

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



Pupils of Promise Land and Sierra International Schools visited the court yesterday.

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

Thursday, 15 June 2006

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

At Special Court ... Kabbah 2 - Norman 1 / <i>Exclusive</i>	Page 3
Kabbah Escapes Special Court / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 4
Special Court Declines Kabbah's Appearance / <i>Christian Monitor</i>	Page 5
President of Sierra Leone Will not be Forced to Testify ... / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 6
Decision of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Norman & Fofana Subpoena ... / <i>Awareness...</i>	Page 6

International News

Britain Says Would Jail Former Liberian Warlord Charles Taylor if Convicted / <i>Reuters</i>	Page 7
UK Agrees to Jail Charles Taylor / <i>BBC Online</i>	Page 8
Special Court : Subpoena Against Kabbah Denied! / <i>Patriotic Vanguard website</i>	Page 9
Encouraging Progress Seen in Liberia but Security Remains Fragile says Annan / <i>UN News</i>	Page 10
Taylor's Men Besiege Party Headquarters / <i>African News Dimension</i>	Page 11
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 12 – 15
Prosecutor in UN-backed War Crimes Court Sees Multiple Darfur Prosecutions / <i>UN News</i>	Page 16

Exclusive

Thursday, 15 June 2006

At Special Court...

Kabbah 2 Norman 1

By Joseph Turay

His Excellency the President Alhaji Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabbah has scored to 2 goals.

to 1 against Hinga Norman and the entire CDF defence team at the Special court. The victory of the presi-

dent came as a result of the ruling by the two judges; Hon Justice Benjamin Mutanga Itoe and Justice

Pierre Boutet that President Kabbah should not appear before the court as a witness on behalf of the de-

fence team. The two judges, after listening to both sides of the submissions and arguments of the defence and

prosecution/Attorney general team, the Chamber this week 13 June 2006, ruled that
Contd. page 2

Kabbah 2 Norman 1

From front page

"for these reasons, and pursuant to the provisions of the rule 54, the Chamber hereby denies the motions by the court's appointed counsel for the second and court appointed counsel for the first accused, for the issuance of a subpoena to H.E. Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, for a pre-testimony interview and for testimony at this trial."

"Accordingly the motions used dismissed," said judges Boutet and Itoe.

On the one hand, Chief Norman scores one point as he was backed by one of the Chamber's judges; Justice Bankole Thompson who in his legal findings and opinion after listening to both parties' oral arguments on the 14 February 2006, supported that President Kabbah be brought to testify on behalf of Norman and Fofana at the

Special Court.

"I accordingly grant the said motions, and order that a subpoena and testificandum as prayed for, be issued to President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to testify as a witness for the defence in the CDF trial, with the option being granted to the president to give such testimony through the medium of closed-circuit television as provided for by rule 85 (D) of the court's rules of procedure and evidence."

Awoko

Thursday, 15 June 2006

Kabbah escapes Special Court

By Betty Milton

Trial Chamber I of the Special Court has dismissed the motion by Moinina Fofanah and Sam Hinga Norman which requested a Judge or the Chamber, to issue a subpoena to President Kabbah to compel him to appear as a witness in the CDF trial to testify on their behalf.

Two of the Judges of Trial Chamber I – Pierre Boutet and Benjamin Itoe ruled that the motion be dismissed while Sierra Leonean born Justice

Bankole Thompson dissented.

In their ruling, Justice Boutet and Benjamin Itoe stated that the application for subpoena in pursuant to Rule 54 must, in according to that Rule show that the measure requested is necessary and that it is for the purpose of an investigation or conduct of the trial.

They further considered that the purpose requirement under the same Rule imposes on the applicant the obligation to show that the subpoena

serves a legitimate forensic purpose for an investigation.

They added that the applicant must therefore demonstrate a reasonable basis for the belief that the information to be provided

by a prospective witness is likely to be of material assistance to the applicant's case.

The Judges concluded that the arguments put forward by the applicants failed to

demonstrate that the proposed testimony would materially assist their cases or alternatively failed to show that the proposed testimony is necessary.

As a result the motion was

dismissed.

For his part, Justice Bankole Thompson who had a dissenting view maintained that on the issue of immunity which has been roundly

Contd. Page 2

Kabbah escapes Special Court

From Front Page

canvassed on behalf of President Kabbah, the arguments raised by the Attorney General Fred Carew, "is legally unsupportable and therefore meretricious, both at the international level and in the context of the domestic jurisprudence of Sierra

Leone."

