to adopt a focused human rights agenda and implement concrete reforms to address persistent deficiencies within the national judicial system, deplorable prison conditions, rampant corruption, and abusive police conduct.

Human Rights Watch also called on Koroma to lead Sierra Leone to abolish the death penalty. The new president should also ensure that the country’s National Human Rights Commission is sufficiently funded and has the ability to act independently and impartially.

Human Rights Watch expressed concern about serious shortcomings within Sierra Leone’s judicial system, including extortion and bribe-taking by court officials, insufficient judicial personnel, detention of hundreds of accused for extended periods without trial, and sub-standard prison conditions. The government should begin a comprehensive review of all those currently held in pre-trial detention, provide legal counsel to indigent defendants, and ensure there is adequate prosecutorial and investigative staff (particularly in the provinces) for courts to function properly and expediently.

Also among the recommended reforms, Human Rights Watch appealed to Koroma to facilitate the work and independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission. This government institution is integral to holding corrupt government officials accountable, but it has been hampered from successfully carrying out its mandate by powerful political influences.

“Five years since the end of the armed conflict, the government has failed to stem rampant corruption, which has for decades robbed Sierra Leoneans of their basic human rights to health and education,” said Takirambudde. “The time of turning a blind eye has passed: President Koroma’s administration must face the problems of corruption head on, and take concrete steps to ensure better economic governance.”

Agence France-Presse

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

SLeone : 34 survive hovercraft shuttle fire

A hovercraft waterbus with 34 passengers on board caught fire in Sierra Leone early Tuesday morning, but nobody was injured authorities and witnesses said.

"Reportedly all 34 passengers were rescued," transport and aviation minister, Kemoh Sesay told AFP.

The hovercraft was making a regular 10-minute commuter run to the country's capital from the northern Lungi international airport town, when it ran out of fuel a few metres off Freetown's shores at around 6:15 am (GMT and local).

Eyewitnesses said a boat was sent to refuel the hovercraft and in the process, fire broke out in the engine.

The Deputy Information Minister Mohamed Koroma said "the whole incident is due to negligence on the part of management".

An inquiry has been launched into the accident.

The management of the hovercraft, which is owned by a Nigerian businessman, have not yet commented on the incident.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 13 November 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberia grants citizenship to 2,600 Sierra Leone refugees

BENSONVILLE, Liberia, Nov 13, 2007 (AFP) - Liberia is granting citizenship to 2,600 Sierra Leonean refugees who chose to stay in the country after the end of a 10-year civil war back home, a government official said on Tuesday. The refugees, who will go through a process of naturalization, started receiving portions of farmland this week being dished out at Bensonville, 60 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of the capital. Gotomo Gordon, a Liberian government official in charge of repatriation and resettlement of refugees, said the decision to resettle the refugees was taken after a voluntary repatriation programme ended in 2004. There were some who did not want to go back home for various reasons such as having married in Liberia or having lost all their families to the war back home. "And so we thought (of) ... a durable solution by facilitating their reintegration into our society," Gordon told AFP.

IMF and Liberia reach deal on reducing debt

WASHINGTON, Nov 12, 2007 (AFP) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has struck a "milestone" deal with member countries allowing it to provide debt relief to Liberia, the fund announced Monday. Member states have made pledges totaling more than 842 million dollars, the IMF said in a statement. "Today's milestone is a critical step in moving Liberia onto a path toward comprehensive debt relief," IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn said the statement. It was the first concrete achievement for the new IMF director, who took over his post on November 1. Ravaged by a decade of civil war, Liberia has a multilateral debt of 1.5 billion dollars for a total debt of 3.7 billion.

International Clips on West Africa

AP 11/13/2007 07:25:42

Sierra Leone war crimes court refuses to allow seizure of Charles Taylor's personal archive

THE HAGUE, Netherlands _ Judges in the war crimes trial of Charles Taylor have refused to allow the seizure of the Liberian president's personal archive, despite the possibility that it contains documents implicating Taylor in atrocities in Sierra Leone. At a hearing Tuesday at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde said prosecutors had given no valid reason for the documents to be seized.

Prosecution appeals for stiffer terms for jailed ex-rebel chiefs

FREETOWN, Nov 12, 2007 (AFP) - Prosecutors at the UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone on Monday lodged an appeal seeking to lengthen the sentences of three ex-rebel chiefs already jailed for between 45 and 50 years. The appeals hearing opened on Monday with Christopher Staker, who is leading the prosecution insisting heavier terms would "reflect their additional criminal liability". In July the court jailed Tamba Brima, 35, and Santigie Borbor Kanu, 42, to 50 years and Brima Kamara, 39, to 45 years. Then the prosecution had asked for between 50 and 60 years for each of the convicts.

