

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Monday, 14 September 2009

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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"Taylor Killed Sam Bockarie"

Prosecution Reveals

The Defence Team of Charles Taylor on Thursday continued its attack on the

credibility of the testimonies of the Prosecution evidence at-
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Taylor Killed Sam Bockarie

From front page

tacked by the Defence blamed Sam Bockarie's death on Charles Taylor. Prosecution evidence is that the RUF and Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL were inseparable. Mr. Taylor described the prosecution allegations as nonsensical.

A Protected Prosecution Witness alleged last year that Charles Taylor ordered the execution of Former RUF Leader Sam Bockarie and his entire family. The witness said Sam Bockarie was killed with the intent to destroy the secret of Mr. Taylor's involvement and support to the RUF Rebels.

On Thursday, Mr. Taylor vehemently dismissed the allegation. The Prosecution Witness said in 1990 Foday Sankoh recruited the first group of RUF Fighters from Kakata which was controlled by Taylor's NPFL.

Mr. Taylor told the court that he was not aware of any recruitment by Foday Sankoh in Liberia. The Prosecution evidence fur-

ther indicated that Foday Sankoh received support from Mr. Charles Taylor for the invasion of Sierra Leone.

The witness said the RUF received arms, food and Medicare from Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor said he didn't know the beneficiaries of food distributed by his men.

An American Journalist Stephen Smith alleged in his testimonies that Taylor's defunct NPFL was a senior brother to the Foday Sankoh's RUF.

Mr. Smith said Mr. Taylor dictated all the tactics used by Foday Sankoh to launch the rebel war in Sierra Leone. Mr. Smith claimed that Mr. Sankoh lived in Monrovia in 1990 and got support from Mr. Taylor before travelling to Sierra Leone with his war campaign.

Mr. Taylor said it was not possible for Mr. Sankoh to have lived in Monrovia in 1990.

Also read this story on www.exclusivepress.net

Taylor denies killing Sam Bockarie

By Alpha Sesay

Ex-Liberia president, Charles Taylor has denied ordering the assassination of one of Sierra Leone's top rebel commanders during

the country's civil war, and dismissed as "lies" allegations that he knew Sierra Leonean rebels were recruiting fighters in Liberia in areas controlled

Contd. Page 3



Sam Bockarie ... his death is being blamed on Taylor

Taylor denies killing Sam Bockarie

From page 1

by his own fighting forces.

In a day of testimony focused on refuting prosecution witness testimony against him, Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone "I did not order the killing of Sam Bockarie."

He was responding to the testimony of the 37th prosecution witness, a Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insider and mining commander who testified under protective measures, using the pseudonym TFI-367. In his testimony from August 20 to September 1 2008, witness TFI-367 explained that a relative of Sam Bockarie's wife had told him that Taylor ordered the assassination of the RUF commander and his entire family because he (Taylor) was concerned that Bockarie knew too much about his involvement with the RUF. In order to protect such information, Bockarie and his entire family had to be killed.

In his response, Mr. Taylor said "it is the silliest thing that I have heard. What will Bockarie have to say about me? That I was giving arms to RUF? If this is true, he would have said so to Foday Sankoh when he returned from custody in 1999." "What is there to hide that he would not have told his boss, that I will have to kill him for many years later?" Mr. Taylor asked.

Several prosecution witnesses have testified that when RUF leader Foday Sankoh was detained in Nigeria in 1997, he gave orders to Sam Bockarie that all diamonds mined on behalf of the RUF were to be handed over to Taylor for safe keeping. Witnesses also said that Sankoh told RUF commanders to take all orders from Mr. Taylor.

In his testimony, Taylor questioned why Bockarie had not mentioned anything in his report to Mr. Sankoh about diamonds given to, or orders received from, Taylor after Sankoh's release in 1999.

"Except they were ungrateful people but he [Bockarie] would have told Sankoh. As a good commander on the ground, he is supposed to give a full report to his boss," Mr. Taylor said.

He also refuted witness TFI-367's testimony that RUF leader Foday Sankoh was recruiting fighters for the RUF in National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) controlled territories in Liberia and that Sankoh was making public pronouncements in Liberia about Taylor's support to the RUF.

The witness claimed that he was personally recruited by Sankoh in Liberia and that he was trained alongside other RUF commanders like Issa Sesay and Morris Kallon at Camp Nama in Liberia. Taylor dismissed the witness' claims as lies.

"I have no knowledge of Sankoh's recruitment in Liberia. I was not even aware that Sankoh was in Liberia, not to talk about recruiting there. There is no way Sankoh would have been in Liberia in 1990 and speaking my name publicly there. I did not know that there was a Foday Sankoh training Sierra Leoneans at Camp Nama and planning to invade Sierra Leone," he said.

Also in his testimony today, Taylor made efforts to refute the testimony of the 42nd prosecution witness, Stephen Smith, an American professor who worked as a journalist in West Africa and has written extensively about issues in the region.

In his testimony on September 22 and 23 2008, Mr. Smith testified that the conflict in Sierra

Leone was fuelled by the conflict in Liberia and that the same faces could be identified in Mr. Taylor's NPFL and Sankoh's RUF. "It felt like a regional war that was spreading out like a regional cancer," Mr. Smith said in his testimony in 2008.

Dismissing Smith's claims that the war was like a regional war, Taylor told the judges today that "I don't accept that at all. If we say so, then it should have gone to Guinea or Ivory Coast. Why didn't the war in Mozambique spur conflicts in other countries?"

Taylor dismissed Smith's work as a "one man workshop." Smith, he said "wrote a lot of nonsense across the African continent."

Taylor also said that Smith had traveled to Liberia at the start of the conflict in order to locate Americans who were in the country. He said that the NPFL had instructions from the United States to protect Smith, which the NPFL did. He said that Smith did not travel to Sierra Leone and that by the end of 1990 to early 1991, Smith was escorted out of Liberia by NPFL rebels through the Liberian border with Ivory Coast.

The RUF, Taylor said invaded Sierra Leone in March 1991, by which time, he said, Smith was already out of the country.

"He got his facts all mixed up.

I don't see how he could have spoken about something that had not happened. I mean, there was no war in Sierra Leone then," Taylor said.

