

**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:

Thursday, 15 October 2009

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

Local News

Special Court to Deliver Judgement / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 3
October 26 th is Judgement Day / <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 4
When Courts are Special / <i>Awoko</i>	Pages 5-6
Military Court Martial Resumes Sitting / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 7
FOC Director Preaches Reconciliation / <i>Concord Times Online</i>	Page 8

International News

Sierra Leone Court to Rule on Rebel Appeal / <i>Agence Frances Presses</i>	Page 9
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 10-15
TRC Recommendations Secure Country's Future / <i>The Analyst</i>	Pages 16-18
Rwanda Suspect Pleads Not Guilty / <i>BBC Online</i>	Page 19

Concord Times
Thursday, 15 October 2009

Special Court to deliver final judgment

Appeal Judgment in the case of three former members of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) will be delivered on Monday, 26 October 2009 at the Special Court in Freetown.

Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao were all convicted in February 2009 for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

These included first-ever convictions for forced marriage as a crime against humanity, and for attacks against United Nations peacekeepers. They were sentenced in April 2009 at terms



of imprisonment of 52, 40 and 25 years, respectively.

This will be the last judgment to be delivered in Freetown. Two other trials held in Freetown are complete, including appeal.

The Special Court's trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor is in the defence phase at The Hague.

Independent Observer
Thursday, 15 October 2009

October 26th is Judgement Day



Special Court for Sierra Leone has given notice that judgment in the Appeal of Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao, all RUF convicts shall be delivered on October 26th.

The judgment will climax the court's operations in Freetown and attention is going to be shifted to The Hague, where the trial of Charles Taylor is ongoing.

Awoko

Thursday, 15 October 2009

When Courts are Special



By S. Beny SAM

It is a fact of life that the more difficult situations become the craftier and scheming people will become in order to cope. A Psychology lecturer used to say that abnormal situations breed abnormal behaviors. There is always a big interplay between cause and effect. Other people will say that to any action there is a reaction.

Sometimes we in the so called developing world get caught up in webs that are never our creation. The rebel carnage was forced on us at a time we least expected or were prepared for it. As a nation we displayed ample levity over the threats that Foday Sankoh and his cohorts continued to puff on us. I can remember the 90 days ultimatum that the then Sierra Leone government was to adhere to or face armed attack. Charles Taylor even at one stage told Sierra Leoneans that they will taste the bitterness of war. People called it a bluff and indeed we tasted it in a dose we are still struggling to recover from.

The war indeed came and went but the scars remain deep in our hearts and minds. The war waged on for 10 to 11 years unabated. It got to a point where our military lost face and could not win hearts and minds. Villagers started forming vigilante groups that later transformed themselves into recognized civilian militias that challenged parts of the renegade soldiers and rebels derogatorily called 'sobels.' By that time the war defied any form of definition and prosecuting it became much more elusive than ever. Everybody agreed that the perpetrators of our war must face the required punishment. So the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court were instituted for Sierra Leone in a bid to secure lasting peace.

The war indeed came and went but the scars remain deep in our hearts and minds. The war waged on for 10 to 11 years unabated. It got to a point where our military lost face and could not win hearts and minds. Villagers started forming vigilante groups that later transformed themselves into recognized civilian militias that challenged parts of the renegade soldiers and rebels derogatorily called 'sobels.' By that time the war defied any form of definition and prosecuting it became much more elusive than ever. Everybody agreed that the perpetrators of our war must face the required punishment. So the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court were instituted for Sierra Leone in a bid to secure lasting peace.

The TRC did its job and presented its report. The Commission's analysis of the war and recommendations have been applauded by all. Several years on the reasons for the rebel war seem apparently manifest and most of the recommendations are yet to be addressed. For the Special Court we were told that those who bear the greatest responsibility for the war will be tried. So the trials started and have lingered on till today.

Sometimes we even hear of funds running out. What is most interesting is that most of those who bear the greatest responsibility for the war are dead and gone... but the trials still go on with a very big focus now on Charles Taylor. Now the question is are we really going to get back anything much from the current trials when most of the key actors are dead and gone?

You can name them ... Foday Sankoh, Sam Hinga Norman, Maskita and is Johnny Paul dead or alive? You see dead men hardly give any evidence. Whoever told you that dead men are invited to court or given bench warrant? One interesting aspect of the Special Court is that some countries never agreed that their nationals be tried by it. This makes justice that selective. What difference could it have made if people are tried by the ICC? Why call it the Special Court of Sierra Leone? Interesting that the warring Leaders already convicted are going to serve their jail terms in Rwanda or so, sure this is also special. I sometimes wonder how things get so different when it comes to this our tiny country called Sierra Leone. See the diversity of support we got during and immediately after the war. Indeed many countries were even jealous of Sierra Leone. Why should a country of little or no global significance be given so much attention?