VOA 11/13/2007 04:05:49

Ivory Coast: Ivory Coast Government dismisses travel warnings

The ministry of tourism in Ivory Coast says it disagrees with warnings issued by many Western nations advising against all but essential travel to the country. The ministry says although full reconciliation has yet to occur, Ivory Coast is peaceful. It says revenue generated from tourism could help boost the country's economy, which has suffered from years of conflict. Phillip Wellman reports for VOA from Abidjan At the Hotel Ivorian in Abidjan, three tourists are playing a game of ten-pin bowling. They are the only customers this evening, which does not surprise the bowling lanes' manager, who says many people are afraid to come to Ivory Coast following the country's brief civil war five years ago.

Local Media – Newspaper

Telecommunications Regulators Shut Down Illegal Service Provider

(The News, New Democrat, Heritage, National Chronicle, The Analyst, Daily Observer and The Inquirer)

- The Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) has shut down the West African Telecommunications Incorporated (WAT) for allegedly operating without a legal frequency in the country.
- Addressing a news conference yesterday, the Chairman of the Authority, Mr. Albert Bropleh said the doors of WAT were sealed because the LTA had warned WAT against operating in the absence of a legally issued frequency but said WAT had ignored the caution and continued to operate illegally.
- He said the license granted the WAT in 2005 requires it to obtain a frequency from the regulator to facilitate the installation and operation of a fixed wireless network.

Executive Mansion Asks Squatters to Give way to Road Works

(New Democrat and The News)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has issued a stern warning to squatters around Monrovia to immediately move their structures or risk demolition by government. The President's warning comes as government embarks on the construction and rehabilitation of major roads in the country.
- Rehabilitation works have already begun in some parts of the city where makeshift structures have been demolished. Presidential Press Secretary, Cyrus Badio told reporters Monday that President Sirleaf does not want anything to hinder the rehabilitation process and as such those concerned should act quickly.

Statistics Institute Calls on the Media to Promote National Census

(The Informer and The News)

- The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information (LISGIS) says a National Housing and Population Census would be conducted in March 2008 which would be the first in 23 years since Liberia last conducted population and housing census in 1984.
- The Director General of LISGIS, Dr. Edward Liberty made the disclosure Monday at a one-day workshop organized for media editors in the country. Dr. Liberty called on the media and the public to support the initiative intended to collect data on key sectors of the national life.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

Former Speaker Snowe Says he would not succumb to In-house Probe

- Correspondents said that the former Speaker of the House of Representatives Edwin Snowe insists he would not succumb to an in-house probe of a bribery allegation he levied against some of his colleagues in January, but welcomed the call by United States Ambassador Donald Booth for an independent probe.

- Former Speaker Snowe accused some of his colleagues of receiving US\$5,000 each as bribe from an unknown source to remove him as House Speaker.
- Former Speaker Snowe dismissed claims by current House Speaker Alex Tyler that no evidence was available to conduct a probe. Instead, he said that he had an abundant of evidence which he has already submitted to the entire membership of the House of Representatives, the US Embassy, the media and other groups which an independent panel could use in its investigation.
- For his part, River Gee Representative Elijah Sieh who was one of the ringleaders in the campaign to remove Mr. Snowe as Speaker said that he backed calls for the bribery allegation to be investigated and asked Snowe to cooperate with investigators by providing proper evidence to prosecute the case.

(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY FM and Truth FM)

Government Unveils Draft National Health Policy Thursday

- According to the Deputy Minister of Health and Chief Medical Officer of Liberia, Dr. Bernice Dahn, the Government will Thursday unveil the draft National Health Policy and Plan at the start of a two-day National Health Fair organized by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in collaboration with its partners.
- Dr. Dahn told Radio Veritas that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf would officially open the Fair which is an opportunity to reach to the public about the basic package of available health services and create awareness on various health issues such as holding seminars and showcase issues on HIV/AIDS prevention, TB and Leprosy control, rational use of drugs, mental health and community contribution, environmental health and family health programmes.

(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY FM and Truth FM)

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.

BBC Online

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Ex-Khmer Rouge leader in hospital

By **Guy Delauney**

BBC News, Phnom Penh

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has arranged for former Khmer Rouge head of state Khieu Samphan to be airlifted to hospital.

Family members say they believe Khieu Samphan suffered a stroke at his home in Pailin, near the Thai border.

It had been expected that he would be the next senior figure to be charged by the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal.

