

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Tuesday, February 15, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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'KAMAJORS USED CUTLASSES TO KILL 150 PEOPLE'

By Mohamed Mansaray

The 43rd Prosecution witness in the on-going trial of CDF indictees of the Special Court, TF 2035, revealed yesterday that he witnessed the killing of 150 people at Talama, Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema district sometime in 1997.

He testified that the people were murdered by Kamajors, using matchetes. "I saw them killed with my own eyes", he said.

The witness was led in evidence by a Prosecution lawyer, Raimund Sauter at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown.

Testifying from the witness Prosecution box, he told the court that the people were murdered on the orders of a Kamajor Commander whom he identified as Keikula Kamagbody.

"The massacre was carried out about 9 metres/27 feet from where I was," the witness said.

Speaking in Krio through an interpreter in English, the witness testified that the people were murdered by thirty Kamajors at around 10 am, and added that all the people slaughtered were Temnes, Limbas and Lokos.

The 45-year-old witness

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Witness On Kamajor Atrocity

informed the court, that the stomach of one of those murdered was split opened and vital parts removed and put in a bucket.

Born in Kabala, Koinadugu district, the witness told the court that he was shot by a 12-year-old Kamajor at Ngeihun with a single barrel, on the orders of CO Walters after he realised that he (witness) was a Limba by tribe.

"After I was shot, I escaped into the bush," he testified and added that four bullets were later removed from his body while one still remains in his body.

In his examination-in-chief earlier, the witness told the court that about 1000 civilians including himself were captured in Tongo Field when the town was recaptured from the AFRC by the Kamajors during that period.

He said that the civilians abducted were divided into two groups when they arrived at Talama. "One group comprised Mendes, Lokos and Sherbros," he said but would not say in his examination-in-chief, what happened to these people.

"I am a Limba but I told them that I am a Madingo and so they did not harm me at that time," he said, adding that he settled in Tongo Field in 1990.

The trials continue.

Salone Times

Tuesday February 15, 2005

REGIONALISM...

Kamajors killed 150 Northerners



Crane... Prosecutor

... witness tells Special Court

BY THEOPHILUS S. GBENDA
45 year-old prosecution witness, TF2-035, testifying in the ongoing CDF trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SPSL), has revealed how Kamajors acting under the command of one Keikura Kamageoty, killed a total of 150 civilians because of their northern

origination, in a village called Talama in Kenema district.

According to the witness who says he is a Limba by tribe and born in Kabala in the Koinadugu district, he was at Tongo Field in 1997 when the Tejan Kabbah administration was overthrown by the Armed Forces Revolutionary

Council (AFRC).

According to him, it was the Kamajors who were based in the township at that material time.

Two months later, the witness testified soldiers of the AFRC captured the town, thereby forcing the Kamajors to flee into the bush, from where they were able to mo-

bilize and mount a counter attack against the junta forces, who succeeded in repelling the attack.

The witness further stated that he was among hundreds of civilians who fled Tongo during the attack, enroute to Kenema, adding however that they were prevented from proceeding by junta forces manning a checkpoint, and were forced to sit on the ground.

Whilst there, the witness stated

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that the checkpoint was overrun by Kamajor militias who advised all the civilians to proceed to Kenema.

Whilst on the way, the witness recalled that a certain Kamajor commander, Keikura Kamageoty, ordered them instead to proceed to Panguma.

"We were however stopped half way in a village called Talama, where we were all asked to place our belongings together," the witness said.

"Our belonging were properly searched and afterwards, all of us were individually searched, and upon the completion of the searching, all the belongings were kept in a room by the Kamajors, who then ordered that all northerners queer up in one line and all south/easterners queer up in another line," said the witness.

All the northerners, numbering a hundred and fifty (150) including a 12 year-old boy, Foday Koroma, were subsequently hatched to death with machetes by about 30 Kamajors, acting under the command of Keikura Kamageoty.

According to the witness, he saw the killings and that he only survived because he told the Kamajors that he was a Mandingo by tribe.

The witness further noted that all the southerners and easterners including him were later conveyed to Panguma, where they were all hosted at the hospital quarters.

According to the witness, he had to be taken to Ngeihun for his safety by another Kamajor commander whom he had known over the years.

Whilst at Ngeihun, commander Keikura Kamageoty met him there and after some discussions with him, left only to come back the other day with threats to kill him on allegations that he is Limba.

According to the witness, he was eventually shot with a single barrel but that he managed to survive, adding that he still has a fragment lodged in his body.