A major question I sometimes ask myself is this: if for whatever reason we have civil unrest in which the loyalty of state security is in question who will we turn to? I ask this question because with all the sacrifices made by patriotic Sierra Leoneans to fight state enemies under the Special Court both enemies of state and defenders of the people are treated at the same level. Strange eh? It's like the Peace Building efforts giving priority to the perpetrators of atrocities and dragging its feet on addressing the problems of the victims. It's a very strange world we are in, isn't it ... or don't you know by now? How do we ever get to moving forward? I don't think our problem is changing drivers each time there is an accident ... I think also we should thoroughly check how functional the entire vehicle is. We seem to have deeply come to accept mediocrity as our target.

Just last night I heard on the BBC that President Obama's efforts to improve the health situation of Americans has had endorsement from the Senate Committee. This in the President's own words is a critical milestone. And you know what, he got one Republican vote! This is remarkable considering the analytical nature of Senate procedures in the US of A. Look, why should Sierra Leone suffer? Our mere size to me puts us in an enviable position given the potential for us to make it fast. Can you imagine President Obama is fighting to make health insurance available to 46 million Americans who have no access to it? We are just about 5 million people. Sure if we were a state of the US our problems are mere chicken change. Man let's just do with how we are ... whenever we are ready as a nation, we will definitely make it. I mean when indeed we are all ready. Of course you do not need to ask me what I mean. My mind just ran to the Kenyan situation. The recent call by no less a person than former UN secretary General Kofi Annan for leaders of the election carnage to face war crimes tribunal is quite telling. These days the International Criminal Court is sending out many invitations. Take the case of Al-Bashir. The current arrest-warrant hanging over him looks like a big stand off as his home support does not seem to be waning.

There is also the case of the Italian Premier Berlusconi who the Constitutional Court says should face court action even when in power. Strange things are happening indeed in the world these days. The question is how much protection should people have as Heads of State? How does all this lead to the UN Charter. Can someone remind the UN that they need to review the Charter to reflect the modern world order and reality! What is this entire thing about territorial integrity and Sovereignty of states? Wow, the world looks too much today and things have to move very fast to cope with the hundreds of threats to global peace.

Can protracted trials of criminals really prove productive to a world that has suddenly woken up to vocabularies of credit crunch, economic downturn or economic meltdown? Call it any name but the truth is that the world is in trouble and it seems only the tough can really get going. Countries with stimulus packages for their economy may survive.

I wonder what Sierra Leone's stimulus package is ... can it probably be Oil exploration? Well may be, just may be. After all we as a nation have for long been doing the impossible and we have done so much with so little; we are now qualified to do anything with nothing. Can you beat that, we are a nation that will never go down and stay there. *We go dae fardom ehn grap.* My only worry now is where the Special Court is taking us when the key players are dead and gone. Remember that you can only move on when you have a clear reflection of where you are. *Leh we member yesterday angry.*

Awareness Times
Thursday, 15 October 2009

Military Court Martial Resumes Sittings

By Aruna Turay

The newly revitalized Military Court Martial, which has suffered lengthy abandon, yesterday, Wednesday 14th October 2009, commenced court sittings.

It could be recalled that since its revitalization in March 2008, the Military Court Martial has been facing some serious challenges, especially in the area of accessing Judges to preside on the sittings.

Court Martial Administrative Secretary, Major Simeon Sankoh, has disclosed that the purpose of the Court Martial is to help in shaping the conducts of men and women of the force. Major Sankoh said the court was initially formed in 1992 by the then military National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) regime, adding that it was later discontinued by another military regime, Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council (AFRC), due to uncountable reasons.

The Major went on that in 2008, the court was again invigorated by International Military Advisory and Technical Team (IMATT) to regulate the activities of military personnel. He said the commencement of court sittings in 2008 has helped immensely in ensuring proper conduct in the force, adding that dozens of cases have so far been heard. He furthered that over twenty more cases are pending hearing to be presided by Justice S.A Ademusu.

The delay in delivering judgments, the Major went on, is as a result of the fact that the court depends on only one presiding Judge.

Major Sankoh further expressed dismay on the point that the court is only sitting once a week and used this forum to appeal for more Judges to

be assigned to the court, in order to ensure speedy trials and fear justice in the force.

