

**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, 16 July 2008

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

### Local News

Anti-Corruption Commissioner Says “Justice System is...” / <i>Standard Times</i>	Page 3
Taylor Trial to Wrap Up “Within a Year” – Prosecutor / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 4

### International News

“Johnny Mad Dog” Movie to be Screened At UN / <i>The News</i>	Page 5
Taylor Trial at UN-Backed Court a Model...Says Prosecutor / <i>UN</i>	Pages 6-7
Press Conference by Special Court...Prosecutor / <i>7th Space Interactive</i>	Pages 8-9
Prosecutor Salutes Special Court for Sierra Leone / <i>Legalbrief Today</i>	Page 10
Commentary: A Healing Justice / <i>Legal Times</i>	Pages 11-13
Seeking Justice as War Crimes Rage On / <i>Chicago Tribune</i>	Pages 14-15
Sierra Leone Arrests 58 Over Record Cocaine Seizure / <i>AFP</i>	Page 16
S. Leone Holds Nine Foreigners After Cocaine Haul / <i>Reuters</i>	Page 17
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 18-20
Sudan 'Will Block Genocide Case' / <i>BBC</i>	Pages 21-22
For All Bashir's Bravado, He is Marked as Damaged Goods / <i>The Guardian</i>	Pages 23-24

Standard Times  
Wednesday, 16 July 2008

## Anti-Corruption Commissioner says "justice system is worrisome"



BY EDWARD MARAH

The Commissioner for the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) Lawyer Abdul Tejan Cole has expressed concern over the country's justice system as worrisome and inadequate to deal with smugglers and drug traffickers, which he said have increased their illegal activities in the country.

He made the statement on Monday 14th July 2008 while launching the report on vulnerability of the Freetown International Airport at the ACC conference room in Freetown.

The ACC Boss maintained that there is need to amend the country's laws on drugs control, stressing that the current laws are outdated and cannot be harder on drug offenders.

He noted that, the report on vulnerability of the Freetown International Airport by the ACC and its partners was

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based on the fact that the ACC cannot work alone in fighting corruption.

He stated that the mandate of his commission is to eradicate corruption in all forms adding that it was based on this background that the commission and stakeholders at the Freetown International Airport decided to investigate problems leading to the non effective management of the airport which has become drugs transit point and smuggling of diamonds and other minerals.

He pointed out that over the years a lot of drugs smuggling and illegal activities have been ongoing at the Airport leading to increase in crimes for which Sierra Leoneans should be concern about as the Airport is the gateway to the country. He called on Sierra Leonean to join the ACC to take immediate step to stop drugs trafficking in the country so that the country will not be blacklisted for drugs, transit points in the world.

He called on the authorities counting to implement the recommendation of the Airport operations Review Committee Report adding that if the recommendations in the report are implemented it will give a facelift to the airport. The ACC Director, systems review Mrs. Neneh Daboh said that the report takes a holistic approach on mechanism that needs to be put in place to make the airport free from drugs trafficking and smuggling of country minerals. She noted that corruption, mismanagement, financial and infrastructural difficulties of the Freetown International Airport recommendations are to avoid the negative operation that have affected travelers coming in and going out of the country, adding that if properly implemented it will help the effectiveness of the airport.

The secretary to the Review Committee Mr. Mohamed Koroma while presenting the report to the ACC Commissioner Mr. Abdul Tejan Cole said that the management of the Freetown International Airport have not been living up to international standards.

He revealed that for the past years there has been lack of appropriate technology, security lapses, drugs trafficking among others which he said were discovered during the investigations and also that the poor working condition which he said are responsible for the poor management of the airport.

He noted that the committee is further committed to ensure that the recommendations of the reports are implemented by stakeholders concern.

Concord Times

July 16, 2008

Page 6

# Feature

## Taylor trial to wrap up "within a year" - Prosecutor

The Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, said yesterday that the case was in its fifth month of hearing the prosecution's evidence, and could possibly wrap up "within a year".

During a Headquarters press conference, Stephen Rapp also told reporters that yesterday on the stand in The Hague was the thirty-fifth witness for the prosecution to appear, and before the end of the week, the thirty-sixth might take the stand. If the Prosecution succeeded on some procedural issues that might speed the case, there was the possibility that its case could be concluded in the next three or four months. The Freetown, Sierra Leone-based Court planned a four-week recess, beginning Friday, he added.

