

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



Wheel chaired handicaps visited the Court yesterday

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 October 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Standard Times
Wednesday, 15 October 2008

Charles Taylor's Prosecutors nearing conclusion

BY JOSEPH CHEESEMAN

In what looks like nearing the end of their task, the prosecution in the trial of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Monday called on four witnesses to showcase "the brutality" of the rebel RUF and their AFRC allies.

James Kpungbu, 33-year-old prosecution witness told the judges that a rebel soldier laid his right hand on the root of a plum tree and chopped it off with an axe. Under direct examination, the 53rd witness said that he pleaded in vain for his left hand to be spared but that the rebels refused, and chopped the left hand which they left dangling.

He also testified to rape and the burning of houses in Freetown during the 1999 invasion of the city by the rebels. He recalled the effect the amputation had had on him, as well as a message the rebels gave him, to go and tell then President Tejan Kabbah that they were fighting for power.

He said he was still feeling pain where his vein was chopped off. On whether he had ever set eyes on Mr Taylor, James said he only saw him on television.

He also told the court that he didn't know the name of the rebel group that invaded Freetown in 1999.

Defence Lawyer, Courtney Griffiths pressed the witness on why the prosecution gave him money for "lost wages" when prior to the war he did not work, and he's unable to work since the war ended.

He replied saying, "They did not pay me."

The 54th witness, Samuel Komba had testified in another trial involving one Brima Kamara and others. S the prosecution only presented his previous testimonies to the defence team for cross-examination.

60-year-old Komba showed to the judge his amputated hand, his bruised side and his swollen right leg, saying a rebel commander known only as Savage brutalized

him. He became furious and raised his right hand bearing four stiff fingers when Defence lawyer, Courtney Griffiths asked whether he could work with the hand. "I can't. I can't write any... I can't do anything with this... Look at it... This one and this one, are they the same?"

Twice, it was chopped with a cutlass, you see? And he also chopped me on my leg. He stabbed me also on my side, and he slapped me in the face. And you see my eyes? I can't see clearly."

The third witness of the day, Sorie Kondeh said he was captured at age 20 years by a joint AFRC/RUF force in Yormadu, in the eastern Kono District.

He told the court that one Lieutenant Bangali had ordered members of his Small Boys Unit to inscribe the letters AFRC/RUF on his chest alongside other civilian.

Another witness, a 26 year old Sierra Leonean woman named Yei Sundu Macaulay testified in open session that she was raped by the rebels. She ended her testimony after she was briefly cross-examined by Taylor's lead lawyer Courtney Griffiths.

[This same article appeared in several papers]

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 14 October 2008

Report from The Hague

Victims of amputation, rape, the marking of human bodies with RUF inscriptions, and other forms of atrocities are making their way to the Dutch City of The Hague each day to testify against Charles Taylor, the man accused of sponsoring the alleged acts of terrorism meted against the victims by the Sierra Leonean Rebel Group. Just within two days the prosecution of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has produced seven victims of the war as witnesses. Joseph Cheeseman reports.

CHEESEMAN: The prosecution 59th witness, an amputee, told the Judges of the Special Court the rebels amputated a six year old girl and placed the cut hand of the little girl in the mouth of a dead police officer in Kabala Town. He said the rebels remarked that hand was the last food of the dead police officer.

Mr. Sieh Mansaray told the court the rebels said starting the amputation with the six year old girl was an indication that they would not spare anybody. Mr. Mansaray also testified that in Kabala Town, the rebels amputated several civilians including a woman who was eight months pregnant. He said a rebel commander gave the instruction for the amputation of the civilians on a piece of paper. Prosecution Lawyer Nicholas Kumjian carried out the direct examination of the witness.

MANSARAY: The one whom I referred to as their boss, he dipped his hand into his bag and took out a paper and pen, and he wrote. And he said (indistinct) two. Another man replied, and he said, Sir! He held the paper in his hand, and he read the paper to me. He said the men, you should chop off their right hands, and for the women you should chop off their left hands.

CHEESEMAN: On direct examination, Mr. Mansaray said before their amputation, the rebel commander told his men to prioritize the burning of the houses in Kabala Town and the fate of the civilians would be decided later. The witness said it was later the rebels told them why they were being amputated.

MANSARAY: They said go, go to Kabala, say these hands that have been cut off, tell them these were the hands which you used to vote for the civilian government, that's why we cut off the hands. That was the boss who said that, the hands which we used to vote for the civilian government, those are the hands that we'll never vote with them again. That was why they were chopping off the hands.

CHEESEMAN: Mr. Mansaray concluded his testimonies after a brief cross-examination by Defence Lawyer, Courtney Griffiths.

