

**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:

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 14 May 2013

Prince Taylor Appeal Denied for Late Filing; Judges Rule Appeal Not Properly Before the Chamber

A three-member panel of the Appeals Chamber today dismissed an appeal by convicted former Special Court defence investigator Prince Taylor against his contempt conviction and 2-1/2 year prison sentence due to late filing of the appeal submissions by his counsel.

The panel, consisting of Justice Emmanuel Ayoola (presiding), Justice Renate Winter and Justice Jon Kamanda, noted that the Defence had filed its Notice of Appeal on 22 February 2013 unaccompanied by the appeal submissions, which is contrary to the procedure set out in the Practice Direction. The submissions were only filed with the Court three weeks later.

Justice Winter, who read out the judgement summary, said that even then, had the Defence submissions been accompanied by a late filing form setting out the reasons for the delay, the Chamber could have exercised its discretion whether or not to hear the appeal. Since the Defence had not taken advantage of this remedy, she said, the appeal was not properly before the Court.

The Judges consequently dismissed the appeal in its entirety.

The Appeal Judgement was delivered in The Hague and streamed to Freetown by video link. Prince Taylor and his lawyer participated in the proceedings from the Special Court's Courtroom No. 1.

Prince Taylor, a former Special Court Defence investigator, was found guilty on 25 January 2013 on five counts of interfering with Special Court witnesses. Four of the counts alleged that he had "otherwise interfered" with Prosecution witnesses who had testified against former Liberian President Charles Taylor. The Court found that Prince Taylor, through former RUF member Eric Koi Senessie, attempted to induce the four witnesses to recant their testimony. The fifth count alleged that Prince Taylor had interfered with Eric Koi Senessie at a time when he was a potential witness in contempt proceedings before the Chamber.

On 8 February 2013, Prince Taylor was sentenced to a 2-1/2 years prison sentence.

The Defence had appealed on four grounds against the judgement, and on two grounds against the sentence.

#END

Independent Observer

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

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AllAfrica.com

Tuesday, 14 May 2013

Kenyatta to Honour International Criminal Court Obligations

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said on Monday (May 13th) he had a "personal commitment" to clear his name by co-operating with the International Criminal Court (ICC).

"Kenya is a signatory to the ICC process or to the Rome Statute and therefore it is my responsibility to ensure that Kenya meets her international obligations and I will ensure that that happens," he told the BBC after Kenya reportedly asked the United Nations Security Council to scrap the cases against Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto.

Kenyatta, Ruto and radio presenter Joshua Arap Sang face charges of crimes against humanity for their alleged role in the 2007-2008 post-election violence.

Ruto travelled to The Hague on Monday to attend a status conference on his case to determine a new date set for his trial with co-accused Sang, following their request to have it delayed from May 28th.

Standard Digital

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

Human Rights groups concerned over International Criminal Court witnesses withdrawal

By Roselyne Obala in Geneva, Switzerland

Human Rights groups have expressed concern at the rate in which International Criminal Court (ICC) witnesses are withdrawing their statements against Kenyan suspects.

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) an umbrella body of global organizations of civil societies working against torture noted that the move is indeed worrying.

“Our concern is what is happening with witnesses in the Kenyan case. This shows that the protection of witnesses in the country is yet to be enforced,” said Gerald Staberock, the secretary general of the organisation.

He continued, “The success of the case of crimes against humanity charges facing three Kenyans largely depend on the witness accounts and evidence presented in court.”

Mr Staberock stressed that it’s the government’s responsibility to ensure a credible witness protection unit is established to guarantee their safety.

“The witnesses are part of the ICC process to ensure Kenyans get justice,” acknowledged the official.

Staberock, who speak while addressing Kenya and Guatemala journalists in Geneva, Switzerland admitted that witnesses are very crucial in the ICC case and called for concerted efforts to ensure they are protected.

He noted that journalists on the ICC beat should also be protected by the government.

“Threats to journalist should not be taken lightly; it’s a human rights violation. Press men and women need all the necessary support to disseminate information the public,” he added.