The Major also informed that the military court martial in Sierra Leone deals with matters ranging from murder, larceny, rape, fraudulent conversion, robbery to house breaking, among similar cases heard in civilian courts.

Another key challenge faced by the court martial, as pointed out by the Major, is that of funding to extend the establishment of the court to other provincial districts and towns within the country, so as to reduce congestion in the Cockeril Military Headquarters in Freetown which is presently hosting the court.

Meanwhile, the court martial stands adjourned for next Wednesday.

Concord Times Online

Tuesday, 13 October 2009

FOC Director Preaches Reconciliation

Solomon Yarjoh

Freetown — Seven years after the end of a brutal civil war, Sierra Leone is a country struggling to fashion a sustainable peace. An internationally designed Truth and Reconciliation Committee has come and gone, while the United Nations backed criminal court is about to wrap up its final deliberations on the handful of men deemed most responsible for fomenting the conflict.

Despite millions of dollars spent on these proceedings, neither body has succeeded in fundamentally changing the daily lives of Sierra Leoneans who still grapple with the aftermath of war.

Fambul Tok - Creole for "Family Talk" - is a new national initiative run by Forum of Conscience in partnership with Catalyst for Peace, that addresses that need for change.

A face-to-face community owned program, Fambul Tok brings together perpetrators and victims of violence through ceremonies rooted in the local traditions of the villages that were affected. It provides Sierra Leonean citizens with an opportunity to come to terms with what happened during the war, to dialogue, to experience healing, and to chart a new path forward -- together.

On Wednesday, October 14, John Caulker, founder of Forum of Conscience, a Sierra Leonean human rights group that developed Fambul Tok in collaboration with Catalyst for Peace, a U.S.-based foundation, who is presently in America, will discuss the need for rural community participation in the national decision making process, and acknowledgement of wrongdoing to victims through the reparations program.

It is an invitation from Richardson Rogers & Associates and Global Information Network.

A rough cut of a powerful, emotionally moving, and soon-to-be completed documentary "Fambul Tok" will be shown preceding Mr. Caulker's presentation.

Agence Frances Presses

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

Sierra Leone court to rule on rebel appeal

FREETOWN — The war crimes court for Sierra Leone will on October 26 rule on the appeal of three former RUF rebel leaders convicted of overseeing a trail of rapes and killings, the court announced Wednesday.

The appeals judgement against Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao will be the last judgement the Special Court for Sierra Leone will hand down in Freetown, the capital of the west African nation.

The UN-backed court's only remaining case, the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor, was moved to The Hague for security reasons.

Sesay, the former interim leader of the United Revolutionary Front (RUF) was sentenced in April to a 52-year prison term, the highest sentence ever handed down by the court, which cannot impose a life sentence.

Kallon, whom judges described as a key player within the RUF was sentenced to 40 years and the rebels' ideology trainer Gbao got a 25-year prison term.

The men maintained their innocence throughout their trial which spanned almost four years.

Between 1991 and 2001 the RUF went on a spree of killings, rapes and mutilations in order to gain control over Sierra Leone's lucrative diamond mining regions. The rebels used so-called blood diamonds to fund the fighting and forcibly recruited many children into their ranks.

The country is still trying to recover from the brutal decade-long civil war that left 120,000 people dead and tens of thousands mutilated and raped.

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 14 October 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

Longer Prison Terms for Drug Dealers in Liberia

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-10-14-voa17.cfm>

By Scott Stearns

Dakar

14 October 2009

Convicted drug dealers in Liberia now face longer prison terms. It is part of a campaign to battle both foreign drug traffickers and domestic producers, some of whom enjoy the support of local villagers in a country where official unemployment tops 80 percent. In the fight against illegal drugs, Liberian lawmakers have toughened criminal penalties for illegal narcotics dealers. Those suspects are no longer eligible for bail during their trial, and law enforcement officials have new powers to seize their assets. But the biggest change is the length of time they face in jail. Before last month's tougher sentencing guidelines, drug dealers usually received between five and 10 years in prison. James Jelah, the executive director of Liberia's Drug Enforcement Agency, says the tougher sentences are an important tool in the fight against illegal drugs. "If you are arrested and sent to court and convicted, you could be sentenced to jail for not less than 25 years and not more than 60 years," he said. Jelah says Liberian DEA agents uprooted more than 300,000 cannabis plants on 15 farms in Bong County and more than 120,000 plants in Nimba County.