The tribunal was established to seek justice for the hundreds of thousands of victims of the brutal Maoist regime.

Denials

Khieu Samphan's arrest was apparently only days away and it would have completed the tribunal's initial round-up of senior leaders.

Now officials at the special courts must decide whether ill health will force a change to their plans.

Prime Minister Hun Sen stepped in personally after he heard reports that Khieu Samphan was unwell.

He said he ordered the airlift so that no-one could blame the government if the former Khmer Rouge head of state died.

WHO WERE THE KHMER ROUGE?

Maoist regime that ruled Cambodia from 1975-1979

Founded and led by Pol Pot, who died in 1998

Abolished religion, schools and currency in a bid to create agrarian utopia

Brutal regime that did not tolerate dissent

More than a million people thought to have died from starvation, overwork or execution

Brutal Khmer Rouge regime

More than one million Cambodians died when the Khmer Rouge held power in the late 1970s.

But Khieu Samphan has always denied responsibility, despite his senior position.

He has written books claiming that he had no real power and knew nothing about the killings, the latest of which was published this week.

Four senior Khmer Rouge figures are already in custody at the special courts.

Former foreign minister Ieng Sary and his wife, the social affairs minister Ieng Thirith, were arrested on Monday. They are appealing against their detention.



Khieu Samphan was a key figure in the Khmer Rouge leadership

Voice of America

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

Former Secretaries Albright and Cohen To Chair Genocide Task Force

By Cindy Saine
Washington

A group of former U.S. officials and lawmakers has launched a task force to draw up a list of practical recommendations for responding to threats of genocide and mass killings. The group is headed by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Defense Secretary William Cohen. Both served under President Bill Clinton. VOA's Cindy Saine reports from Washington.



Man at the "genocide cemetery" of Kigali, Rwanda (file photo)

Secretary Albright and Secretary Cohen served in an administration that grappled with genocide in Rwanda and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. At a news conference in Washington Tuesday, Ms. Albright said genocide cannot be stopped by simply pledging "never again."

"The world for a long time has said that genocide is unacceptable. And yet genocide continues, and mass killings continue. And our challenge basically is to match the words with deeds and actions to stop these kinds of unacceptable acts," she said.

The task force was formed by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the American Academy of Diplomacy and the United States Institute of Peace. Members of the group also include former Republican Senator and Ambassador to the United Nations John Danforth, former Democratic Senator Tom Daschle, and former head of the U.S. Central Command, Retired General Anthony Zinni. The group plans to draw up a list of guidelines by December 2008 to present to the new U.S. administration that takes office in January 2009.

Secretary Albright said the task force was, in part, born out of frustration at the ongoing crisis in Sudan's Darfur region. "Watching Darfur, I think, is one of the things that has led us all to say, okay, let's give this another try to see if there are some guidelines. And if, speaking of the United States government, if there is some way to organize ourselves better to deal with it, in terms of early intelligence information, or the deployment of certain kinds of negotiators and diplomats," she said.

Former Defense Secretary William Cohen pointed out that modern technology prevents us from saying we are not aware of what is taking place. "Because we live in this age of information, we can no longer claim that we're in a state of bliss. Ignorance is not bliss. We can no longer live in a state of denial or willful indifference. And so the purpose of this task force is to look to the past to be sure, but to look forward to say what are the signs, what are the options that will be available to the United States as one of the leading forces to help shape multilateral action," he said.

Secretary Cohen said the U.S. failure to intervene in Rwanda was not a high point in the country's history. But he said he was proud to serve on the genocide prevention task force with Secretary Albright, because she took the lead in calling for U.S. intervention to stop the massacre of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

He said the task force will focus on the future to prevent atrocities from happening again.

Agence France Presse

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

UN envoy says Somali war crime suspects should face ICC

NAIROBI (AFP) — A United Nations envoy on Tuesday said Somali war crimes suspects should be prosecuted at the international Criminal Court in order to end impunity in the lawless African nation.

"People perpetuating crimes and violence are not being challenged before the International Criminal Court," said Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the UN secretary general's special envoy to Somalia.

"I think the time has come to see what international justice can do to help Somalis," he told a press conference in Nairobi, where he became the first top UN envoy to make such a call for trials before the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal.

Ould-Abdallah said investigations in Somalia should really go back to 1991 when dictator Mohamed Siad Barre was ousted, touching off power struggles that have defied numerous attempts to restore stability, but the ICC can only take up cases since it started work in July 2002.

"I believe in justice (in order to avoid) to avoid impunity," said the envoy, three days after after holding talks with President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed.