Taylor dismissed Mr. Smith's entire report, saying that "It is very immature of him to speak in such loose terms. This is not a language of a journalist. This is a language of an intelligence analyst."

Taylor's testimony continues on Monday.

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Taylor

Refutes

Prosecution

Testimony



Charles Taylor yesterday made efforts to refute a prosecution witness' claim that Mr. Taylor was part of a common plan to destabilize West Africa.

Between February 8 to 11 2008, the Prosecution's eleventh witness, a Gambian named Suwandi Camara, testified that that Mr. Taylor, together with Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader

Standard Times
Monday, 14 September 2009

Reflection

TAYLOR SAYS PROSECUTION ALLEGATION IS NONSENSICAL

The Defence Team of Charles Taylor on Thursday continued its attack on the credibility of the testimonies of Prosecution Witnesses. One of the Prosecution evidence attacked by the Defence blamed Sam Bockarie's death on Charles Taylor. Prosecution evidence is that the RUF and Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL were inseparable.

Mr. Taylor described the prosecution allegations as nonsensical. John Kollie sent this report from The Hague for the BBC World Service Trust...A Protected Prosecution Witness alleged last year that Charles Taylor ordered the execution of Former RUF Leader Sam Bockarie and his entire family. The witness said Sam Bockarie was killed with the intent to destroy the secret of Mr. Taylor's involvement and support to the RUF Rebels.

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the court that he was not aware of any recruitment by Foday Sankoh in Liberia. The Prosecution evidence further indicated that Foday Sankoh received support from Mr. Charles Taylor for the invasion of Sierra Leone. The witness said the RUF received arms, food and Medicare from Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor said he didn't know the beneficiaries of food distributed by his men.

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The Senator

Monday, 14 September 2009

Reparation is the Hallmark to Reconciliation

By Abdul Kposowa

Due to the eleven year rebel war that was unleashed on the people of Sierra Leone by some of our own compatriots, no man born of woman with his or her right senses will ever dare to imagine a repeat of the destructive and terrible carnage that was inflicted on the defenseless citizens of this beloved nation.

SERIOUS

So if we as a nation are serious and very determined to say "no" to any resurgence of that sad chapter of our country, we have a task at hand to sound the early warning signals, whether there is the political will or not.

But for a gentle reminder, the destructive war in Sierra Leone has not only left the country completely devastated and its economy ruined, but also succeeded in inflicting pain and untold suffering on the masses.

REBEL

The rebel insurgents amputated limbs, sexually molested our women folk and young girls, now, most of them aimlessly parade the streets begging or are involved in one crime or another. After a careful investigation of the plight of these women and girls who happened to be victims, the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) came up with recommendations, which if thoroughly implemented would help improve their conditions. The recommendations among others called for reparations to be made to war victims and the setting up of a War Victim's Fund.

The unimaginable brutality of violations committed against up to one third of Sierra Leonean women and girls has drawn this writer's attention to properly address the issues of reparation as a crucial component in bringing lasting peace and sustainable development to Sierra Leone.

The government of Sierra Leone delegated responsibility to the National Commission for Social Action for its programs. In fact, it was only recently that the National Steering Committee of the Peace Building Fund approved around \$3 million to support the reparation program.

VICTIMS

What are not clear to many, including the war victims, is who is going to benefit from this lump sum and how soon the beneficiaries will start to claim their benefits.

Other organizations have also been wondering why the victims who suffered the brunt of the war are not treated with utmost concern.

Even though in my opinion government has failed to effectively address the physical, psychological and economic impact of these crimes on the survivors, without justice,

recognition of the crimes, effective programmes to ensure their rehabilitation, help to rebuild their lives or steps being taken to ensure that they are protected from future crimes, the suffering of the women and girls continues unabated.

SURVIVE

The writer has taken the pain to interview many women and girls who were victims as to how they survive on a daily basis. For most of them, the sexual violence that they went through was not a one off event, but rather a violation that has caused them continued hardship in the absence of comprehensive measures to deal with it.

Along with the sexual violence they suffered at the hands of these rebel war bandits, some women have faced stigma, isolation, and exclusion by members of their families. Furthermore, good people that might want to come to their aid within their respective communities have been absent.

As a result of this, many have had difficulty accessing food, shelter, work and healthcare. Though quite recently the intervention of a few humanitarian agencies, like Mercy Ship, the Shepard's Hospice at Lower Allen Town, are currently providing for these women by giving medical treatment, the majority of these victims are still languishing in suffering and pain.

The unabated discrimination they faced has become a stumbling block on their way to being reintegrated into their very society. Some of these women and girls have expressed a desire for justice and meaningful reparations however this is not out of revenge. They want something that can enable them to become economically independent so that they can begin to re-establish their lives free from fear, stigma, rejection, and discrimination.

However, if this is the case, then one would be tempted to ask where these concepts of reparations come from. Within the Sierra Leonean context one may be tempted to date it back to the TRC Report of 2004, however, this not the origin.

PRINCIPAL

The principal of reparation dates back to the lexation of the Hebrew scripture and before the Norman Conquest, Anglo-Saxon Courts in England also contained this principal. Furthermore, under the English legal system, judges must consider making compensation order as part of the sentence for a crime.

Section 130 of the powers of court (Sentencing) Act 2000 requires the courts to explain their reasoning if they do not issue compensation order. This writer is not au fait with the judgment at the Special Court if the judges did make any room for the payment of

compensation to the victims, especially to our women folk who suffered severally in the hands of those gun-toters.

In jurisprudence, reparation of a previously inflicted loss by the criminal to the victim in the form of monetary restitution is common. Usually, reparation is the making amends for a wrong or injury done - reparation for an injustice done to an innocent person who did not deserve to be treated the way they were treated, as was the treatment meted to the women of this nation. Up to date, no one individual has openly shown remorse for the crime they did not commit, nor has any single perpetrator made a public apology.

COMPLEX

In order to address the complex social and individualistic impact of sexual abuse, the reparation must be paid for in a context that seeks to prevent future violence, addresses the deep seated discrimination against women, empowers them to promote equality, and improves political participation and the general status of women in our society.