He said that the Defence had announced that its case would take about three or four months, and that then it would be up to the judges to determine his guilt or innocence.

Many outside observers following the trial had hailed the proceedings and the cases put forward by both the Prosecution and the Defence as "models of international justice", showing that the trial of a former Chief of State could be conducted openly and fairly, "and we're very proud to date of the progress that's been made", he said of the Court's handling of the case.

Mr. Taylor was charged with 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his involvement in the 10-year civil war in next-door Sierra Leone, which ended in 2002. He is alleged to have supported the rebels in Sierra Leone who committed murder, rape and mutilation of civilians, and arms trafficking and the use of child soldiers, aiming to gain control of the country's mineral wealth, particularly its diamond mines. The Security Council authorized the Special Court to transfer Taylor to The Hague for trial, "due to the security implications if he is held in Freetown".

Despite the Court's progress, Mr. Rapp said the Taylor case had presented the Prosecutor's Office with some unique challenges, especially since it was dealing with the responsibility of a Head of State and former rebel leader from one country for crimes against humanity in a neighbouring nation. "For that reason we have the special challenge of showing the linkage between Mr. Taylor and crimes committed on the ground [in Sierra Leone] by the RUF and their allied AFRC military group."

To address this, the Prosecution had listed in its case some 59 insiders, people who were at one time or another very close to the former Liberian leader. They were now providing evidence as witnesses to support his case that Mr. Taylor "was behind the planning of this campaign of terror and atrocity, that he took various steps to order and instigate those crimes and, at a bare minimum, at least aided and abetted these crimes by providing crucial arms and materiel in return for diamonds, at a time when all the world knew that these rebels were committing horrendous offences against human beings".

He told correspondents that one of the Court's ongoing challenges involved the selection, transportation and protection of witnesses. "We deal with people that may be very hard for us to reach and protect, since, in the Charles Taylor case, they have to be brought all the way to The Hague to testify," he said, adding that, even though witnesses could be transferred to safe houses for interviews, 42 days before they appeared in Court, their identities had to be

disclosed. That often involved another move and, after their testimony, the Court had to often consider relocation.

"We have ongoing responsibilities in this area," he said, recalling that last year Court officials had spoken to the Security Council about helping to urge countries to enter into relocation agreements with the Court, just as they had in more than a dozen cases with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and in several cases with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

While the Court's intention was always to relocate individuals in country, there were

those, including families and friends, "at such great risk" that they had to be relocated outside the region. He added that perhaps 25 of the witness that had taken the stand thus far in the case would need "ongoing protection of one kind or another".

Responding to questions about the news today that the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court had presented evidence against Sudan's President for alleged war crimes, including genocide, in the strife-torn Darfur region, Mr. Rapp said that, while the cases against the two leaders might differ, the lesson of the Charles Taylor indictment, arrest, transfer and trial -- as well as that of [former Serbian President] Slobodan Milosevic -- was that when an international court ordered an arrest, even of a Head of State or Government, "it's not an issue of if, but when", that leader would face justice.

"If the arrest warrant is [executed], I would expect the day will arrive when President Al-Bashir is going to face justice," he said, adding that day might not be tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, or even next year. The steps between the issuance of an arrest warrant, an arrest, a transfer and trial, "are somewhat unforeseen at his point", but the momentum was such and expectation of the victimized communities, human rights groups and mobilized populations across the globe, was such that there would come a day when there would be justice. While the decision was in the hands of the Prosecutor and the judges and all the States parties involved, "I am confident that day will arrive," he said.

Mr. Rapp is also at Headquarters in connection with the Security Council's debate this Thursday on "children in armed conflict". The Special Court handed down last June historic first convictions by any United Nations-backed tribunal for the crime of recruiting and using child soldiers. The judges found the three accused, Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu members of the rebel Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) -- guilty of war crimes and other serious violations of



Former Liberian President Charles Taylor

international humanitarian law, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers, he said.