Earlier the prosecution 58th witness testified that he was captured and stripped naked along with 50 of his fellow residents of the town of Tumbudu and made to mine diamonds for the rebels.

Mr. Tamba Yomba Ngekia told the Judges little rebel boys ages six, ten and eleven held the civilians at gun point while they mining.

Mr. Ngekia told the Judges of the Special Court the rebels brought another 70 civilians tied with robes around their waists. He recalled the severe flogging and shooting of one S.E Songbeh who said he was too weak to mine diamonds.

MGEKIA: Officer (indistinct) passed an order to them that if anybody refuses to work, that person should be shot. Then he asked Mr. Songbeh, are you the one who said you were not going to work? Are you the

one who said you are not going to work? And he shot him three times. Then he fell down. We were sitting down there, wanting to cry, how could we have?

CHEESEMAN: The third war affected Sierra Leonean to take the stand today Tuesday was a woman who told the court she suffered sexual violence at the hands of the rebels. Madam Roko Turay, 50 years old, said she was raped by three of the rebels. On cross-examination, she clarified that the rebels who raped her spoke Krio, and that she did not hear any of them speaking Liberian English. She concluded her testimonies after she was briefly cross-examined by Defence Lawyer, Terry Munyard. The trial of Charles Taylor continues Wednesday with a new set of witnesses taking the stand.

Cocorioko

Wednesday, 15 October 2008

Taylor prosecutors nearing conclusion

The prosecution in the War Crimes Trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor will soon complete the presentation of their case. The prosecution has meanwhile continued to provide witnesses who are testifying about the brutality of the RUF and AFRC rebels. [READ THE FULL STORY](#):

By Joseph Cheeseman in The Hague

In what looks like nearing the end of their task, the prosecution in the trial of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Monday called on four witnesses to showcase “the brutality” of the rebel RUF and their AFRC allies. James Kpungbu, 33-year-old prosecution witness told the judges that a rebel soldier laid his right hand on the root of a plum tree and chopped it off with an axe.

Under direct examination, the 53rd witness said that he pleaded in vain for his left hand to be spared but that the rebels refused, and chopped the left hand which they left dangling. He also testified to rape and the burning of houses in Freetown during the 1999 invasion of the city by the rebels. He recalled the effect the amputation had had on him, as well as a message the rebels gave him, to go and tell then President Tejan Kabba that they were fighting for power. He said he was still feeling pain where his vein was chopped off.

On whether he had ever set eyes on Mr Taylor, James said he only saw him on television. He also told the court that he didn't know the name of the rebel group that invaded Freetown in 1999. Defence Lawyer, Courtney Griffiths pressed the witness on why the prosecution gave him money for “lost wages” when prior to the war he did not work, and he's unable to work since the war ended.

He replied saying, “They did not pay me.” The 54th witness, Samuel Komba had testified in another trial involving one Brima Kamara and others. S the prosecution only presented his previous testimonies to the defence team for cross-examination. 60-year-old Komba showed to the judge his amputated hand, his bruised side and his swollen right leg, saying a rebel commander known only as Savage brutalized him.

He became furious and raised his right hand bearing four stiff fingers when Defence lawyer, Courtney Griffiths asked whether he could work with the hand. “I can't. I can't write any... I can't do anything with this...Look at it...This one and this one, are they the same? Twice, it was chopped with a cutlass, you see? And he also chopped me on my leg. He stabbed me also on my side, and he slapped me in the face. And you see my eyes? I can't see clearly.” The third witness of the day, Sorie Kondeh said he was captured at age 20 years by a joint AFRC/RUF force in Yormadu, in the eastern Kono District.

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Courtesy BBC World Service Trust

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
14 October 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Committee to Probe US\$250,000 Scandal at LEC Set Up

(The News, Daily Observer and The Informer)

- A three-member Presidential committee has been set up to probe into a US\$250,000 scandal at the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC).
- Members of the committee include, European Union Power Consultant, John Cook, Assistant Minister for Land Mines and Energy, Albert Chieh and former LEC Managing Director and now Energy Expert and Advisor to the President, Christopher Neyor.
- The panel which has already begun investigation is expected to report its findings and recommendations to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in the shortest possible time.
- Meanwhile, the media reports that making the disclosure at the weekly press briefing on Monday, Presidential Press Secretary also clarified that the recent dismissal of the Board of Directors of the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) by President Sirleaf was not as not due to mismanagement but the Board's failure to exercise "effective" oversight responsibility over operations at LEC.