It has been revealed by well-placed personalities, both inside and outside the situation, that the eleven-year rebel war created many more victims by reducing the dignity of mankind. This is a human rights concern because human rights campaigners are fighting to redeem the dignity of 'man' in this global trend of improving the status of women.

HUMANITY

All victims and survivors of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws are entitled to justice and reparations. However, it may not seem to be a reality for Sierra Leoneans though the Special Court has tried and convicted some of those who bear the greatest responsibility in the recently concluded rebel war.

This piece is strategically directed on reparations for survivors of sexual abuse, which mainly affects women and girls from both Freetown and the more remote areas of our society.

SOCIAL

The Lawyers Centre for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA) has carefully examined the social and individual effects of sexual violence, the failure of the government to take measures to address its impacts, and the need for the government to implement a comprehensive, effective, and efficient recommendation to the TRC, as reparation is the hallmark to reconciliation.

*-The author is a senior staff at
Lawyers' Centre for Legal Assistance*

Cotton Tree News

Saturday, 12 September 2009

Sierra Leonean becomes Acting Prosecutor of the Special Court

Written by Mariama Khai Fornah



The Secretary-General of the United Nations has named the Deputy Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara as the Acting Prosecutor of the Court. Mr. Kamara's appointment followed the resignation of the Prosecutor Stephen Rapp who has been appointed as

Ambassador at Large for War Crimes in the US State Department.

He will serve as acting prosecutor until a new prosecutor is appointed. Mr. Kamara joined the Office of the Prosecutor in January 2004, and a year later he was called upon to lead the prosecution team in the Civil Defence Force case as Senior Trial Attorney. He was named Deputy Prosecutor in August 2008. Mr. Kamara is the first Sierra Leonean to act as prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Taylor Rebuts Prosecution Evidence About His Role in Sierra Leone Conflict

By Alpha Sesay

Charles Taylor this week made efforts to refute the evidence of key prosecution witnesses against him, including allegations that he made a pact with Sierra Leone's rebel leader to help each other in their respective wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. He also rebuffed as "lies" prosecution evidence that he ordered the execution of a key Sierra Leonean rebel commander or that he had a common plan with Sierra Leonean and Gambian rebel leaders to destabilize West Africa.

On Monday, Mr. Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone that he did not did not have any pact with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels to help each other out with their respective wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

"I had no pact with RUF leader Foday Sankoh for mutual assistance. That could not have been necessary," Mr. Taylor said during his trial in The Hague.

Mr. Taylor asserted that if such mutual pact ever existed between himself and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Foday Sankoh, the prosecution would have led evidence to show the assistance that Mr. Sankoh rendered to Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL).

"There has been no evidence in this court about Sankoh being involved in the conflict in Liberia or commanding an NPFL post. There was no such thing because I did not know him at this time," he said.

Mr. Taylor was responding to questions from his defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, about allegations that while in Libya in the late 1980s, Mr. Taylor entered into an agreement with Mr. Sankoh for the RUF rebels to assist the NPFL during its initial war efforts in Liberia in exchange for Mr. Taylor's assistance to the RUF in attacking Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor denied that this was ever the case. The accused former president reiterated his earlier position that while he was in Libya, he did not know about the existence of the RUF and that he did not meet with Mr. Sankoh.

"I did not know about the creation of the RUF in 1989. I did not know Foday Sankoh. I only knew Alie Kabbah and the Sierra Leone Pan African Movement," he said.

On Tuesday, Mr. Taylor said that he did not order or know about an infamous operation launched by rebel forces in Sierra Leone during its civil war aiming to ensure that anything that had life must be killed.

"I was not aware of 'Operation No Living Thing'," Mr. Taylor said.

During the presentation of the prosecution's case, witnesses testified that Mr. Taylor worked in concert with RUF and Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) rebels to plan "Operation No Living Thing" against the Sierra Leonean population.

"I did not instruct anybody to launch such an operation. I had no control over anybody in Sierra Leone. There is no way that I would be in control or even acquiesce in any type of situation of this sort when throughout the revolution in Liberia we never had these kinds of atrocities, so this is impossible," Mr. Taylor said.

On Wednesday and Thursday, Mr. Taylor focused on refuting the testimonies of key prosecution witnesses who testified that he had plans to destabilize West Africa and that he ordered the execution of RUF Commander Sam Bockarie for fear that Mr. Bockarie had too much knowledge of his involvement with the RUF — information which the witnesses said Mr. Taylor was determined to protect.

Between February 8 to 11 2008, the Prosecution's eleventh witness, a Gambian named Suwandi Camara, testified that that Mr. Taylor, together with RUF leader Foday Sankoh, and a Gambian rebel leader named Dr. Manning, met

in Burkina Faso and developed a common plan to destabilize West Africa. The witness also testified that Mr. Taylor recruited and armed children under the age of 15 years. (Mr. Camara was a linkage witness who said he was trained alongside Mr. Taylor in Libya and later became part of Mr. Taylor's Special Security Service (SSS)).

In his testimony on Wednesday, Mr. Taylor denied ever knowing the Suwandi Camara and dismissed as "lies" the witness' claims that Mr. Taylor had plans to destabilize West Africa.

"There was no such thing like this that occurred," Mr. Taylor said.

Asked by Mr. Griffiths whether he did "coordinate such a movement with Dr. Manning and Foday Sankoh," Mr. Taylor said no. He elaborated that "there was not one Sierra Leonean, not one Sierra Leonean in Burkina Faso. The only people that were in Burkina Faso were the Gambians and Dr. Manning had come to Burkina Faso not along with the Liberian group."

In his testimony in February, Witness Camara claimed that he was a training instructor for the NPFL at the Gbartala training base in Liberia and that under his command, the NPFL recruited and trained young children who were under the age of 15 years. Mr. Taylor told the judges that "that was a blatant lie and there will be witnesses to prove that it is a lie."

Explaining the role that children played in NPFL territory, Mr. Taylor said "people that were under the age of 18 were not trained as military personnel in the NPFL. They were family members associated with soldiers that helped to take care of them in their home, cooking for them, but they were not recruits of the NPFL. They did not have any command structure. If you have a bigger brother, you follow him, you were with him, but there was no fixed command structure of any group calling themselves SBU[Small Boys Unit]."