Guinea

Guinea's Camara Should Be Tried for Killings, EC Says

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=anZjs5jiKkm8>
By Jason McLure

Oct. 14 (Bloomberg) -- The leader of Guinea's ruling military junta, Moussa Dadis Camara, should step down and face trial for war crimes after his security forces killed as many as 135 pro-democracy demonstrators in the streets of Conakry last month, the European Commission said. "Sooner or later he will have to stand to court and be judged on what happened in what was clearly a very brutal attack on civilians," Karel de Gucht, the EC's commissioner for development and humanitarian aid, told reporters at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, today. "The obvious, deliberate way it happened has to be considered a crime against humanity." Soldiers opened fire near the stadium in the capital Conakry Sept. 28 after demonstrations by opposition supporters protesting Camara's intention to run in Jan. 31 presidential elections. Guinea's opposition claims more than 200 people were killed and 150 women were raped by members of the military during the crackdown. Europe has suspended 258.5 million euros (\$395 million) in aid commitments to Guinea

over the next five years, and will work with the AU, the Economic Community of West African States and the U.S. to persuade Camara not to run in elections slated for Jan. 31, De Gucht said. China should also take note of the international community's response, he added.

Guinea Boasts of Deal with Chinese Company

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/world/africa/14guinea.html?hp>

DAKAR, Senegal — Guinea's military government, facing international sanctions and heavy strictures over a mass killing of unarmed demonstrators, is highlighting a recent agreement with a Chinese company that could provide it with billions of dollars. Mamadi Kallo, the military junta's secretary of state in charge of public works, confirmed Tuesday that the deal had been in the works for months, but he said it was signed only over the weekend, well after the civilian killings and rapes on Sept. 28. China has yet to confirm the deal, leading some analysts to suggest that the Guinean government was trying to bolster its legitimacy in the face of international condemnation. But if the deal has progressed as Guinean officials have described, it could clash with the tough positions laid out by the junta's critics, including France and the United States.

Guinea mines, businesses reopen after strike

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE59D0J520091014?sp=true>

CONAKRY (Reuters) - Mining operations and daily life mostly returned to normal in Guinea on Wednesday after a two-day strike called by unions in reaction to a bloody crackdown on anti-government protesters on September 28 brought the No. 1 bauxite exporter to a halt. Officials from the Guinea Bauxite Company (CBG) -- a joint venture between Anglo-Australian Rio Tinto and U.S. Alcoa that ships bauxite -- and Russia's UC RUSAL, which runs an aluminum refinery and some mining operations, said business had resumed. Last month's violence, which left 157 civilians dead, according to human rights groups, was the worst since Guinea's military rulers came to power last December and led to intense international calls for the junta to relinquish power. "The strike was largely followed for two days but people are mostly back at work this morning. The production train and the flow of bauxite has resumed as normal," a CBG official said.

Sierra Leone court to rule on rebel appeal (AFP) –

FREETOWN — The war crimes court for Sierra Leone will on October 26 rule on the appeal of three former RUF rebel leaders convicted of overseeing a trail of rapes and killings, the court announced Wednesday. The appeals judgment against Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao will be the last judgment the Special Court for Sierra Leone will hand down in Freetown, the capital of the West African nation. The UN-backed court's only remaining case, the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor, was moved to The Hague for security reasons. Sesay, the former interim leader of the United Revolutionary Front (RUF) was sentenced in April to a 52-year prison term, the highest sentence ever handed down by the court, which cannot impose a life sentence.

43,000 Sierra Leoneans suffer from HIV

<http://awoko.org/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=6934&cntnt01returnid=15>

The Chief Executive Officer of the Shepherd's Hospice Sierra Leone, Gabriel Madiye, has stated in his keynote address during the celebration of the World Hospice and Palliative Care Day on the 10th October, 2009 that "about 43,000 Sierra Leoneans suffer from HIV". He further disclosed that even with the alarming indicator, only about 1,500 are put on anti-retro viral therapy. The event took place at the organization's office at Allen Town in the East end of Freetown. Mr. Madiye gave statistics indicating the prevalence of terminal diseases globally. He said that about 6 million cancer deaths and 10 million new cases of cancer are occurring every year. He said that with this tremendous increase in the number of cancer cases, it is expected to amount to 15 million by 2020. The figures, he mentioned, are more than the population of Sierra Leone, giving urgency for a quick measure to be put in place to combat the high increase of terminal diseases in not only Sierra Leone but the world at large. Mr. Madiye said that the Shepherd Hospice, with its establishment in over 100 countries, has been proving aid to people suffering from terminal diseases in their respective locations. He added that the World Hospice and Palliative Care Day is being celebrated to raise funds to cater for the growing number of cases of HIV, cancer, tuberculosis and other related diseases, adding that we should not be donor- dependent to address our domestic problem and that we should implement initiatives to be able to tackle our prevailing circumstances. He mentioned that the money raised from the different activities is being used to buy oral mifampridine, which is a drug administered to cancer patients and people who are terminally affected by HIV.