Several Arrested Over Freeport Rice Scam

(New Democrat, Daily Observer, National Chronicle and The Informer)

- The management of the National Port Authority (NPA) says it has detained several persons in connection to an alleged rice theft at the Freeport of Monrovia.
- The NPA management said it has also launched a full-scale investigation into the incident to establish how a truck with an unspecified quantity of rice left the port early Saturday morning.
- Authorities at the port have vowed that those linked to the criminal syndicate will be brought to book.
- Meanwhile, the Director of the Liberia Seaport Police (LSP), Col. Ashford Peal said some LSP officers and Tally Clerks have been arrested and are presently undergoing investigation.

Nyenabo's Backers Upbeat on Supreme Court Opening

(Daily Observer)

- [Sic :]Credible information said senators supporting suspended Senate Pro-Tempore, Isaac W. Nyenabo are upbeat about the return of the full bench of the Supreme Court of Liberia.
- The senators, according to Senate sources, are expressing joy over the return of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court because, they want the court to hear and hand down ruling in the constitutional crisis that has overwhelmed the Senate since the suspension of Senator Isaac W. Nyenabo, Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate .
- The Supreme Court of Liberia opened on Monday, October 13, 2008.

TRC Survey Identifies Four Conflict Prone Areas in the Country

(The Informer)

- A conflict mapping research has identified four issues that have the potential to threaten the peace and stability in the country.

- The conflict driven issues include narrow channel of communication, accountability, land and property, identity and youth dimensions.
- The survey spoke of the explosive nature of security implication of land dispute and youth dimension across Liberia.
- Lofa, Nimba and Bong Counties as well as Grand Gedeh are specifically identified as conflict prone areas.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) undertook the survey funded by the European Commission as part of its mandate of peace building.

Sanoyea Leadership Crisis 'Resolved'

(The News)

- The long-standing leadership crisis in Sanoyea District, Bong County, has apparently been resolved following the intervention of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on Sunday.
- The Liberian leader who led a high-power government delegation including members of Bong County Legislative Caucus to Sanoyea, told citizens of the district that it is important for them to put aside their differences and work together for the common good of their district.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

Int'l Women Advocacy Group to Present Video Documentary to Government

- An international women advocacy organization based in Uganda is expected to present a video documentary to Government for validation
- The documentary is comprehensive situational data analysis of women survivors and experiences during and after the Liberian conflict.
- It is produced by the Ugandan based group called "ISSI DICCE".
- A Gender Ministry release said the documentary contains findings from a research conducted in Bong, Lofa, Maryland and Grand Kru Counties early this year.
- The research was conducted in collaboration with the Gender Ministry and the Women in Peacebuilding Network and highlights the indiscriminate killing, rape sexual abuse torture and recruitment of child soldiers.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

TRC Survey Identifies Four Conflict Prone Areas in the Country

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Office of the President Clarifies LEC Board Dismissal Action

Several Arrested Over Freeport Rice Scam

African Press Agency

Tuesday, 14 October 2008

Liberian advocacy group plans 100-man march for Wednesday

APA-Monrovia (Liberia)- The Forum for the Establishment of a War Crimes Court in Liberia, has organized a one million man march for Wednesday to call the international community's attention to the need for the establishment of a war crimes court in Liberia.

The Chairman of the Forum, Mulbah Morlu told journalists Tuesday the justice ministry has given the group clearance to undertake the march.

He said the forum was organizing the march on October 15 to remind Liberians about the attack on Monrovia by Charles Taylor's defunct NPFL forces on October 15, 1992.

It left thousands of innocent civilians dead and resulted in the destruction of millions of dollars worth of property, including the Hydro which supplied electricity to the capital Monrovia and its environs.

Many Liberians, including the former Special Representative to Somalia, Winston Tubman and Boi Bleauju Boi recommended that a war crimes court be established in Liberia during separate appearances before the TRC recently.

The News (Monrovia)

Wednesday, 15 October 2008

“I Would Have Destabilized Ivory Coast” --Edward Slinger Tells TRC

Mr. Edward Slinger, the man who admitted killing Thomas Quowonkpa, former Commanding General of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) during an abortive invasion in 1985, says he would have destabilized neighboring Ivory Coast if he had the means to do so.

Slinger, a former Captain in the AFL, blamed the Ivorian government for allowing rebels to use their territory to attack Liberia, a sovereign country which eventually resulted to the deaths of thousands of innocent Liberians.

Slinger said he would have had no regrets if he had the means to destabilize the Ivorian government.

Speaking before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Thematic and Institutional hearings Monday, Mr. Slinger said he crossed into Cote d'Ivoire with some 500 armed AFL soldiers following news that the late President Samuel Doe had been captured at the Freeport of Monrovia by Prince Johnson, then leader of the erstwhile INPFL.