Justice Thompson explained further that "the principle that no Head of State or Government or responsible government official enjoys immunity from criminal process under international law was recently restated by

the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone."

He quoted the present Chief Justice Ade Renner Thomas in his ruling on case SC No.1/2003, that "there exists no a priori entitlement to claim immunity particularly from criminal process involving international

crimes."

Justice Thompson drew attention to sections 21(2) and 29 of the Special Court agreement and drew the conclusion that the growing effect of these provisions is that presidential immunity from prosecution has been waived by the State of Sierra Leone and in this regard the President cannot claim immunity from subpoena.

Therefore, he went on

while the President enjoys immunity under the domestic law of Sierra Leone from prosecution by reason of section 48(4) of the Sierra Leone Constitution, no immunity to appear as a witness before the domestic courts is granted to the President "no immunity to appear as a witness before the international criminal tribunals, likewise, exists."

Concluding Justice Thompson said "I, accordingly, grant the said motions and order that a

subpoena as prayed for, be issued to President Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to testify as a witness for the defence in the CDF trial, with the option being granted to the President to give such testimony through the medium of closed-circuit television as provided for by Rule 85(D) of the Court's Rules of Procedures and Evidence."

However given that the two other judges ruled against the motion the majority decision carried the day and the motion was therefore dismissed.

Christian Monitor

Thursday, 15 June 2006

Special Court Declines Kabbah's Appearance

By Edward B Kargbo

The long-awaited decision by the Special Court as to whether or not President Kabbah should be subpoenaed to testify in the Hinga Norman and Moinina Fofana defenses was on Tuesday 13th June made by Judges of Trial

Chamber 1.

The Chamber ruled by a two to one decision that applications by both defense counsels for Hinga Norman and Moinina Fofana, requesting that President Tejan Kabbah be subpoenaed pursuant to Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure and

Evidence, are denied and dismissed accordingly. According to Justice Benjamin Itoe, the submissions and arguments presented by counsels for the two CDF accused persons to sustain their motion failed to meet the standards in Article 54 of

the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

He also stated that by virtue of section 48 (subsection 4) of the constitution of Sierra Leone, President Kabbah enjoys immunity and that the issuance of a subpoena vio-



His Excellency President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah

lates the provisions of the constitution of Sierra Leone. 'President Kabbah does not only enjoy immunity under the constitution of Sierra Leone but also under international practice in legal systems of other countries of the world,' he emphasized. It could be recalled that the issue of immunity was raised by former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor who had challenged the decision of the Special Court to indict him since he was still a seating president at the time the indictment was issued. Legal pundits argue that this latest ruling by the Court to dismiss the motion by Hinga Norman and others to have President Kabbah subpoenaed to testify in the former's trial seems to contradict the rules under international practise in legal systems as quoted by Justice Itoe.

Awareness Times (Online Edition)

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

http://news.sl/drwebsite/publish/printer_20052716.shtml

Breaking News

President of Sierra Leone will not be forced to testify in front of Special Court

By Awareness Times

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has reached a decision on the Moinina Fofana / Hingha Norman motion to subpoena the President of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to testify as a Defence witness in their (Fofana/Norman) ongoing trial for crimes against humanity. Awareness Times will soon bring you the entire decision filed which had the majority of the judges saying that the President cannot be subpoenaed with Justice Bankole Thompson alone dissenting from the majority view. Stay tuned for the files which are quite large in size.

----- *[Update]* -----

NOTICES & DOCUMENTS

Decision of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Norman / Fofana Subpoena of President Kabbah

By Awareness Times

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

Awareness Times brings to you the 90 paged decision of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on the Moinina Fofana / Hingha Norman motion to subpoena the President of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to testify as a Defence witness in their (Fofana/Norman) ongoing trial for crimes against humanity. Two of the three sitting judges decided that the President cannot be subpoenaed whilst Justice Bankole Thompson dissented from the majority view. Click on the following two links to download the two PDF files containing the filed decision.