Local Media – Newspaper

UNMIL assures over Guinea situation, Monitors Situation

(Heritage, Daily Observer, The News, National Chronicle, The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- Outgoing UNMIL Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Zahirul Alam says the Mission has updated its contingency plans to deal with any effect of the Guinean situation.
- Lt. Gen. Alam said while the Mission does not anticipate armed insurgency from Guinea, it would not hesitate to deal with a possible refugee situation.
- He said there is still a joint border cooperation mechanism in place involving UNMIL soldiers and Guinean troops and assured that the Mission is in control of the situation and there is no need for fear.
- On the new Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Lt. Gen. Alam said the Mission is mandated to assist with capacity building following its training at the end of the year.
- He said the Mission is currently training a batch of AFL soldiers based in Gbarnga in combat and field engineering skills and stressed that the new AFL should concentrate on confidence building activities and help in what he calls the social economic field.
- Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. Alam has dismissed claims that Liberia is a transit point for drug trafficking in the sub region.

LCIP/USAID turn over refurbished medical institute Today

(Public Agenda, The News)

- The refurbished dormitory and classrooms of the Tubman National Institute of Medical Arts (TNIMA) will on Wednesday be turned over to Government.
- The Liberia Community Infrastructure Program of the U.S Agency for International Development funded the project.
- A U.S. Embassy release put the cost of the rehabilitation at US\$775,000.00. In addition to the rehabilitation, USAID provided 150 student desks, 500 bunk beds and mattresses, ceiling fans and 4 solar-powered outdoor security lights.
- According to the release, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, U.S. Charge d' Affaires Brooks Robinson and Health Minister Walter Gwenigale will grace the occasion.

Nigeria's First Lady Arrives Today

(Heritage, Public Agenda, Daily Observer, New Vision, The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- Nigeria's First Lady, Hajiya Dr. Turai Umaru Yar'Adua at the head of a high-powered women's delegation is expected in the country today on a two-day official visit.
- While in the country, Dr. Yar'Adua will attend the Tubman National Institute of Medical Arts turning over ceremony at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Sinkor and tour the fistula center at the same venue.
- The Nigerian First Lady will also tour the Nancy B. Doe market and the Monrovia Demonstration School.
- Dr. Yar'Adua will attend a private lunch with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during her two-day stay.

Liberia's Ambassador to UN Presents Credentials

(Daily Observer)

- Liberia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Madam Marjon V. Kamara, Thursday, October 8, 2009 presented her Letter of Credence to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.
- Prior to her appointment, Madam Kamara served as Director of the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR) for Africa based in Geneva, a position she held from October 2005 to May 2009.
- Ambassador Kamara held numerous government posts within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from September 1974 until July 1980 including Assistant Minister/Special Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the late C. Cecil Dennis Jr.

NEC Sets to Clear Candidates, Declares Campaign Today

(The News)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) says it will officially clear candidates who have met all requirements for next month's Montserrado senatorial by-election.
- The NEC has previously cleared 10 candidates representing political parties and independent interest preliminarily for the November 10 poll.
- A NEC statement noted that political campaign will be officially declared today Wednesday October 14.
- Contenders in the Montserrado by-election will be competing in a tough contest to fill the vacancy created by the death of Montserrado County Junior Senator, Hannah Brent of the Congress for Democratic Change.

Journalists Warned

(The Inquirer)

- The Deputy Minister of Justice for Administration, Eva Morgan on Wednesday warned journalists to seek permission from the Ministry of Justice before visiting prison facilities throughout the country.
- "Journalists wanting to go to the facilities should be aware that it is a high risk area. You have to take responsibility for your own protection, so if you go there, you take some responsibility for putting yourself in that high risk," she warned.
- Minister Morgan made the statement at the United Nations Mission Headquarters in Monrovia when she was quizzed by some journalists who unveiled that there was drug shortage when they visited the Monrovia Central Prison recently.

Trade Policy Workshop Opens in Monrovia

(Heritage, The News)

- The Commerce Ministry in collaboration with ECOWAS will today Wednesday begin a two-day Trade Policy Workshop.
- The workshop under the auspices of the Liberia National Coordination Committee on Trade (LNCCT) will review the draft document on trade policy.
- The workshop according to a Commerce Ministry release, seeks to evolve an investment code that will address critical trade related issues in the country.
- The workshop will draw participants from relevant government ministries, agencies as well as stakeholders in trade industry of Liberia that make up the LNCCT.