The call comes amid fresh bout of clashes between Ethiopian-backed Somali forces and Islamists in Mogadishu that have claimed dozens of lives and displacing at least 170,000 others.

"Somalis deserve a minimum of justice," he said. "So, may be now, no investigation is being done but one day this investigation may be done as it has been in other conflicts," he said.

"Why can't Somalis make an internal effort to be like Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone (countries that have emerged from conflict). Where are the patriotic Somalis to ask why can't we have peace like Angola, Mozambique?" said Ould-Abdallah.

In April, a European Union envoy asked Brussels to investigate whether Ethiopian and Somali forces committed war crimes in their recent crackdown on Islamist and clan insurgents in Mogadishu.

The EU envoy in Kenya, Eric van der Linden, urged his EU headquarters in Brussels to see whether "indiscriminate use of force in heavily populated areas amounted to war crimes".

The envoy was referring to an April assault in which Ethiopian soldiers wrestled final control of the Somali capital from the Islamist militants after a bloody campaign that claimed hundreds of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands.

The Hague-based ICC on Tuesday announced a trial date for May next year for one of two warlords from the Democratic Republic of Congo currently detained in the city and has also indicted five Ugandan rebel commanders for war crimes.

Ethiopia sent thousands of troops into Somalia last year to help its government topple an Islamist movement that briefly controlled much of the country and is accused by Washington of links to Al-Qaeda.

Since then, hit-and-run attacks by remnant Islamist fighters have shaken Mogadishu.

The Sun

Wednesday, 14 November 2007

Angelina calls for war crimes trials

ACTRESS Angelina Jolie is a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations and is just back from Chad after meeting refugees from the genocidal war in the Darfur region of neighbouring Sudan. There Arab militias armed by the Sudanese government have been killing Christian and spirit-worshipping blacks.

Angelina reports on what she found in new book *The World In 2008*, published by *The Economist* magazine today.

In it, the Hollywood heroine says she believes the cycle of violence can be stopped, writes TIM SPANTON.

SITTING with a group of refugees in a camp, the Tomb Raider star asked them what they needed.

She says: "These were people who had seen family members killed, neighbours raped, their villages burned and looted, their entire communities driven from their land.

"So it was no surprise when people began listing the things that could improve their lives just a little bit.



Victims of war ... Darfur's children (Getty)

"Better tents, said one. Better access to medical facilities, said another.

"Then a teenage boy raised his hand and said with powerful simplicity: 'We want a trial.' "

A trial might seem a distant and abstract notion to a young man for whom the inside of a courtroom is worlds away from the inside of a refugee camp.

But, for Angelina, his statement showed a recognition of something elemental – that accountability is perhaps the only force powerful enough to break the cycle of violence that marks so many conflicts.

She says: "I believe 2008 can be the year in which we begin seeking true accountability and demanding justice for the victims in Darfur and elsewhere.

"Through accountability we can begin the process of righting past wrongs.

Convicted

“We can even change the behaviour of some of the world’s worst criminals.”

Angelina says that international trials for killers in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda have shown the way.

Heads of state and generals have been convicted for genocide and crimes against humanity.

The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has already sentenced three former leaders of a pro-government militia to jail for war crimes committed during the country’s civil war in the Nineties.

In Cambodia, the joint UN-Cambodian court to try top former Khmer Rouge leaders with war crimes and crimes against humanity has begun calling witnesses. Angelina says we should make no mistake that the existence of these trials changes behaviour.

Five years ago, she visited the Ituri region of Congo, formerly known as Zaire. She says: “It was there that Germain Katanga’s reign of terror had been most intense.

“Our group attended a meeting of rebel leaders. They had gathered in a field to discuss the prospects for a peace agreement, which were not looking very good.

“The conversation turned hostile and the situation grew extremely tense.

“At that point one of my colleagues asked for the name of one of the rebels, announcing, perhaps a bit recklessly, that he was going to pass it along to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

“His words had a remarkable effect – the rebel leader’s whole posture changed from aggression to conciliation.

“The very existence of the ICC was enough to intimidate a man who had been terrorising the population for years.”

Angelina says that this is not an isolated example and she believes that accountability has the potential to change behaviour.

She adds: “When crimes against humanity are punished consistently and severely, the killers’ calculations will change. My hope is that these examples of justice in the name of accountability will be just a few of the many to come.

“I hope the Sudanese government will hand over the government minister and the militia leader who have been indicted for war crimes by the ICC. I hope the teenager I met in Chad will get to see the trial he seeks.

“Despite the horror I have seen in my travels, the hopeful lesson I take is that we can begin to put an end to the cycle of violence that gives rise to war criminals and sets forth floods of refugees.”