Reuters

Thursday, 15 June 2006

09:01 15Jun2006 RTRS-BRITAIN SAYS WOULD JAIL FORMER LIBERIAN WARLORD CHARLES TAYLOR IF
CONVICTED OF WAR CRIMES

09:03 15Jun2006 RTRS-Britain says will jail Liberia's Taylor if guilty

LONDON, June 15 (Reuters) - Britain promised on Thursday to jail Liberia's Charles Taylor if he is convicted of war crimes, paving the way for the West African country's former president to be tried in a Dutch court.

"I was delighted to be able to respond positively to the request of the United Nations Secretary General, that, should he be convicted, Charles Taylor serve his sentence in the UK," British Foreign Minister Margaret Beckett said.

She said in a statement that his presence in Sierra Leone remains a threat to peace and Britain wanted to demonstrate his commitment to international justice.

Taylor, a former teacher who became one Africa's most feared warlords, is awaiting trial at a United Nations-backed war crimes tribunal in the capital of Sierra Leone, a former British colony and Liberia's neighbour.

He faces 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for backing Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels, who sent drugged child soldiers into battle and mutilated and raped civilians during the brutal conflict.

The U.N.-backed court had asked the Netherlands to hold the trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague due to security concerns but needed a third country to volunteer to be his jailer.

Britain's announcement clears the way for a U.N. Security Council resolution authorising Taylor's transfer to The Hague.

((Reporting by David Clarke, editing by Paul Majendie; London newsroom +44 207 542 7947))
Keywords: WARCRIMES TAYLOR

For Related News, Double Click on one of these codes:

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[POL] [DIP] [CRIM] [LEN] [RTRS] [JUDIC] [VIO]

Thursday, 15 June 2006 09:01:06

RTRS [nLAL001796] {EN}

ENDS

BBC Online

Thursday, 15 June 2006

UK agrees to jail Charles Taylor

The British government has agreed that former Liberian leader Charles Taylor could serve a prison sentence in the UK, if he is convicted of war crimes.

This paves the way for his trial to start in The Hague, after other European countries refused to host him.

A UN-backed tribunal in Sierra Leone, where he is in prison, wants the trial to be moved due to security fears.

Mr Taylor faces 11 war crimes charges after allegedly backing rebels in the decade-long Sierra Leone civil war.

"I was delighted to be able to respond positively to the request of the United Nations Secretary General, that, should he be convicted, Charles Taylor serve his sentence in the UK," British Foreign Minister Margaret Beckett said.

However, she said new legislation would be required.

Mrs Beckett said the decision showed the UK's "commitment to international justice".

The Dutch government agreed to host Mr Taylor's trial, as long as he was imprisoned in another country, if he was convicted.

Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are recovering from years of conflict, in which Mr Taylor played a central role.

Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who took office in January, said she feared that putting Mr Taylor on trial in West Africa could lead to renewed instability.

Britain, the former colonial power in Sierra Leone, sent troops to help oust rebels from the capital, Freetown in 2000.

Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels were notorious for mutilating civilians, by hacking off their arms or legs with machetes.



Charles Taylor has pleaded not guilty to charges of war crimes

TAYLOR TIMELINE

1989: Launches rebellion
1991: RUF rebellion starts in Sierra Leone
1995: Peace deal signed
1997: Elected president
1999: Lurd starts rebellion to oust Taylor
June 2003: Arrest warrant issued
August 2003: Steps down, goes into exile in Nigeria
March 2006: Arrested, sent to Sierra Leone

Patriotic Vanguard website

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/article.php3?id_article=597

Special Court : Subpoena Against Kabbah Denied!

- Wednesday 14 June 2006.

At long last the news is out. The judges of Special Court in Freetown have denied the *subpoena ad testificandum* initiated by Hinga Norman and others to bring president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah(photo) to the court to testify. The court, in its ruling issued today and posted on its website noted that Kabbah enjoys immunities bestowed on him by the constitution of Sierra Leone and that he cannot be subpoenaed but may only appear on his own volition. It remains to be seen whether the president will voluntarily present himself to the court in the days to come.

Meanwhile we also bring you the interesting proceedings at a press conference of the special court held in Freetown on Monday this week. Many issues were discussed prominent among which were the health of Chief Hinga Norman and Charles Taylor's fate. This is unedited.

United Nations News Service

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

Encouraging progress seen in Liberia but security remains fragile says Annan

14 June 2006 – War-ravaged Liberia has made “very encouraging” progress since the Government of the new president assumed office in January, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said today, highlighting in particular the resettlement of all internally displaced persons. But he warns that the security situation remains fragile and there is a continuing need to manage the various threats to stability.