Civil Society Gears Up to Engage Legislators

(Heritage, The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- Liberia's civil society is gearing up for what is expected to be a serious engagement with members of the National Legislature on issue of critical significance to the stability of the country.
- According to a press release, under the auspices of the Liberia National Law Enforcement Association (LINLEA) and with the support of the National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations of Liberia, over 60 civil society leaders will meet today, Wednesday, October 14, 2009 in Monrovia to reflect on current issues of national significance and map out strategies for effective intervention as watch-dogs of society.

Phebe Hospital to Close Down if....

(Daily Observer, The Informer)

- The Acting Chief Medical Officer of the Phebe Hospital in Bong County, Dr. Jefferson Sibley, says the hospital may close down to the public if it does not pay its debts owed to both petroleum dealers and pharmacies.
- Dr. Sibley said the hospital owed its vendors US\$300,000.00 thereby making it extremely difficult for the hospital to function effectively.
- He said as a result of the heavy debt, there is an acute shortage of essential drugs at the only referral hospital in central Liberia.
- "If the hospital is closed because of a US\$300,000.00 debt, it means more deaths in this part of the country," Dr. Sibley pointed out.

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

Five HIV/AIDS cases reported in Bomi

- The Bomi County health team has reported five new HIV/AIDS cases in the county with one death recorded.
- The county health team also said it diagnosed a total of 19 suspected cases of Tuberculosis.
- The team also spoke of 69 emergency cases for the month of September with malaria dominating the chart.
- The disclosure was contained in the health team's report on Tuberculosis released at the Special County Development Committee meeting.
- The report said 22 surgical operations were carried out during the month of September.

Health workers go-slow at Guthrie

- Reports say health workers at the Guthrie Rubber Plantation have begun a go-slow action.
- According to the reports, the workers' action is in reaction to what they claimed is government's failure to take over the Guthrie Clinic as it did with the Guthrie School System.
- The reports further say condition at the clinic is going from bad to worse, because of the lack of a management.
- Government took over the Guthrie School System after an interim management team headed by MANCO, abandoned the plantation.

Diamond Headquarters shut down in Bomi County

- Bomi County Superintendent Mohamed Massaley has shut down the local diamond certification headquarters in Tubmanburg.
- Superintendent Massaley ordered the Kimberley Certification headquarters closed following a special county development meeting Tuesday.
- The Bomi Superintendent alleged since the headquarters was established in the county nearly three years ago, it has failed to cooperate with his office.
- Mr. Massaley said his office was interested in knowing the quantity of diamonds being mined, who is mining them, and how they are leaving the county.

UNMIL assures over Guinea situation, Monitors Situation

LCIP/USAID turn over refurbished medical institute Wed.

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

Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 09:45 am)*

Nigeria's First Lady Arrives Today

(Also reported on Truth FM)

Truth FM *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Trade Policy Workshop Opens in Monrovia

(Also reported on Star Radio)

NEC Sets to Clear Candidates, Declares Campaign Today

The Analyst

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

Liberia: TRC Recommendations Secure Country's Future

"We must, with all fairness, admit that the TRC has been, probably, the most controversial issue since elections. I did not sign the resolution to suspend all works on the TRC Report because I did not see that, in any way, in the Act forming the TRC and it was something that was passed by the National Legislature itself. "

"Yes, a lot of issues have been raised about the TRC report and I have raised some issues about the Report, but in the ultimate end, I endorsed the Report because it is a report that should be able to take us to the future, and I will like to see proceedings continue with the TRC report so I did not sign it." - This is how Senator John Ballout of Maryland County began expressing his support for the implementations of the recommendations contained in the TRC Final Report.

Addressing the controversy regarding the report as to whether it should be implemented or not, Senator Ballout told this paper that "I will like us go by the recommendations" because he believed that "it is the true vehicle that can take Liberia to the future." The Senator is of the conviction that implementing the recommendations of the TRC will do justice to the country as it will secure its future.

"I think it is not a perfect document, even the commissioners themselves admitted that it is not a perfect document. It is not met to satisfy every Liberian. They too had their own shortcomings and as a result, it is expected to create a lot of debate from both sides of the divide of the Liberian society. A lot of people are concerned about what it needs to implement the recommendation. Does that mean we will go back fighting? There are others who are concerned about implementing it because of the culture of impunity that for too long persisted in Liberia," he said reflecting on the true consequence the nation stands benefit.