The witness explained that when he entered Ivory Coast, some Ivorian nationals were also arrested along with them based on allegations that he had gone there to plan a coup.

He pointed out that after he and his men surrendered and were disarmed, he informed the Government of La Cote d'Ivoire that he was a relative of President Doe who escaped the fighting in Liberia.

However, Slinger pointed out that the Ivorian government did not have confidence in him for which he and others were arrested and incarcerated.

Witness Slinger claimed while under detention he was electrocuted by Ivorian security guards.

He also informed the TRC that his driver was tortured to death by Ivorian security personnel while under detention.

Mr. Slinger said he was furious over the attitude of the Ivorian government to allow the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) to attack a sovereign government, reiterating "... if I had the ability I would have attacked and destabilized Ivory Coast because they allowed rebels to use their country to cause mayhem and atrocities in Liberia".

The witness also disclosed that he was arrested and detained in Ghana on allegation that he and Ghanaians were planning to stage a coup in that country.

Asked whether he knew about the 1980 military coup d'tat, Mr. Slinger said he had no knowledge. On the question of the 1990 invasion, the witness also blamed senior military advisors such as Gen. Henry Dubar for misleading President Doe during the crisis.

On the capture and subsequent killing of President Doe in 1990 at the Freeport of Monrovia, Slinger said if he were in Monrovia, he would have gone with President Doe or advised him against going to the port.

Explaining his role in the Liberian crisis, the former AFL commander said he was arrested in 1994 following an attempt by retired army General Charles Julue to take over the Executive Mansion. Slanger said he was charged with treason but later purged of the charge.

According to him, in 1998, he and 12 others were arrested and charged with treason by the government of Charles Taylor following the September 18th Monrovia street battle.

Slanger and others, including former politician Gbai Gbala, former Deputy Justice Minister for Legal Affairs David Gbala and University Professor Charles Breeze were adjudged guilty and sentenced to 20 years in prison. However, they were granted clemency in 2001 by former President Charles Taylor.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 14 October 2008

Sudan Holds Militia Leader Wanted by International Court

By Derek Kilner

Sudan has announced it is detaining a militia leader who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for crimes committed in the country's western Darfur region. Derek Kilner reports from VOA's East Africa bureau in Nairobi.

Ali Mohamed Abdel-Rahman, better known as Ali Kushayb, was charged by the International Criminal Court in early 2007 with 50 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity as a commander of the Janjaweed militia in the conflict in Darfur.

The Sudanese government has repeatedly rejected handing over to the ICC either Kushayb, or Humanitarian Affairs Minister Ahmed Haroun, who is also wanted by the court.

The government says its justice system is capable of dealing with any crimes related to the conflict.

Sudan's justice minister reiterated the government's opposition to cooperating with the ICC, but said Kushayb has been the target of a Sudanese investigation that is in its final stages. It is unclear how long Kushayb has been in detention.

Sudan is trying to rally international support for dropping or delaying a request for an arrest warrant for Sudan's president by the ICC's chief prosecutor. The African Union and Arab League have backed Sudan in urging the U.N. Security Council to defer that request, a power granted by Article 16 of the court's charter.

Such a move would require the approval of the Security Council's permanent members, including Britain, France, and the United States, all of whom have indicated they would consider allowing a deferral if Sudan takes significant actions to address the conflict in Darfur.

The director of the Horn of Africa project at the International Crisis Group, Fouad Hikmat, says the possibility of deferral depends on the outcome of the investigation, and whether further steps are taken to go after others suspected of crimes in Darfur, including Haroun, the humanitarian affairs minister.

"It needs to be seen if it is going to happen in a way that it is going to satisfy the international criminal court or those who are debating now whether to invoke Article 16 or not, but he is not the only person on the list, because above him there is a person who is holding a ministerial position and above that the president himself," said Hikmat.

There have been reports that France has offered a deal to Sudan to back a deferral in exchange for offering up Haroun to the ICC.

For Hikmat, establishing accountability for crimes committed in Darfur, whether through the ICC or another approach, is necessary for any peace agreement in Darfur, as well as for the survival of the 2005 north-south peace agreement, which calls for national elections next year, followed by a referendum on southern secession in 2011.

"If we do not have a reconciliation mechanism where impunity is addressed and issues of justice are addressed in one form or another there will not be a sustainable settlement to the conflict in Darfur, and the contribution of Darfur to the general elections. Because general elections cannot happen if Darfur is not part of it," added Hikmat.

The African Union and United Nations are attempting to revive stalled peace negotiations between the government and rebel factions.