In his latest report on the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), which includes among other things recommendations on reducing the UN’s role, Mr. Annan also calls on international donors to maintain their humanitarian support and assist in the creation of public works programmes to allow ex-combatants, young people and others to find jobs.

“There are still a number of potential threats to the stability of Liberia emanating mainly from several disaffected groups, including demobilized personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia who are dissatisfied with the severance and pension benefits, former members of the Anti-Terrorist Unit...former combatants, as well as deactivated members of the Special Security Service and Liberian National Police,” the Secretary-General notes.

“The serious disturbances created by former personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia on 25 April, and by residents of Nimba County on 17 May, underline the fragility of peace in the country,” he says, referring to an attack in April on the National Defence Ministry and property disputes last month that saw residents take to the streets with machetes.

Despite such problems however, Mr. Annan’s report also records the reduction in UN personnel that has already occurred this year but he was careful to emphasize, as he did in his March report, that further adjustments in the military component will be considered “without compromising the security of Liberia.”

He also reiterates his “strong recommendation” for the deployment of an additional formed police unit, which is armoured and made up 125 officers from a single country, not only to respond to situations of public unrest but also to provide an opportunity for the Liberian Police Support Unit to gain further practical experience “to eventually take over those responsibilities from UNMIL.”

The transfer in March of the former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who has been charged with war crimes, for trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone is described as the “most significant political development” during the past few months, and Mr. Annan says it “sent a strong message to other warlords in the region.”

African News Dimension

Wednesday, 14 June 2006,

Taylor's men besiege party headquarters

Some former fighters of Charles Taylor's former militia have stormed their party's headquarters in Monrovia, besieging the building and claiming that it belongs to them.

Patrick Wrokpoh The fighters told our Monrovia correspondent that they were seizing control of the building because they have credible information that some officials of the party were planning to claim the property and have it sold.

Over 50 fighters, through their spokesperson James Glassco, said that they had credible information which suggested that senior officials in the party were planning to sell the property. Glassco, who claimed that he is the director of the War Veteran Association of Liberia, said they (him and the fighters) were occupying the headquarters to prevent such a plan. However, he added, that having fought during the Liberian civil war for Taylor, they have been abandoned by the party's executives with no attention given to their plight.

The former militia spokesperson showed our correspondent a letter dated May 11th, and addressed to the party's chairperson Lawrence George, in which the fighters urge the party officials to assist them as war veterans who fought to defend the party and its former leader Charles Taylor. "We have been asked to leave our respective dwelling places and have no where to turn. We will not allow this building to be sold, and so we will occupy it until the party's officials do something about our plight," he said.

Glassco - whose comments were greeted with applause from his colleagues - vowed that they will leave the building when some attention is given to them by the former ruling party officials. "Anyone who have purchased this building or planning to purchase it will have to resettle and pay us for the services we have rendered the NPP," Glassco added.

Some senior party officials, who were at the building on Wednesday morning, fled the area when the former militia besieged the building.

None of the party officials, including its chairperson, could be immediately reached for comment. But an executive of the party and the wife of former President Taylor denied plans to sell the building.

Lawmaker Jewel Howard Taylor strongly refuted claims by the former militia to sell the party's properties when she was contacted.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 14 June 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Associated Press 06/14/2006 09:09:46

Liberia says loosening of arms embargo will help state improve security

By JONATHAN PAYE-LAYLEH

MONROVIA, Liberia_ Officials in Liberia welcomed a United Nations resolution to ease restrictions on weapons sales to the West African country on Wednesday, and continued to push for the U.N. to lift sanctions on diamonds and timber. The U.N. Security Council agreed on Tuesday to allow the sale of weapons and ammunition "on a case-by-case basis" so that Liberia's new president can arm police and security forces. Liberian Information Minister Johnny McClain said the resolution will enable Liberia to acquire weapons "for special groups within the police and other state security."

06/14/2006 07:45:49

UNDP hosts two-country meeting on small arms in Sierra Leone

Monrovia_(dpa) _ The United Nations Development Programme's Arms for Development Projects in Liberia and Sierra Leone recently facilitated a meeting of the two countries to discuss plans for a cross-border small arms control, the government-run New Liberia newspaper reported Wednesday. The meeting held in the eastern Sierra Leonean provincial town of Kailahun, was to discuss ways and means of fostering partnership for joint implementation of a cross-border arms control programme, according to the report.