However, the Maryland lawmaker is not trekking the path of "let's by-gone be by-gone" neither is he backing the call for document to be swept under the carpet under the canopy of fostering reconciliation. Rather, he wants to see precedence being set.

"I am one person who is interested in seeing precedence being set in dealing with the culture of impunity. I think over the years, it has never helped us. We said let's by-gone be by-gone over the years and over and over. We have seen the same things, the same mistakes, the same heinous crimes being committed against the people of this country," he said.

Expounding on the disagreements hovering over the TRC report, Senator Ballout said there would be such trend of disagreements, divisions and differences as long as human beings exist, but noted that in the end of it all, the common good of the nation matters.

"As long as we live in one area, for example in Liberia, there will always be reasons to be differed with one another, to divide, to disagree and there may another reason why people may think we need to fight again," he propounded but rubbished any notion that people are no longer interested in staging coup d'état and civil war because of past experiences. He hammered home the understanding that people who harbor any plans to stage wars or other forms of destabilization will know how to go about it because of what is unfolding regarding the TRC report.

"Maybe it will not happen in the next fifty years, or hundred years or hundred and fifty years. Who knows? We may have another coup d'état some way in the future or another civil unrest in the future. But what this document is saying is that as you go about dealing with your differences, and even as you deal with your coup d'état, you will know how to execute it; that when you are going to launch a civil war, you will know how to do it, that when you are going to fight, you will know how to fight the war and how you deal with prisoners of war, how you respect international protocols governing disputes or wars," Senator Ballout indicated.

According to him, the TRC report is intended to satisfy the future, noting "Today, you may be afraid of its implementation, but the consequences of not implementing are by far greater and there is where we stand today on the issue and that is my position."

At the same time, in as much as he says the TRC report should not be withheld; he expressed reservation about the manner in which he said the President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was treated, saying that it as one of the issues that concerns him most as far as the recommendations are concerned.

According to him, the Liberian leader who is among those the TRC recommended a thirty years ban from holding public office because of their role in the war, was dealt a "very harsh blow stronger than she deserves."

Agreeing that he indeed the president admitted to providing money to the NPFL to kick the ball rolling, but equally so, he said, the money was not her personal money, but for an organization and that every Liberian supported the cause for change of government as was demonstrated by the singing of slogans "of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, justice and good governance and equal rights.

"This is what all Liberians almost embraced from the unset because at that point in time there was a need for change. Whatever way we were applauding, but we were supporting the movement for change and that movement for change was abused and misdirected against the Liberian people and converted itself into dictatorship.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf no longer supported it. She fought it; the Liberian people no longer supported that. So I am just saying that what she was supporting was just the movement of change and that is expected of all Liberians, hoping to fight for a change that will bring justice, good governance, human rights and the rest. And this is the right of every Liberian and it is expected for all of us to support change in that line," he said in defence of the president.

He said to judge the president whether she was right or wrong, is not to find out whether she supported it or not but is to judge what she was supporting and fighting. He added: "If the president was fighting democracy I condemn her, but when that was dictatorship, I hail her."

According to him, by supporting the movement of change, Liberians were simply saying that the Samuel Doe government was a dictatorship, and as such, the president at the time was fighting a dictatorship. He said as much as there are some disagreeable things in the report, "it may not satisfy us individually, but it does satisfy the future."

While Senator Ballout has expressed opposition to the categorization of President Sirleaf and the ban placed on her, equally so, he has advised her to do the most honorable thing by upholding the recommendations contained in the TRC work.

"As I express my dissatisfaction, my disappointment in the way Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was dealt with, I am just saying that I still advise her and all Liberians to uphold the recommendations. While it may be true that it is stamping some of us, but it is bigger than us; it is dealing with national issues, the culture of impunity; it is dealing with ensuring that the future of this country is ensured for the generations unborn, and we as national leaders are under obligation to secure that future even to the point where we may not form part of it," Senator Ballout said.

He said those listed by the TRC under the category of "lesser crimes" where the president is, should take advantage of the "Palava Hut" discussions as provided for in the TRC Report and seek forgiveness, reconciliation and further express remorse.

Most importantly, the Maryland lawmaker urged his fellow countrymen and women not to disregard the report, saying "Let us follow the recommendations of the TRC; let us not attempt, in any form, shape or manner to distort it, or to manipulate it, or to undermine it."