Meanwhile, third accused, Allieu Kondewa, has started attending the proceedings after joining his co-accused persons Chief Sam Hinga Norman and Moinina Fofanah to effectively boycott the trials.

Standard Times

Tuesday February 15,

2005

"I saw Kamajors hack 150 people to death" - *Witness*

By Odilia French

The 43rd Prosecution Witness- TF2 035 has testified at the Special Court how he witnessed the hacking to death of a total of 150 people by Kamajors using cutlasses at a place called Talama. He said that the Kamajors after killing the people split open the stomach of one of the dead men- took out the entries and placed them in a bucket.

The 45-year-old witness revealed that the 150 people killed comprised of Temnes, Limbas and Lokos who were asked to stand in one line by a Kamajor commander, Keikula Kamagbode; adding that they were all men. He said that the incident took place in 1997 while about 1,000 were trying to escape from Tongo after the Kamajors had launched an attack. After that incident he went

on to narrate, they were taken to Panguma at the hospital headquarters where he was released on the instructions of one Kamajor Commander whom he knew and taken to Ngiehun. He said that it was at Ngiehun that he met with the same Commander who ordered the killings of the 150 people. "This man told me that he was going to kill me because I am a Limba. He then gave bullets to one

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Sustained

I saw Kamajors hack 150 people to death

From Front Page
small boy aged 12 to shoot me," he explained. According to him, the boy carried

out the orders and started shooting him and he ran into the bushes where they pursued him but was

not caught. "I had five bullets in me, four was taken out and the one is still inside my body," he added.

Awoke

Tuesday February 15, 2005



INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY

[Homepage](#)[Search](#)[Contacts](#)[Headlines](#)**RIGHTS:****U.N. Chief Gets Tough on Recruiters of Child Soldiers**

Thalif Deen

Alarmed at the continued widespread abuse of children in war zones, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is calling for tough new measures to penalise those guilty of atrocities.

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 14 (IPS) - The proposed measures, detailed in a report to the U.N. Security Council, include the imposition of travel restrictions on leaders and their exclusion from any governance structures and amnesty provisions, the imposition of arms embargoes, a ban on military assistance, and restriction on the flow of financial resources to warring parties.

"This report represents the launch of a comprehensive compliance regime to ensure the protection of millions of children who are being brutalised in situations of conflict," Annan says.

The study, which will be presented to the Security Council on Feb. 23, identifies six "grave violations" described as "egregious abuses against children".

These include killing or maiming of children; recruiting or using child soldiers; attacks against schools or hospitals; rape and other grave sexual violence against children; abduction of children; and denial of humanitarian access for children.

Annan says there is a need to "transform words into deeds, protective instruments and standards into enforcement on the ground, and condemnation into accountability."

The secretary-general expects key U.N. and international bodies such as the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, and regional organisations and governments to take action against child abuse.

The study also expresses "grave concern" about recent reports of sexual exploitation and abuse of children by U.N. peacekeeping personnel -- specifically in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

"This is one of the most disturbing and grave incidents of abuse and exploitation of women and children," U.N. Under-Secretary-General Olara Otunnu, head of the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, told reporters last week.

That such activities could be occurring "in our own house" was most alarming and required an end to impunity. Otunnu said the idea that U.N. personnel, including peacekeepers, would abuse their position to take advantage of local women and children was particularly troubling.

Conscious of the political sensitivities of member states, the report says the names of countries are only referred to in order to indicate the locations or situations where offending parties are committing violations.

The first list consists of national armies and/or armed groups that recruit or use children in situations of armed conflict (and are on the agenda of the Security Council). These include Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Somalia and Sudan.

A second list includes national armies and/or armed groups that recruit or use children (and are not on the agenda of the Security Council). These include Colombia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

Otunnu said that while efforts over the past several years had yielded "significant advances" and had greatly increased global awareness of and advocacy for child protection, the situation "remained grave and unacceptable."

Perhaps the only silver lining, he said, was that within the last two years, the numbers had slightly decreased: from some 350,000 child soldiers worldwide to about 300,000.

That, he explained, was primarily due to either political transition or lessening of tensions in several countries, including Angola, Sierra Leone and southern Sudan.

Otunnu singled out two countries -- Sri Lanka and Nepal -- as causes for concern. In Sri Lanka, where there was currently no fighting but also no peace, the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) continue to recruit children.