Those charges had been affirmed on appeal in February and the three accused now faced "long sentences", up to 45 years, in one instance, and 50 years for the other two. Mr. Rapp will join the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict and the Permanent Representative of France to present the film Mad Dog Johnny, a drama about child soldiers fighting a war in an unnamed African country that premiered to rave reviews at the Cannes Film Festival this past May. That film, shot entirely in Liberia and including a cast of former child soldiers, was produced with backing from the French and Liberian Governments and with the help of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

"While the movie doesn't specifically focus on Liberia, I think it presents a very realistic and, to some extent, shocking picture, of this crime" and the way it affected recruited children and the persons who were subjected to their acts of brutality, he said. Indeed, it had been one of the horrors of Sierra Leone and Liberia that children had been used to fight where adults, quite frankly, couldn't be motivated to join the conflict because it didn't involve any substantial political issues. "So these children became instruments of warlords, and sometimes, then, committed the most brutal acts," including amputating limbs, in the case of the Sierra Leone conflict.

He said that the film underscored the importance of ending impunity for the crime of child soldiering. Since the Court's prosecution and since the United Nations had stepped up its involvement in the issue, there had been, to some extent, a reduction in the use of children in war. "But it still happens," he said. "It happens too much." He stressed that the recruitment of child soldiers could be deterred through criminal prosecutions and raising public awareness. At the same time, "the damage needs to be repaired" to help the children and their victims heal the scars of the brutality. He added that former Liberian President Taylor now also stood accused of that crime.

## The News (Liberia)

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

### **“Johnny Mad Dog” Movie To Be Screened At UN**

The award-winning film on child soldiers, “Johnny Mad Dog” filmed in Liberia is expected to be screened today at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The movie was filmed entirely in Liberia and features a cast that includes former child soldiers.

A release from the Special Court for Sierra Leone said the Prosecutor, Stephen Rapp, will co-host a special advance screening of the award-winning film on child soldiers.

The Prosecutor will join the UN’s Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict and the French Mission to the United Nations in a screening for diplomats, UN officials, and members of the press.

“This year the Special Court for Sierra Leone rendered the first convictions in world history for the crime of enlistment and use of child soldiers,” Rapp said, adding “this film shows how this crime victimizes both the enlisted children and the innocent persons who are subjected to their acts of brutality. It strengthens our resolve to end impunity for this crime and to do all we can to repair the harm that it does to human beings”.

“Johnny Mad Dog” premiered at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, where it was awarded the Prize of Hope.

The screening will be followed by a panel discussion on the enlistment and use of child soldiers. Panelists will include the director of the film, Jean-Stéphane Sauvaire, Prosecutor Rapp and SRSG Radhika Coomaraswamy. They will be joined by the Permanent Representatives of the UN Missions of Sierra Leone, Liberia and France.

The event takes place two days before the UN Security Council is scheduled to hold an open debate on children and armed conflict.

## United Nations News Centre

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

### ***Taylor trial at UN-backed court a model for international justice, says Prosecutor***



14 July 2008 – The Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), which is trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, says many commentators refer to the court as a model for international justice.

Charles Taylor

“It shows that the trial of a former chief of State can be conducted openly and fairly and we’re very proud to date of the progress that’s been made,” Stephen Rapp told reporters in New York today.

Mr. Taylor is facing 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law – including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers – for his role in the decade-long civil war that engulfed Sierra Leone, which borders Liberia. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges against him.

Mr. Rapp said the prosecution’s case is that Mr. Taylor aided and abetted two rebel groups, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which committed numerous atrocities during the civil war.

He noted 59 insiders, people who were at one time very close to the former Liberian President, are providing evidence as witnesses to support his case that Mr. Taylor “was behind the planning of this campaign of terror and atrocity, that he did various steps to order and instigate those crimes and, at a bare minimum at least, he aided and abetted these crimes by providing crucial arms and materiel in return for diamonds, at a time when all the world knew that these rebels were committing horrendous offenses against human beings.”

Currently the SCSL is hearing its 35th prosecution witness, Mr. Rapp said, adding that he expected that the trial would wrap up within a year after the defence has also made its case.

In 2006, the Security Council authorized the staging of Mr. Taylor’s trial at The Hague, Netherlands, citing reasons of security.

The Court, established in January 2002 by an agreement between the Sierra Leonean Government and the UN, is mandated to try “those who bear greatest responsibility” for war crimes and crimes against community committed in the country after 30 November 1996.

Last year, it reached an agreement with the British Government whereby Mr. Taylor will serve out his sentence in the United Kingdom if he is convicted.