06/14/2006 09:42:32

US embassy issues travel warning to Americans in Liberia

Monrovia_(dpa) _ The United States embassy in Liberia issued a travel warning indicating that the US State Department "continues to urge American citizens to consider carefully the risks of travel to Liberia," a US embassy source said Wednesday. The embassy in Monrovia on Tuesday issued "a strict 2.00 am curfew," strongly advising American nationals in its employ not to go out of doors alone. Calling the Liberian situation "unpredictable," the warning said:

International Clips on West Africa

BBC Last Updated: Wednesday, 14 June 2006, 08:47 GMT 09:47 UK

Concern at Guinea student deaths

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has said he is deeply concerned about the deaths in Guinea's capital on Monday of some 10 students. Mr Annan appealed to the authorities in Conakry to show restraint, after security forces shot dead protesters. The students were demonstrating over the cancellation of end of year exams after many teachers joined a nationwide general strike over price rises.

Local Media - Newspapers

Radio Veritas Criticizes Government for Attacks on Journalists

(Daily Observer, The News and The Inquirer)

- In a press release issued in Monrovia yesterday, the Catholic Church-supported Radio Veritas described as outrageous and dangerous the attitude of presidential guards and other state security personnel who allegedly intimidate and harass journalists, including Veritas reporters.

Security and Journalists Tussle at Executive Mansion

(New Democrat and Heritage)

- Special Security Service (SSS) officers and four journalists—Jallah Grayfield of Veritas, Olando Zeongar of *Heritage*, Abass Dulleh of *New Democrat* and Patrick Honnah of Truth FM--scuffled at the Executive Mansion yesterday when the security men allegedly attempted to seize the journalists' equipment.
- The journalists said that the incident followed their inquiry into reports that five SSS personnel had been wrongfully dismissed and replaced by partisans of the ruling Unity Party.

UNMIL's Mandate Continues

(The Inquirer, New Democrat and The Informer)

- Speaking in Monrovia yesterday at the UNMIL Nepalese police contingent's medal parade, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and Rule of Law Luiz Carlos da Costa said that UNMIL had assured President Johnson-Sirleaf that it would continue to provide security while the government focuses on rebuilding the country.

Alleged Russian Rapists May be Extradited

(New Democrat)

- Inspector-General of Police Beatrice Munah Sieh said in Monrovia recently that plans are underway for the extradition of five Russians accused of sexually abusing Liberian girls. The five Russians who were working for an UNMIL contractor fled the country during a police investigation.

President Attends West African Group's Summit

(The Informer)

- President Johnson-Sirleaf traveled to Abuja, Nigeria yesterday to participate in a two-day summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

House Supports Media Law Reform

(The News and The Inquirer)

- Meeting in Monrovia recently with a delegation from the international Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa, House Speaker Edwin Snowe said that the House of Representatives were committed to the media law reform process in Liberia.

UN Secretary-General Expected in Liberia Next Month

(National Chronicle)

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has written to the House of Representatives to inform it that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will arrive in Liberia on 3 July as a guest of the Liberian government.

Security Council Eases Arms Embargo on Liberia

(The News)

- The Security Council yesterday unanimously adopted a resolution easing the UN arms embargo on Liberia. The decision is meant to enable the state security to establish law and order in the country. In its editorial, *The News* urged the government to exercise caution in assigning the weapons to the security forces as there might be unscrupulous individuals who intend to abuse the arms.

Man Gets Sentenced to Seven-Year Prison for Rape

(The News and Heritage)

- The Criminal Court-A yesterday convicted and sentenced to seven years in prison for rape a Liberian man, Musa Solomon.