The prosecution has alleged that Mr. Taylor maintained a relationship with RUF rebels throughout the conflicts in both Sierra Leone and Liberia. Together with the RUF's leader, Foday Sankoh, Mr. Taylor allegedly developed a common plan to wage war against the people and government of Sierra Leone. Prosecution witnesses have testified to the pattern of operations in Mr. Taylor's NPFL such as the use of child soldiers called SBUs, and have related the same patterns in the RUF where the child combatants were also called SBUs. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations.

On Thursday, Mr. Taylor said he did not order the the assassination of one of Sierra Leone's top rebel commanders during the country's civil war, and dismissed as "lies" allegations that he knew that Sierra Leonean rebels were recruiting fighters in Liberia in areas controlled by Mr. Taylor's own fighting force.

Mr. Taylor was responding to the testimony of the 37th Prosecution Witness, an RUF insider and mining commander who testified under protective measures, using the pseudonym TFI-367. In his testimony from August 20 to September 1 2008, Witness TFI-367 explained that a relative of Sam Bockarie's wife had told him that Mr. Taylor ordered the assassination of the RUF commander and his entire family because Mr. Taylor was concerned that Mr. Bockarie knew too much about his involvement with the RUF. In order to protect such information, Mr. Bockarie and his entire family had to be killed.

In his response on Thursday, Mr. Taylor said that "it is the silliest thing that I have heard. What will Bockarie have to say about me? That I was giving arms to RUF? If this is true, he would have said so to Foday Sankoh when he returned from custody in 1999."

"What is there to hide that he would not have told his boss, that I will have to kill him for many years later?" Mr. Taylor asked.

"I did not order the killing of Sam Bockarie," he maintained.

Several prosecution witnesses have testified that when RUF leader Foday Sankoh was detained in Nigeria in 1997, he gave orders to Sam Bockarie that all diamonds mined on behalf of the RUF were to be handed over to Mr. Taylor for safe keeping. Witnesses also said that Mr. Sankoh told RUF commanders to take all orders from Mr. Taylor.

In his testimony, Mr. Taylor questioned why Mr. Bockarie had not mentioned anything in his report to Mr. Sankoh about diamonds given to, or orders received from, Mr. Taylor after Mr. Sankoh's release in 1999.

"Except they were ungrateful people but he [Bockarie] would have told Sankoh. As a good commander on the ground, he is supposed to give a full report to his boss," Mr. Taylor said.

Mr. Taylor also refuted Witness TF1-367's testimony that RUF leader Foday Sankoh was recruiting fighters for the RUF in NPFL controlled territories in Liberia and that Mr. Sankoh was making public pronouncements in Liberia about Mr. Taylor's support to the RUF. The witness claimed that he was personally recruited by Mr. Sankoh in Liberia and that he was trained alongside other RUF commanders like Issa Sesay and Morris Kallon at Camp Nama in Liberia. Mr. Taylor dismissed the witness' claims as lies.

"I have no knowledge of Sankoh's recruitment in Liberia. I was not even aware that Sankoh was in Liberia, not to talk about recruiting there. There is no way Sankoh would have been in Liberia in 1990 and speaking my name publicly there. I did not know that there was a Foday Sankoh training Sierra Leoneans at Camp Nama and planning to invade Sierra Leone," he said.

Witness TFI-367 had also testified that Mr. Taylor supplied the RUF with arms and ammunition, food and medical supplies. In his testimony on Thursday, Mr. Taylor vehemently denied this allegation, saying that "I Charles Ghankay Taylor never authorized any food or weapons or whatever say, take this to Foday Sankoh for his men, never did."

Also in his testimony on Thursday, Mr. Taylor made efforts to refute the testimony of the 42nd Prosecution Witness, Stephen Smith, an American professor who worked as a journalist in West Africa and has written extensively about issues in the region.

In his testimony on September 22 and 23 2008, Mr. Smith testified that the conflict in Sierra Leone was fuelled by the conflict in Liberia and that the same faces could be identified in Mr. Taylor's NPFL and Mr. Sankoh's RUF. "It felt like a regional war that was spreading out like a regional cancer," Mr. Smith said in his testimony in 2008.

Dismissing Mr. Smith's claims that the war was like a regional war, Mr. Taylor told the judges that "I don't accept that at all. If we say so, then it should have gone to Guinea or Ivory Coast. Why didn't the war in Mozambique spur conflicts in other countries?"

Mr. Taylor also dismissed Mr. Smith's assertions that RUF leader Foday Sankoh lived in Monrovia in 1990 before invading Sierra Leone in 1991.

"Foday Sankoh is in Monrovia before he goes to Sierra Leone. What does that say? Its total nonsense," he said.

Mr. Taylor said that his NPFL rebels never totally controlled Monrovia throughout the Liberian civil war and it would therefore not have been possible for him to host the RUF leader in Monrovia in 1990.

Mr. Taylor is responding to allegations that he provided support for RUF rebels in Sierra Leone through the supply of arms and ammunition in return for diamonds. The prosecution also alleges that Mr. Taylor gave direct orders to RUF commanders and that through his acts or omissions, he bears responsibility for the crimes committed by RUF rebels in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor has denied all these allegations. He is presently testifying as a witness in his own defense at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor's testimony resumes again on Monday

Thursday, 10 September 2009

John Kollie

The Defence Team of Charles Taylor on Thursday continued its attack on the credibility of the testimonies of Prosecution Witnesses. One of the Prosecution evidence attacked by the Defence blamed Sam Bockarie's death on Charles Taylor. Prosecution evidence is that the RUF and Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL were inseparable. Mr. Taylor described the prosecution allegations as nonsensical. John Kollie transcribes reports from The Hague for the BBC World Service Trust...

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On Thursday, Mr. Taylor vehemently dismissed the allegation. The Prosecution Witness said in 1990 Foday Sankoh recruited the first group of RUF Fighters from Kakata which was controlled by Taylor's NPFL.

Mr. Taylor told the court that he was not aware of any recruitment by Foday Sankoh in Liberia. The Prosecution evidence further indicated that Foday Sankoh received support from Mr. Charles Taylor for the invasion of Sierra Leone.