Mr. Rapp also noted today that the Security Council is holding a debate on children and armed conflict this week, and stressed that the SCSL had obtained the first convictions in history for the crime of the enlistment or use of children under the age of 15 in hostilities.

In February the Court upheld convictions against Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Borbor Kanu, who are both serving 50-year prison terms, and Brima Bazzy Kamara, who is serving 45 years, after all three were found guilty of 11 charges, including committing acts of terrorism, murder, rape and enslavement and conscripting children under the age of 15 into armed groups.

## 7th Space Interactive

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

[http://7thspace.com/headlines/286843/press\\_conference\\_by\\_special\\_court\\_for\\_sierra\\_leone\\_prosecutor.html](http://7thspace.com/headlines/286843/press_conference_by_special_court_for_sierra_leone_prosecutor.html)

### **PRESS CONFERENCE BY SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE PROSECUTOR**

The Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, said today that the case was in its fifth month of hearing the prosecution's evidence, and could possibly wrap up "within a year".

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He said that the Defence had announced that its case would take about three or four months, and that then it would be up to the judges to determine his guilt or innocence.

Many outside observers following the trial had hailed the proceedings and the cases put forward by both the Prosecution and the Defence as "models of international justice", showing that the trial of a former Chief of State could be conducted openly and fairly, "and we're very proud to date of the progress that's been made", he said of the Court's handling of the case.

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Legalbrief Today  
Wednesday, 16 July 2008

**Prosecutor salutes Special Court for Sierra Leone** Published in: Legalbrief Today

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Issue No: 2111

The Chief Prosecutor of the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, says many commentators refer to the court as a model for international justice.

'It shows that the trial of a former chief of state can be conducted openly and fairly and we're very proud to date of the progress that's been made,' said Stephen Rapp. According to a *UN News Service* report, Taylor is facing 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law - including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers - for his role in the decade-long civil war that engulfed Sierra Leone, which borders Liberia. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges against him. Rapp said the prosecution's case is that Taylor aided and abetted two rebel groups, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the Revolutionary United Front, which committed numerous atrocities during the civil war.

**Full UN News Service report**

## Legal Times

Wednesday, 16 July 2008

<http://www.law.com/jsp/law/LawArticleFriendly.jsp?id=1202423001663>

### **Commentary: A Healing Justice**

Alexander Koff and Joseph L. Morales

07-16-2008

Look out, General Motors. Move over, Toyota. Sierra Leone is introducing its own brand of hybrid -- and it's attracting significant attention from, well, lawyers and politicians.

In its drive to justice following a decade of civil war, Sierra Leone is betting on a special international court with strong national ties. The Special Court for Sierra Leone has already built a promising track record of five convictions for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Now it is revving up for its biggest challenge: the next phase in the trial of Charles Taylor. The claim is that the former Liberian president actively supported rebel forces in neighboring Sierra Leone during the latter country's bloody conflict. His trial before the special court resumed this year after a postponement to give a new defense team time to prepare.

The true test of Sierra Leone's hybrid court will be the degree to which the Taylor trial and others help close the chapter on the atrocities that befell the West African country.

#### A NEW DESIGN

It's proof of the yearning for peace that in the years after a civil war, people turn to courts to mete out justice. But designing a court system that can help mend the tattered social fabric or bring ordinary citizens together to build a better future is no easy task.

Purely national tribunals run the risk of being -- and being seen as -- biased, retaliatory and divisive. Defendants may receive support from their remaining loyalists. Trials can become circuses. And in the worst case, bloodshed erupts again.

International tribunals sometimes fare no better. Perceived by locals as a form of distinctly pro-Western meddling, such proceedings may lack the on-the-ground credibility essential to heal deep wounds.

Enter the Special Court for Sierra Leone, established at the request of the new government in 2002. Instead of opting for either an international or national model, Sierra Leone chose to design a special court that could meld the credibility of a local tribunal with the safety valves of an international one.

With the exception of the Taylor trial, which is being conducted in The Hague because of security concerns, all proceedings of the special court take place in Sierra Leone itself. This represents a marked departure from previous efforts to deal with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Two well-known tribunals formed in the 1990s -- the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda -- have both operated largely outside the borders of the country where the alleged crimes took place.