Local Media – ELBS Radio

President Authorizes Defense Ministry to Pay Salary Arrears to Former Soldiers

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has authorized the Ministry of National Defense to pay salary arrears to personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).
- A Ministry of National Defence press statement said that President Johnson-Sirleaf requested the ministry to pay two months of salary arrears to regular enlisted men and four months to demobilized personnel of the AFL. The President's authorization followed an apology from former soldiers of the AFL who had protested for the payment of their salary arrears a few months ago.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Advocates for War Crimes Court for Liberia Visit Sierra Leone

- A delegation of the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crimes Court for Liberia will this week visit Freetown, Sierra Leone to hold discussions with key institutions, including civil society organizations, human rights groups and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The Forum's Executive Director Mulbah Morlu told journalists yesterday that the discussions would focus on the process that led to the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Chinese Embassy Denies Selling Arms to Former President Taylor

- In an interview yesterday, the Chinese Embassy Public Affairs Director, Louis Liu, denied Amnesty International's report that China had supplied weapons to former President Charles Taylor. Mr. Liu said that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China could not have been involved in the illegal sale of arms to Liberia.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Sierra Leone Police Arrest Liberian Refugees in Freetown

- According to correspondents in Sierra Leone, over 40 Liberian refugees including women were on Monday arrested in Freetown, Sierra Leone for allegedly vandalizing the offices of the UNHCR in Freetown. The Liberians stormed the UNHCR offices after accusing the agency's officials of impropriety and providing poor medical services at various refugee camps.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Special Court Prosecution Makes Disclosures on Evidence for Taylor Trial

- The Special Court for Sierra Leone Registrar Lovemore Munlo said that the prosecutor has made "disclosures" to the defence counsel of former President Charles Taylor giving him an idea of what evidence would be used in this trial. Correspondents said that Mr. Munlo was unable to confirm a report that Sweden had offered to jail Mr. Taylor if he is convicted.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Man Sentenced for Raping Girl

- A Monrovia criminal court yesterday sentenced to 7 years in prison 42-year-old Solomon Musa Fallah for raping a 9-year-old girl in March this year.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Lawmaker Pledges Support for Media Law Reform Processes

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Executive Mansion Security Allegedly Assaults Journalists

(Also reported on Star Radio)

UN Secretary-General to Address Legislature in Early July

(Also reported on Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Liberian Refugee Murder Suspect Arraigned in Ghanaian Court

- A Liberian refugee in Ghana, 45-year-old Samuel David Whitherspoon, was yesterday arraigned before a Ghanaian Central Region court for allegedly murdering his wife Amelia Whitherspoon, a Star Radio correspondent said.

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. Jeddi Armah at armahji@un.org.

United Nations News Service

Wednesday, 14 June 2006

Prosecutor in UN-backed war crimes court sees multiple Darfur prosecutions

14 June 2006 – Given the scale of killings, rape, looting and destruction of villages in Darfur, Sudan the Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations-backed criminal court said today he anticipates the prosecution of a sequence of cases, rather than a single case, of possible war crimes in the conflict between the Khartoum Government, allied militia and rebels.



“Identifying those persons with the greatest responsibility for the most serious crimes in Darfur is a key challenge for the investigation,” Luis Moreno Ocampo, of the International Criminal Court (ICC), said as he presented his latest report to the Security Council this afternoon. “The complexity of the conflict in Darfur exacerbates this challenge, given that it involves multiple parties, varying over time throughout the different states and localities.”

The Council referred the matter, along with the names of 51 suspected perpetrators, to the ICC in March 2005, after a UN inquiry into whether genocide occurred in Darfur found the Government responsible for crimes under international law and strongly recommended referring the dossier to the ICC.

The probe also found credible evidence that rebel forces were responsible for possible war crimes, including murder of civilians and pillage.

So far, Mr. Ocampo said, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) has been collecting evidence on the ground and from certain countries, but has been hampered by the security situation in Darfur itself.

The office has been able to document, however, thousands of alleged direct killings of civilians, including “a significant number of large scale massacres, with hundreds of victims in each incident,” targeting specific ethnic groups.

“In most of the incidents where the OTP has collect evidence there are eye-witness accounts that the perpetrators made statements reinforcing the targeted nature of the attacks, such as ‘we will kill all the black’ and ‘we will drive you out of this land.’”

There was also significant substantiation of thousands of civilians dying as a result of displacement and other hardships due to the conflict, as well as registration of hundreds of alleged cases of rape.

In obtaining further evidence, he appealed to the Council for a system to protect witness and Member States’ assistance in obtaining information. The full cooperation of the Government of Sudan and other parties to the conflict was also vital, he stressed.

However such information is obtained, and however the cases are tried, he stressed to reporters after the briefing: “There will be justice in Darfur.”