The witness said the RUF received arms, food and Medicare from Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor said he didn't know the beneficiaries of food distributed by his men. An American Journalist Stephen Smith alleged in his testimonies that Taylor's defunct NPFL was a senior brother to the Foday Sankoh's RUF.

Mr. Smith said Mr. Taylor dictated all the tactics used by Foday Sankoh to launch the rebel war in Sierra Leone. Mr. Smith claimed that Mr. Sankoh lived in Monrovia in 1990 and got support from Mr. Taylor before travelling to Sierra Leone with his war campaign.

Mr. Taylor said it was not possible for Mr. Sankoh to have lived in Monrovia in 1990.

The Analyst

Friday, 11 September 2009

Taylor denies execution of Bockarie & family

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Mr. Taylor said it was not possible for Mr. Sankoh to have lived in Monrovia in 1990.

Special Court Gets Acting Prosecutor - Replaces Stephen Rapp

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has named Sierra Leonean lawyer Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara as Acting Prosecutor of the Special Court. The appointment is effective as of 8 September 2009.

Joseph Kamara is the first Sierra Leonean to hold this post. He succeeds Prosecutor Stephen Rapp, who resigned this month to become the United States Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes. He will serve as Acting Prosecutor until a new prosecutor is appointed.

Joseph Kamara joined the Office of the Prosecutor in January 2004, a year later; he was called upon to lead the CDF Prosecution Team as Senior Trial Attorney. He was named Deputy Prosecutor in August 2008.

Prior to joining the Special Court, Mr. Kamara worked for eight years as prosecutor in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, where he rose to the rank of Senior State Counsel. In 1996, and again from 2000-2004, he worked in the private sector, including several law firms in Washington, D.C. In July 2009, Joseph Kamara was elected as President of the Sierra Leone Bar Association.

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

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 11 September 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

Vietnam calls for reconciliation, dialogue in Liberia

english.vovnews.vn

Vietnam has called on every party in Liberia to work together to promote national reconciliation and hold constructive talks to find a long-term solution to its internal conflicts. During a United Nations Security Council debate on the situation in Liberia and the operations of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) on September 9, Ambassador Bui The Giang, Vietnam's permanent deputy representative at the UN, praised Liberia's quest for peace, its economic stability and modernization, improvements in social welfare and its solutions to humanitarian issues. The Vietnamese official reaffirmed his support for the Liberian Government's efforts to reduce poverty, increase security, eliminate its proliferation of weapons and reintegrate demobilized soldiers back to the community. He highlighted the necessity to step up moves between Liberia and its neighbors to counter drug-trafficking and organized crime.

Benin, Liberia to Strengthen Defense, Economic Cooperation

Sept. 11 (Bloomberg) – Liberia and Benin signed four agreements to strengthen economic and defense ties, the presidents of the two African nations said. The four pacts were signed yesterday by Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and her Beninese counterpart Thomas Boni Yayi at a press briefing in Benin's main city, Cotonou, during Johnson-Sirleaf's two-day visit to the country. Yayi visited Liberia two years ago when the two presidents pledged to strengthen scientific, economic and technical cooperation.

Taylor Did Not Order The Assassination Of RUF Commander Sam Bockarie, He Says

Sep 11, 2009 (CharlesTaylorTrial.org/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Charles Taylor today said he did not order the the assassination of one of Sierra Leone's top rebel commanders during the country's civil war, and dismissed as "lies" allegations that he knew that Sierra Leonean rebels were recruiting fighters in Liberia in areas controlled by Mr. Taylor's own fighting force. In a day of testimony focused on refuting prosecution witness testimony against him, Mr. Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone "I did not order the killing of Sam Bockarie." Mr. Taylor was responding to the testimony of the 37th Prosecution Witness, a Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insider and mining commander who testified under protective measures, using the pseudonym TFI-367. In his testimony from August 20 to September 1 2008, Witness TFI-367 explained that a relative of Sam Bockarie's wife had told him that Mr. Taylor ordered the assassination of the RUF commander and his entire family because Mr. Taylor was concerned that Mr. Bockarie knew too much about his involvement with the RUF.

International Clips on West Africa

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone UN Mission Office burgled

<http://www.cocorioko.net>

The Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations in New York was broken into last night by unknown person(s) and cash and equipment totaling several thousands of dollars stolen. The discovery was made at 8:45 am today Thursday 10th September, when the first set of workers arrived for the routine work at the 245 East 49th Street Mission in New York. The Receptionist and Office Manager had both commuted on the same train from Mount Vernon but split up on the train before their point of disembarkation. On her arrival at the office, the Receptionist said she met the gate and the main entrance door unlocked, and thought that perhaps the manager or, one of the officers may have reported for work earlier as they were busy making preparations for the President and his delegation's arrival for the United Nations General Assembly's 64th Session scheduled to be convened next week.

Survivors blame captain for S.Leone boat tragedy

TOMBO, Sierra Leone AFP— The captain of a ferry that sank off Sierra Leone leaving more than 200 people feared drowned ignored warnings that it was about to capsize, survivors said Friday. A senior police officer meanwhile said the main cause of the disaster appeared to be overloading. Police said only 38 people were known to have survived after the ferry, the Teh Teh, overturned and sank in just a few minutes after a storm suddenly blew up on Tuesday night. Estimates of the numbers on board ranged from 268 to more than 300. Witnesses and officials said 37 bodies had been brought out or washed ashore.

Cote D'ivoire

Compaore to visit Cote d'Ivoire next Tuesday

www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news

Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire - Burkinabe President Blaise Compaore will pay an official visit to Cote d'Ivoire 15-18 September, according to a statement issued by the Ivorian presidency. According to the statement, which was read on the national television by the general secretary of the government, Tyéoulou Félix, the visit of the Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian dialogue will begin in the country's political capital, Yamoussoukro, where the first joint Council of Ministers of the two countries would be held.