The report says the LTTE "has often carried out recruitment by force, abducting children while on their way to school or during religious festivities, and beating families and teachers who resisted the seizure of the children."

During 2004 alone, more than 1,000 cases of recruitment and re-recruitment were reported by the U.N. children's agency UNICEF. A high percentage of them were young girls.

Last year, a coalition of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) urged Annan to prepare an annual list of governments and armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers in violation of international obligations.

Such a regular list, the coalition said, would keep violators constantly "named and shamed" for not protecting children during military conflicts.

The coalition included International Save the Children Alliance, Norwegian Refugee Council, Care International, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, World Vision International and Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers.

The 1990 U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets the legal minimum age for recruitment at 15.

But an Optional Protocol to the CRC, which came into force in February 2003, outlawed the involvement of children under 18 in any hostilities and sets strict standards for the recruitment of those under 18. (END/2005)

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Transfer of ICTR Convicts to Rwanda: Lawyers Make 'A Wrong Move', Says Kigali

Hirondelle News Agency (Lausanne)

NEWS

February 14, 2005

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Arusha

Rwandan government representative at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Alloys Mutabingwa, has described the action taken by defence counsels to challenge the transfer of those convicted by the tribunal to serve their sentences in Rwanda as "a wrong move".

Last week, the president of the Association of Defence Counsels working at the Tribunal (ADAD), Hamuli Rety, met officials of the UN High Commission for Human Rights in Geneva. He said he was keeping the UN body informed about the impending accord between the Tribunal and Rwanda on the serving of sentences.

ADAD is opposed to the transfer of convicts to Rwanda, supporting the wishes of their clients.

"This is a wrong move especially when it is done by the lawyers," Mutabingwa told reporters on Monday.

He pointed out that Article 26 of the Statute establishing the Tribunal stated clearly that "imprisonment shall be served in Rwanda or any of the states on a list of states which have indicated to the Security Council their willingness to accept convicted persons as designated by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda."

Mutabingwa said the lawyers should not "mislead the public". He added they should avoid propaganda.

He emphasised that the impending accord would boost the reconciliation process in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, in which Rwandan government estimates a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus died.

ICTR and Rwanda are waiting for a green light from the UN on the matter, before signing the accord.

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It's not just a place on the map.

Rwanda-ICTR Honeymoon Threatens to End Over Rape Charges

Hirondelle News Agency (Lausanne)

NEWS

February 11, 2005

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Arusha

A year after fences were mended between Rwanda and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), a storm seems to be brewing between the two once again.

The short-lived honeymoon came to an end this week when the Prosecutor of the ICTR decided to drop charges of rape from the indictment of a former Rwandan senior army officer, Colonel Tharcisse Muvunyi.

Muvunyi, the army commander of Butare and Gikongoro (southern Rwanda) during the 1994 genocide, had earlier been charged with five counts (genocide, complicity in genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide and crimes against humanity (rape and other inhuman acts)).

But the Prosecutor dropped the bombshell early this week when he decided to withdraw the rape charges, citing insufficient evidence.

This caused a furore, from both a coalition of women's rights organisations and Rwanda's representative to the ICTR, Aloys Mutabingwa, who sharply criticised the prosecutor's decision

"It is our founded view that removing rape from your Prosecutorial focus creates a serious barrier to effective dispensation of justice and indeed it occasions failure of justice", said the Rwandan envoy who opposed the relegation of rape crimes to the bottom rung.

But the prosecution was quick to defend itself.

"The rape charges against Tharcisse Muvunyi were dropped because some of the prosecution witnesses cannot be traced, while other prosecution witnesses have refused or declined to testify," replied Alex Obote-Odora, special assistant to the Prosecutor.

He claimed that some of the potential witnesses had either died or changed their residences without leaving a forwarding address.

This was dismissed by Mutabingwa, who said that witnesses were willing to come and testify despite the many problems they encounter before the tribunal.

"It actually adds an insult to injury to claim that the same [people] have become reluctant now!" he said.

Relations between Rwanda and the ICTR had been on the mend ever since the departure of former Prosecutor Carla del Ponte.

Among the criticisms that led to her replacement was that she did not give sexual violence enough weight. But Obote-Odora refutes that charge for his boss, Hassan Bubacar Jallow.

He denied claims that investigations into sexual violence were not given enough attention pointing out that they were being "vigorously pursued".