"I am not speaking from the side of the president, from the side of anyone; I am speaking from the side of the collectivity of all Liberians. This TRC is the future of the country. As difficult as it may be, it is the Chloroquine that will kill the chronic malaria of impunity that we have. It is the chloroquine we have to deal with this reckless and irresponsible way of dealing with issues," the Maryland lawmaker said.

Marylanders Call For The Implementation Of Dev Policies - Appeal To Caucus To Release Funds For Development

Local leaders in Maryland County have called on the County's Legislative Caucus to make sure that development policies formulated are implemented. According to them, implementation of policies that were carved have not begun in the county, and have recommended that authorities jumpstart the process.

In a 7-count recommendation adopted at the end of the intensive capacity building workshop, the Maryland local leaders also called on the county's Legislative Caucus to release the county development funds for the 2008/2009 budget year in order to implement the projects identified for the use of the funds.

Additionally, they are calling on the Caucus to transfer to the county roads equipment from the county's 2008/2009 development funds to commence work in the county. According to the local Maryland county leaders, their caucus should endeavor by prevailing on relevant agencies of government for the assignment of a county attorney, a resident judge, and adequate police to the county for the dispensation of justice in the county.

Among other things, they urged the Ministry of Education to provide support to the county's school system by providing school furniture's, qualified teachers and stationeries. They made the recommendations at the end of an intensive peace building workshop organized by Action for Community and Human Development (ALCOHD), a pro-democracy, human rights and development advocacy organization operating in Southeastern parts of the country.

The workshop which lasted for two days was conducted for stakeholders in Maryland County. It was held at the St. Theresa Parish Hall under the Theme: "Local leadership Capacity Enhancement for Democratic Governance at local level."

It brought together some twenty-six participants including members of the Project Management Committee (PMC) as well as the Acting Development Superintendent for Maryland County, the County Inspector, two Statutory District Superintendents, seven Administrative District Commissioner and other county authorities.

The workshop which ran from October 2-3, 2009 was intended to build the capacity of the project management committee and governance especially in the conduct of local affairs at the local level, strengthen internal democracy and the enhancement of leadership role for local government leaders in Maryland County, and empower local government leaders to take full control of the county's development agenda and the poverty reduction strategy (PRS) for the smooth realization of their respective goals.

It was about endeavoring to provide a forum for stocktaking of the county Development Agenda (CDA) and the PRS in order to provide a sincere focus on their implementation process and to help local leaders better understand public business.

The workshop, according to a statement, was facilitated by Mr. Samuel N'Dingi, Office in Charge of the UNDP field office In Harper, Maryland C county Mr. Stephen Jallah of UNMIL Civil Affairs office in Maryland, Mr. Numene T.H. Bartekwa, Executive Director of ALCOHD and Mr. Andrew Gbowlion Sieh Nyeswah, program officer, ALCOHD.

During the workshop, several topics were extensively discussed. They include a critical look of the 2009/2010 budget years development focus, the implementation of the County PRS, good governance and its characteristics in local leadership, national budget for local leaders, the role of UNDP in the implementation of the County Development Agenda and the role of UNMIL in the implementation of the Maryland CDA.

BBC Online

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

Rwanda suspect pleads not guilty

One of the most wanted suspects in Rwanda's 1994 genocide has pleaded not guilty to charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Idelphonse Nizeyimana entered his plea at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Tanzania.

He was an intelligence chief at the time of the genocide, in which some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died.

Mr Nizeyimana is accused of organising the killing of thousands, including the former Tutsi queen.

He was arrested last week in Uganda and later extradited for trial at the UN-backed tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania.



Mr Nizeyimana had been on the run for 15 years

False documents

On Wednesday, Mr Nizeyimana, aged 46, pleaded not guilty to the charges of genocide, complicity to commit genocide and crimes against humanity.

Mr Nizeyimana was head of intelligence and military operations at Rwanda's elite military training school, the ESO, during the genocide.

The lengthy indictment says he elaborated, adhered to and executed a plan to wipe out the Tutsis - the minority in a country ruled by a Hutu government for more than three decades.



Queen Rosalie Gicanda (L) was revered by many Tutsis

He is accused of setting up special military units to help carry out the slaughter.

One of these units is believed to have killed Queen Rosalie Gicanda, widow of King Mutara III who died in 1959 shortly before the country became a republic.

Like an estimated two million Rwandan Hutus, Mr Nizeyimana fled after the genocide and took refuge in neighbouring DR Congo.

He had been on the run for 15 years until his arrest in a modest hotel in the Ugandan capital, Kampala.

Ugandan police said he had crossed the border from DR Congo last week, and was heading for Kenya with false travel documents.