Local Media – Newspaper

National Elections Commission Releases By-election Timetable

(The Inquirer, The News, The Informer, Daily Observer, New Vision, Heritage, National Chronicle)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) has released the timetable for the pending Senatorial by-election in Montserrado County.
- Addressing a news conference in Monrovia, NEC Chairman James Fromoyan said the by-election will be held on November 10 and put the cost of the election at US\$1.2 million.
- Chairman Fromoyan said nomination of candidates would run from September 12 to 26 while the final list of qualified candidates would be published on October 14, 2009.
- Montserrado County has a total of 496,508 registered voters throughout its 14 electoral districts.

“H1N1 virus” Suspected in Liberia

(The Informer, National Chronicle)

- The Liberian Government has reported the first case of Swine flu or Influenza A, H1N1, in the country.
- Health Minister Walter Gwenigale said an expatriate with the Buchanan Renewable Energies in Grand Bassa County is suspected to have brought the virus into the country.
- Minister Gwenigale said the British national who was treated in London of the virus and returned to Liberia in August 2009 but is still found to be infested, is reported to have spread the virus to seven additional staff of the company.

- The Health Ministry and the World Health Organization (WHO) are sending a team to Buchanan Friday to carryout awareness exercise and treat anyone found with the symptoms.

UN Envoy Briefs Security Council on Progress, Challenges in Liberia

(Public Agenda, The Analyst, New Vision, The Informer, The Inquirer)

- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj has briefed to the United Nations Security Council on activities of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) over the last six months.
- In her briefing on the Secretary-General's 19th Progress Report on Liberia, SRSG Løj drew the Council's attention to the Partners' Forum and highlighted the critical work that is still needed in the Rule of Law sector.
- The UN Envoy also outlined the latest proposals for Phase 3 of UNMIL's drawdown, as recommended by the Technical Assessment Mission.
- Members of the Security Council expressed support for the work of UNMIL and are engaged in negotiations on the renewal of UNMIL's mandate before the end of September.
- Meanwhile, a Liberian Government delegation led by Justice Minister Christiana Tah has participated in a Justice and Security Sector Partners' Forum.
- The security delegation presented details of the Ministry of Justice, LNP, Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization strategic plans at the Forum.

State Transfers alleged Pakistani Human Traffickers Secretly

(Daily Observer, New Democrat, The Parrot)

- [SIC]Latest reports say the State has secretly removed from the Monrovia Central Prison six alleged Pakistani human traffickers.
- In an interview, the Commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration, Colonel Chris Massaquoi confirmed the transfer of the suspects from the South Beach prison to the custody of the National Security Agency (NSA).

GAC to Investigate Domestic Claims...Secretariat Constituted

(The News, Public Agenda)

- The General Auditing Commission (GAC) has reconstituted the Secretariat of the Permanent Claims which is to receive and investigate all claims against the Republic of Liberia.
- A GAC release said the commission has put in place a vigorous and efficient model and system of control to shortly begin to receive all claims with all supporting documents.
- The Commission will independently determine the validity and the amount of all claims against the country to ensure that claimants are legitimate to receive government payment.

Nation-Wide Address System Launched

(The News, The Analyst)

- The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications have launched a nation-wide address project aimed at providing the necessary framework that would lead to the introduction of a national address system. The project valued at US\$1.5 million is expected to last for two years.

Former President Taylor Denies Ordering The Assassination Of RUF Commander

(Liberian Express, The News, Daily Observer, The Analyst, Heritage)

- Former President Charles Taylor said he did not order the assassination of one of Sierra Leone's top rebel commanders during the country's civil war
- Mr. Taylor dismissed as "lies" allegations that he knew that Sierra Leonean rebels were recruiting fighters in Liberia in areas controlled by Mr. Taylor's own fighting force.
- He was responding to the testimony of the 37th Prosecution Witness, a Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insider and mining commander who testified under protective measures using the pseudonym TFI-367.

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

"H1N1 virus" Suspected in Liberia

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

State Transfers alleged Pakistani Human Traffickers Secretly

National Elections Commission Releases By-election Timetable

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

Legislature to Submit Threshold bill to President Sirleaf

- The Senate has instructed its Executive Committee to liaise with the Lower House to submit the "controversial" threshold bill to President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.
- The Senate took the decision Thursday after it endorsed a letter from the Lower House informing it of the concurrence vote on the threshold bill.
- Earlier, confusion erupted in the Senate as three Senators attempted to prevent the submission of the bill to President Sirleaf.
- But majority members of the Senate rejected the call by the three Senators and voted to submit the threshold bill to President Sirleaf for possible approval.

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

Government to Enforce Property Tax Collection

- The Ministries of Justice and Finance have reportedly launched a new effort to collect government taxes from real estate property owners indebted for more than 3 years.
- Government Senior Tax Prosecutor said the indebted property owners have been notified and given a 21-day period to settle their arrears.
- Counsellor Aaron Kparkillin said the failure of property owners to pay their taxes violates the tax laws and is an attempt to strangulate government.
- Counsellor Kparkillin warned that properties of people who fail to comply within the given period would be confiscated.

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

Health Ministry Launches Human Resource Census

- The Health Ministry has reportedly launched a human resource census for health workers across the Country sponsored at the cost of over US\$90,000.00 by the World Bank.
- According to Assistant Health Minister for Planning, Kpangbala Sengbe, the census seeks to identify every health worker in the country.
- Minister Sengbe said the census result would also help in the development of good policies to improve the health care delivery system.

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

Government Orders a Halt to Publication of Unregistered Newspapers

- Government has reportedly mandated all printing presses in the country not to print any newspaper that is not registered.
- Information Minister Laurence Bropleh said there are laws on the books that prohibit the printing of newspapers not registered with Government.
- Minister Bropleh said the move is not intended to muscle the press but to ensure regularities are upheld.
- He said the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) was aware of the regulation and does not think the Union would oppose it.

The Times

Monday, 14 September 2009

Stephen Rapp: Obama's Point Man on War Crimes

By SULAKSHANA GUPTA



A child, drafted in the Kamajors, the traditional hunters allied to the Sierra Leonean Army, pose for photographers in a file photo taken May 13, 2000.