He continued, “ The ICC process is underway and this calls for continuous engagement by ensuring the rule of law is upheld.”

Staberock said for Kenyans to get justice, they must strive to offer the necessary assistance to all the major players until the case comes to its logical conclusion.

“Kenya is a charge political country, the citizenry need to get in updates in the right context as they happen,” he said.

Staberock spoke after two suspects retracted their statements against Deputy President William Ruto who is at The Hague for the status conference.

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Others suspects includes President Uhuru Kenyatta and former Radio presenter Joshua Arap Sang.

He stressed that many Kenyans are eager to see justice done to victims of post-election violence.

The Daily Star

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

STL moving quickly for victims' sakes: official

BEIRUT: A senior official of the U.N.-backed Special Tribunal for Lebanon investigating the assassination of a former prime minister said Tuesday it was moving quickly for the benefit of the victims of the 2005 bombing that killed Rafik Hariri and 22 others.

The STL's Acting Registrar Daryl Mundis made the comments during a round-table meeting organized in cooperation with the non-governmental organization Justice Without Frontiers.

Brigitte Chelebian, director of Justice without Frontiers, stressed: "Justice must be global for all and not selective."

Regarding the witnesses and the alleged leaks of witnesses' names, Mundis said: "We don't know if the information was leaked and we need to be careful because the prosecution list is confidential and it's a sensitive topic."

Read more: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2013/May-15/217138-stl-moving-quickly-for-victims-sakes-official.ashx#ixzz2TMSVEJ1n>

(The Daily Star :: Lebanon News :: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb>)

International Criminal Court prosecutor opens initial probe into Gaza flotilla



Nine Turkish citizens were killed during the Israeli raid on the Mavi Marmara ship on May 31, 2010.

The International Criminal Court has opened a preliminary probe into Israel's deadly raid on a Gaza-bound flotilla in 2010 in which nine Turkish citizens died to see if war crimes or crimes against humanity had been committed, the prosecutor's office said May 14. "My office will be conducting a preliminary examination in order to establish whether the criteria for opening an

investigation are met," Fatou Bensouda said in a statement issued from the court based in The Hague.

Nine Turkish nationals died when Israeli commandos staged a botched pre-dawn raid on a six-ship flotilla seeking to bust Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip on May 31, 2010.

Bensouda said she had met Istanbul-based lawyers who are acting for the government of the Comoros, which referred the case to her office.

The ship on which the activists sailed, the MV Mavi Marmara was registered in the Indian Ocean island country, which has been a state party to the ICC since 2006.

"After careful analysis of all available information, I shall make a determination that will be made public in due course," Bensouda said.

Israel imposed its blockade on Gaza in 2006 after militants there seized an Israeli soldier, who was eventually freed in 2011 in a trade for 1,000 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

The blockade was strengthened in 2007, when the Islamist Hamas movement took control of Gaza, then eased somewhat following an international outcry over the killing of the Turkish activists.

Deliberate use of violence as disuasion

Lawyers in their 17-page submission said the attack on the flotilla had "serious international repercussions" and that the ICC was seen as an institution to "provide a remedy for redress".

They added that the actions of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) "were manifestations of a plan or policy to use violence to dissuade the humanitarian flotillas to directly reach a blockaded Gaza".

"The IDF attack on the flotilla - charged with bringing humanitarian aid to Gaza resulted in the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity falling within the ambit of the ICC's jurisdiction," the lawyers said.

The maritime assault also severely wrecked relations between former regional allies Israel and Turkey, with Ankara demanding a formal apology and compensation for the families of the raid victims, as well as the lifting of the blockade.

Compensation talks finally began in late March, after Israel extended a formal apology to Turkey to get the rocky relations back on track.

Bensouda's office receive numerous requests every year for probes into alleged crimes like genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

According to the Rome Statute, the court's founding document, prosecutors may now gather initial information about the case.

If Bensouda believes she has enough evidence, she may then give the go-ahead for a full investigation which could lead to a future trial.