"The Office of the Prosecutor has established a Rape Data base of the result of intensive investigations of sexual crimes all over Rwanda during the period of the genocide. This database is continually updated and has been and continues to be a source of information for the use of the various Prosecution Teams in the preparation of indictments as well as in the prosecution of the trials in the Tribunal."

Meanwhile as the coded verbal missiles sail across the sky between Rwanda and women's lobby groups on one side, and the ICTR on the other, Colonel Tharcisse Muvunyi patiently awaits his trial with the possibility of one less charge to worry about.

His trial opens February 28, 2005.

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Calls grow to tackle Afghan war crimes

By Paul Anderson
BBC News, Kabul

In many countries affected by war, courts to try war crimes and crimes against humanity have been set up soon after the conflict.

In Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone... but not Afghanistan.

It is more than three years since the fall of the Taleban, but neither the international community nor the government of President Hamid Karzai have sought redress for the millions of Afghans with direct experience of atrocities.

The authorities thought it wisest not to start the process.

Stability first, the argument ran, justice second.

Now the tidal gates holding back years of accumulated grief look set to burst open.

Those who argue you do not get stability without justice have hit back with the recent publication of a survey revealing that most ordinary Afghans agree with them.

Torrent

Take Shukria Fazal and Hamida Ahmed. Shukria lost a staggering 183 members of her extended family to the communist forces running Afghanistan in 1978, just before the Soviet invasion.

The secret service of Afghanistan, Khad, did their KGB paymasters proud.

Shukria says its visits started off as a trickle - first an uncle, then a brother dragged out of bed in the middle of the night and whisked off to the vast Pul-e-Charkhi prison and torture centre on the outskirts of Kabul.

Then it turned into a steady flow of arrests of family members suspected of being anti-communist insurgents. Then it was a torrent.

The ground around Pul-e-Charkhi is peppered with the mass graves of thousands.

No war crimes investigator has ever visited them to gather evidence.

Shukria brought out some fading black and white photos of the men taken away.

Some young about to enter university. Others well advanced in years.

She trembles with grief as if the arrests were yesterday.

But this was 27 years ago. Even so, she is demanding that anyone connected to the regime then be brought to justice.

Insurrection

The Soviets and their communist Afghan puppets have plenty more to answer for, like the Kerala massacre, in Kunar province, in 1979.

We will never forget it... so many women, children and men killed

Hamida Ahmed

A thousand men were dragged from their homes by communist forces and shot in cold blood on the streets.

It was a communist answer to an insurrection staged by mujahideen fighters in the province.

The next phase in the war crimes tally is in the early 1990s when different mujahideen factions were fighting among themselves for power.

Hamida Ahmed recalls one of the worst: the Afshar massacre and mass rape in 1993.

The forces of the Afghan national hero, Ahmed Shah Masood, struck a deal with another warlord to attack the Kabul neighbourhood of Afshar, headquarters for a rival faction from the ethnic Hazara minority.

After 24 hours of mortar bombardment from the hills, Masood's forces walked into the district and embarked on an orgy of killing, rape and looting.

"We will never forget it," says Hamida, "so many women, children and men killed."

Deeply political

The Taleban were well known for their zealous application of Islamic values, but less often identified with war crimes - scratch the surface and you will find plenty.

Like the scorched-earth operations in the Shomali plain outside the capital or the massacre of civilians at Mazar-e-Sharif in the north.

So where do the people who were victims of all this go for justice?

The first and almost only port of call is the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, which compiled the survey and for the first time since the end of the Taleban regime gave a voice to the people's demand for justice.

What it discovered was a suppressed anger shared across the country, that many warlords and militia commanders are not just free, but co-opted in the new political system.

The commission has recommended setting up a special prosecution office within two years and a war crimes court within five.

It has also demanded the vetting of anyone in public service so war crimes suspects do not slip through the net.

All these recommendations are deeply political and may never get off the ground.

The communists and the Taleban are not around any more or are on the run.

The easiest ones to catch are the warlords.

Since the Taleban's overthrow they have still been controlling some of Afghanistan's furthest corners, collecting their own taxes, extorting, seizing property, running their own private jails and armies.

But they are the most difficult politically to touch.

The theory is they are needed to help coalition forces hunt Taleban remnants or that their arrest would destabilise the country.

But many people are arguing that they are not so popular that thousands would rally behind them or that their arrests would have a destabilising effect.

If that is the case, these same people argue, then they say the time has come to open the tidal gates holding back the people's clamour for justice - that it is a healthy thing to do to flush out the system now and then.

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