ISSOUF SANOGO / AFP / Getty

As chief prosecutor for The Special Court for Sierra Leone, Stephen Rapp witnessed many firsts, including the first ever convictions for the recruitment of child soldiers and the first convictions for sexual slavery and forced marriages as crimes against humanity. Now he's joining the Obama Administration as Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues, and taking his pursuit of justice out to the rest of the world. **(See the TIME multimedia essay: Death and Life in Sierra Leone.)**

Why does the U.S. need an Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues?

This position was established during the second term of the Clinton Administration. [It] was particularly needed in the '90s when we saw the beginning of international criminal tribunals for the first time since Nuremberg, with the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and then the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, both with the support of the U.S. This office focused on coordinating the cooperation that these tribunals needed to bring people to trial.

The U.S. is yet to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). How does your appointment further U.S. involvement with the ICC and international law?

The decision about the ICC Treaty has to be made by the President of the United States. In 2002, Congress passed the American Service member's Protection Act that prohibited U.S. cooperation in the ICC in many areas. [There was a fear that American soldiers could be targeted in politically-motivated prosecutions.] But it also included a provision that U.S. authorities could cooperate to bring to trial

individuals like [former Yugoslav President] Slobodan Milosevic. I think you can expect that the current administration won't go back on what the second Bush Administration did after 9/11 with regards to unsigning the ICC treaty.

So the U.S. does not want its own citizens to be held accountable for crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq?

In my point of view, if there were acts of torture, they violated American law because America ratified The U.N Convention Against Torture. If we were part of the ICC we would be expected to investigate these issues, and if there were a strong case you would expect prosecution. That's what the U.S. is doing anyway. We respect one of the guiding principles of the ICC that the international court has jurisdiction that is secondary to the national court. Whether we are part of the ICC or not we will conduct ourselves so that no prosecutor at the international level would ever have cause to take up a case against an American citizen.

Which countries do you hope to focus on?

There are situations that have already been handed to us. There is a report from the Department of State on the war in Sri Lanka due in Congress [on Sept. 21]. Additionally the office, together with the Secretary for Global Affairs and the Secretary of State, has the responsibility to collect information on ongoing atrocities and it is then the responsibility of the President to determine what steps might be taken towards justice. Like the canary in the coalmine, we give the signal that something very serious is occurring.

Do the requirements of peace get in the way of justice?

I think we've learned that contrary to fears, holding people accountable for atrocities does not make the problem worse, it makes it better. When Milosevic was indicted for ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, people were convinced that they would never have peace and he would be worse than ever. Within a short time he was charged and jailed in his own country. In Sierra Leone there was a peace agreement that gave the rebels amnesty, but that was not genuine peace. When the government said they needed to try those that bore the greatest responsibility, that's what hastened the end of that conflict. Justice is a necessary ingredient to the establishment of peace. There's always an argument that justifies doing nothing, but you can't defer it forever.

What problems came up in the pursuit of international justice in Sierra Leone?

The concern all of us had was that we were conducting justice in a comfortable courtroom with long trials and well paid attorneys. Prisoners had single cells and they had committed the worst crimes. A mile away in the local prison there were simply no resources. Cases can't go forward, witnesses are lost, and people stay in detention for many years at a stretch. [If I was] to do it over, I would try to develop a court within the national system. That would be my preference. Maybe not a court that costs \$30 million a year like the Special Court, but an appropriate court.

Does your remit restrict you to conflict zones or can you focus on human rights abuses in places like Burma and North Korea?

My job deals with atrocities, genocide and war crimes. Human rights and international humanitarian law are closely related, but my focus is on the latter. I'll be working not just with new developments and existing courts but also unhealed wounds created by past atrocities, in Cambodia for instance.

With [special envoy] Scott Gration in Sudan and now you, is there a trend towards diplomatic engagement with war criminals and the systems that shield them?

We want genocide to stop but also want the conflict to stop. Issues like contact with governments that have committed these crimes always come up. We should have no nonessential contact with indicted individuals. It is preferable to meet with people who are not accused, but sometimes you need to have that contact. There are different approaches that can be taken, but working that out is something I look forward to doing.

Breaking News 24/7

Monday, 14 September 2009

War crimes court convicts French former spokeswoman of contempt, fines her 7,000 euros

War crimes court convicts journalist of contempt

The U.N. Yugoslav war crimes tribunal on Monday found a former prosecution spokeswoman guilty of contempt for revealing confidential court decisions made by judges during the trial of Serbia's ex-President Slobodan Milosevic.

The court fined French national Florence Hartmann euro7,000 (\$10,200) for disclosures she made in her 2007 book "Peace and Punishment," which she published after leaving her job, and again in a later magazine article.

She revealed that the court had decided in secret not to disclose Serbian military documents that could have linked the government in Belgrade to atrocities such as the Srebrenica massacre committed by Bosnian Serb forces.

The original documents — minutes of Serbia's Supreme Defense Council — are still not public. Serbia had given them to the court for Milosevic's case on the condition they be kept secret.

Some analysts believe the documents might have helped Bosnia in its failed attempts to sue Serbia for genocide. Observers of the war crimes court say it must show it is willing to enforce confidentiality agreements, otherwise states will never lend potentially sensitive documents in future cases.

Reading a summary of the ruling, Judge Bakone Moloto said Monday Hartmann had "knowingly and willfully interfered with administration of justice" by revealing the decisions.

He said that as a former spokeswoman, Hartmann was "well aware of what the confidentiality of a decision entailed."

Hartmann's lawyers had argued that the information was already common knowledge by the time she published it.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 14 September 2009

Florence Hartmann guilty of contempt of Yugoslavia Tribunal

By International Justice Desk



*The Hague,
Netherlands*

The Yugoslavia Tribunal convicted Florence Hartmann of contempt of the court for disclosing confidential information in a genocide case.

She was sentenced to pay a fine of 7,000 Euros. Hartmann, a one-time spokesperson for a former International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia's (ICTY) Prosecutor Carla del Ponte, disclosed the contents of two appeals chamber decisions from the Slobodan Milošević case in a book as well as an article authored by her in 2007 and 2008.

The court dismissed the argument that the same information was already put in the public domain by the tribunal as well as the applicant for the protective measures.

The fact that Hartmann spent six years in the capacity of the spokesperson of the Prosecutor meant that she was well aware of what the confidentiality of a decision entailed.

The Chamber further found the Hartmann's conduct could deter sovereign states from cooperating with the Tribunal where the provision of evidentiary material is concerned.

“This...impacts upon the Tribunal’s ability to exercise its jurisdiction to prosecute and punish serious violations of humanitarian law as prescribed by its mandate,” Judge Bakone Justice Moloto, presiding, said.

“Public confidence in the effectiveness of protective measures, orders and decisions is vital to the success of the work of the Tribunal.”

Voice of America

Saturday, 12 September 2009

UN Accuses Congo of Possible War Crimes

By Lisa Schlein
Geneva



AFP Photo

The United Nation's Human Rights chief, Navi Pillay, condemns human rights abuses in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and says government forces and rebel groups are possibly guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Two reports by the U.N. peacekeeping force in the DRC and the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights describe some particularly heinous crimes committed by rebel groups and Congolese armed forces.

A woman carries some of her belongings on the main road crossing the North Kivu town of Kayna, Democratic Republic of Congo, 19 Nov 2008

These reports document violations by Congolese security forces and various armed groups that occurred during a spike in fighting in North Kivu in October and November, 2008. The most serious abuses include extra-judicial executions and wide scale rapes and sexually based gender violence.

Scott Campbell, the chief of the African Section of the U.N. Human Rights Office, says these atrocities are committed on a massive scale. And, rape and sexual violence are a daily occurrence.

"Impunity is the norm," said Campbell. "The few perpetrators that have been held accountable are the exception to the rule. Many of those that are prosecuted and sentenced and end up in a jail are subsequently freed or simply walk out the door as there are prisons in Congo that simply do not have doors. This has been the situation in the Congo for many years."

One of the reports focuses on the actions of government forces, some of whom engaged in large-scale pillaging, arbitrary killings and sexual violence. The report says these abuses were targeted against the very people they were supposed to be protecting in eastern Congo's provincial capital of Goma, and in surrounding towns and villages.



AFP Photo

Rebel General Laurent

The U.N. High Commissioner, Navi Pillay, expresses particular concern about the actions of the National Congress for the Defense of the People militia. The group's former leader, Laurent Nkunda was arrested in January in Rwanda.

Nkunda (C) walks in the courtyard of a house after speaking with the press in the town of Kitshoumba, 02 Nov 2008

She says the actions of the CNDP could well amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity.

Dozens of cases of killings and rapes are documented in the U.N. reports. But, Scott Campbell says the real total is probably much higher.

"The excess deaths reported in the Congo since 1998 make the conflict there the bloodiest conflict on the Planet since World War II," he said. "That is including Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. So, the scale of violations that have been committed there and the scale of active killing and death due to a lack of humanitarian service, access to health, etc., exceeds any other catastrophe on the Planet."

The U.N.'s Human Rights chief says the judicial response to the abuses have been wholly insufficient. She calls for concrete and immediate action to hold perpetrators accountable, particularly since sexual violence continues to take place on a daily basis.

The Christian Science Monitor

Friday, 12 September 2009

International Criminal Court eyes role beyond war-crimes trials

Advocates want the ICC to help build a stronger international justice system. Will the Obama administration join the ICC?

By Howard LaFranchi

United Nations, N.Y. - Although spurned by the United States, the International Criminal Court approaches its first review conference next year with several high-profile war-crimes prosecutions under its belt. More recently, the court grabbed headlines by issuing a warrant for the arrest of Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, over alleged war crimes committed in the country's Darfur region.

But the seven-year-old ICC faces stiff challenges in coming years, advocates say. Supporters of the court who gathered in New York this week – including its chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo – say second thoughts by some countries that signed on to the court, and criticisms that the ICC only goes after rights violators in weak countries, are just part of the challenge.

More broadly, they say, the court must do more than try cases – namely, it must help build a stronger international justice system. As the high-profile cases that gave the court its notoriety fade, the ICC's purpose – ending impunity for war crimes – should expand to helping countries develop their own national court systems.

Resistance to the court is brewing, however, in regions that initially supported it, as in Africa, where the African Union recently said it would not honor the arrest warrant for Mr. Bashir. Moreover, controversy surrounding the court could build if some preliminary inquiries into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan – committed by both NATO troops and Taliban forces – are pushed further.

What advocates hope is that the ICC will be able to achieve its goal by the fact of its existence and its example, rather than by the multiplication of trials.

"The goal of the ICC is not to put on trial everybody who violates the Rome statute" that established the ICC, says Christian Wenaweser, Lichtenstein's UN representative and president of the ICC's Assembly of States Parties. "The goal is to end impunity."

Mr. Ocampo says recent experience in Kenya offers an example of how the court's existence is changing behaviors and potentially reducing the kinds of conditions that have led to court action.

Kenya is one of a list of countries, including Colombia, Sri Lanka, Cote d'Ivoire, and Gaza in the Palestinian territories, where the ICC has opened initial inquiries into rights-abuse cases that could turn into full-blown investigations.

But Ocampo says that in Kenya, government representatives sought him out and committed to providing the information he needed to answer accusations of crimes and abuses by officials in the post-elections period.

"That's important," Ocampo says, "because it's important we keep the state working with us."

Ocampo notes that Afghanistan is an ICC signatory, so the court has "normal jurisdiction" there. Right now, he says, the court is simply assessing cases of "collateral damage" and alleged torture to see whether they warrant a full investigation.

But the implication of such an inquiry – that NATO and American forces might be charged with a crime by the ICC – is what led the Bush administration to rescind President Clinton's signing of the Rome statute.

Court advocates note that by the end of his second term, President Bush was sounding more accepting of the court – especially after his own conclusion that "genocide" was occurring in Darfur. That warming trend has continued under the Obama team, with some court supporters expecting the administration to move toward joining the ICC.

"If they don't," says Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch, "we will be on them like white on rice." That desire to see the US inside the ICC could influence how the court approaches a case like Afghanistan, if achieving global representation is seen to be of greater long-term value than pressing ahead on prickly questions of justified soldier conduct.

As Mr. Wenaweser notes, having 110 of the UN's 192 countries in the ICC is "great." But he adds that "only universal coverage will create a truly global network of international criminal justice."