Both of those courts are also under the authority of and funded and staffed by the United Nations. Not Sierra Leone's court. The special court is not funded or staffed directly by that international body.

Moreover, prosecutors have the option to pursue indictments under international or national law. So far, they have chosen not to proceed under the domestic law of Sierra Leone -- which has drawn criticism. But the option remains.

That said, the tribunal will ultimately be judged on whether, in the eyes of the local people, it offers a fair and functioning judicial system that brings closure to the conflict. Intermediate panel decisions, handed down in May of this year, in the cases of Allieu Kondewa and Moinina Fofana suggest that the special court is doing just that.

Kondewa and Fofana fought against the rebels backed by Charles Taylor. The fact that those on opposing sides of the civil war are being prosecuted and that the May decisions overturned convictions on some counts and reconfirmed others suggests that the court is acting impartially, guided by the rule of law. Time will tell.

But what really makes the Sierra Leone court special is how it has worked to obtain and maintain the active buy-in of the population. The court's outreach program is, in the words of chief prosecutor Stephen Rapp, "a model for almost any justice system in the world."

## CONSUMER DEMAND

Outreach efforts, dubbed the Grass-roots Awareness Campaign, focus on town meetings and grass-roots organizing. Both are crucial in a country with a critical lack of infrastructure, which leads to great difficulty in reaching isolated areas. These initiatives are coupled with a concerted effort to obtain increased media coverage. As Robert Alsdorf, chairman of the American Bar Association's Sierra Leone Task Force, reported last year, this outreach has been "so successful" that the international courts for Yugoslavia and Rwanda have come to study the process.

Town meetings keep citizens in remote communities informed about how the special court operates, who is being brought to justice, and how the cases are progressing. These meetings also give citizens the chance to ask questions and air concerns about the pursuit of justice.

The court says there are more than 1,500 outreach meetings a year. Conducted by court staff members, the gatherings reportedly draw anywhere from 50 to 400 people. Videos are shown. Key members of the court -- including the chief prosecutor, the principal defender, and the registrar -- even go off-road to remote areas to conduct meetings.

And because those in neighboring countries suffered during the civil war too, there is reportedly an effort to extend outreach efforts to Liberia and Guinea.

Another key feature of the court's outreach are the Accountability Now Clubs, a form of grass-roots organizing geared toward high school and college students. A representative of the court has advised us that the clubs are meant to build support for the rule of law, good governance, and a national judicial system over the long term: "We hope that these clubs instill a thirst for justice and the means for achieving it so the court's legacy will not merely be a fair trial for Charles Taylor and the righting of wrongs committed by his regime."

The third leg of the court's outreach efforts is the strengthening of media coverage. Already, two independent organizations not affiliated with the court -- the BBC World Service Trust (the BBC's human rights charity) and Search for Common Ground (a nonprofit organization focused on peaceful conflict resolution) -- have ongoing media efforts in Sierra Leone.

The special court hopes that such increased attention will show the openness and transparency of the court's proceedings and ultimately increase its legitimacy -- particularly as Sierra Leone itself struggles with the concept of a free and impartial press.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

Although a solid source of pride within Sierra Leone, this type of judicial effort also presents obvious financial challenges. Without the deep pockets of the United Nations, the special court is forced to rely solely on voluntary contributions from donor countries. It is not easy to adjudicate a case involving alleged crimes against humanity; it is even harder to do without the necessary financial resources.

Whatever the ultimate success of the Special Court for Sierra Leone -- and its full impact remains to be determined -- it is a solid and creative attempt to combine the best practices of international law with the legitimacy of a local court. It offers a vehicle for healing national wounds, bringing criminals to justice and permitting citizens to actively participate in legitimate trials. It may yet achieve what everyone should want: confidence in the rule of law and the glimmer of a brighter, more stable future.

*Alexander Koff is a partner and Joseph L. Morales is an associate in the Baltimore office of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston. Koff chairs the firm's global practice.*

Chicago Tribune  
Wednesday, 16 July 2008

## Seeking justice as war crimes rage on

By Priscilla Hayner

GENEVA—The request by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for an arrest warrant against the president of Sudan focuses attention on one of the greatest challenges of international relations: whether and how to seek justice during an ongoing conflict, when the worst of the accused perpetrators still hold great power.

Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the ICC's chief prosecutor, gave advance warning of his intentions, telling the United Nations Security Council last month that he intended to pursue the highest officials for serious crimes in Darfur. Sudan's government responded by making threats intended to intimidate the court. The international community, including humanitarian organizations feeding and protecting tens of thousands of civilians in Darfur, feared damage to the sputtering peace talks on Darfur; damage to an already weakened North-South Sudan peace agreement; even a forced exodus of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers.

For many who follow Africa, there are familiar threads to this story. A powerful head of state, or a senior rebel leader who can single-handedly decide when and whether a war will end, is indicted for war crimes even while peace talks are under way. Everyone shakes, fearing the worst.

What happens then, however, is surprising, and perhaps this story is too little known. Peace talks for Liberia, for example, were directly strengthened and invigorated by an indictment of Liberia's president, Charles Taylor. The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone made the indictment public on the opening morning of the talks, which were taking place in Ghana, in 2003. Diplomats hosting the peace conference were furious and immediately provided a plane for Taylor's rapid return to Liberia.

But virtually everyone present at those talks now agrees that the indictment of Taylor single-handedly changed the peace conference into a serious affair of peacemaking, with real prospects for success. Taylor, then the most powerful man in Liberia, had often manipulated previous efforts to secure a peace settlement. This time, though, he was effectively delegitimized, marginalized and removed from any role in a future political settlement. After 2½ months, the Ghana peace talks produced a comprehensive agreement. Taylor left Liberia for exile in Nigeria.

Despite initial worries, the indictment did not lead to greater violence in Monrovia, the Liberian capital. Two years later, after repeatedly violating the terms of his exile, Taylor was arrested and sent to the court in Sierra Leone.

If the court had not issued that indictment, many participants believe, there never would have been a serious peace agreement, and the war would not have come to a peaceful end.

Worries about efforts to combine justice and peacemaking also surfaced in Uganda, where government forces were battling the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.

In 2005, the ICC issued arrest warrants against leaders of the LRA, a force notorious for its use of child soldiers and wanton attacks against civilians. In this instance, too, diplomats worried that the ICC's action would damage ongoing peace talks with the LRA. Ultimately, the peace negotiations broke down this

April after the senior rebel leader failed to appear for a final signing ceremony. But in the meantime, the arrest warrants had a noticeably positive effect on the talks' substance and style.

The LRA talks—after the warrants were issued—produced a strong framework for holding all parties accountable for their actions—and through Ugandan institutions, which would have effectively taken over from the ICC. Diplomats and other experts close to the talks concluded the ICC had a largely positive impact on the process.

There were other reasons for the talks' ultimate failure, but the indictments provided a constant point of pressure and an incentive for the rebels to negotiate.

The past does not reliably predict the future, and Sudan is not Uganda or Liberia. But at this critical time for Sudan, when some voices are calling for justice to be sacrificed in the interest of peace, it is useful to recall some of this recent history.

The situation in Sudan is delicate, and it is impossible to know the full impact of the ICC's actions. But it would be wrong to suggest that pragmatism always trumps principle in matters of life and death, and thus that one must ease up on justice in order to achieve peace. In some cases, the interest of peace has been well served by strong, forthright efforts to advance justice.

*Priscilla Hayner is director of the Geneva office of the International Center for Transitional Justice.*

## Agence France-Presse

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

### **Sierra Leone arrests 58 over record cocaine seizure**

FREETOWN (AFP) — Police in Sierra Leone said Tuesday they had arrested a total of 58 suspects, including a number of foreigners, in connection with Sunday's record cocaine bust in the West African state.

Deputy Inspector-General Oliver Somassa said those detained included Americans, Mexicans, Colombians, Venezuelans, Brazilians and nationals from Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria. He did not give precise figures.

Others included local airport officials and five police officers. An air traffic controller and an employee of a bank at the airport were picked up trying to cross into Guinea, Superintendent Frank Sesay said.

Sources said the suspects were being detained at the maximum security Pademba Road prison in the capital Freetown. A checkpoint manned by armed guards was set up on the main road to the prison on Tuesday evening.

Somassa said police were still searching the area around the airport in an effort to track down other suspects.

"We have made a lot of progress and we are on top of the affair," he said.

The arrests follow the discovery on Sunday of 600 kilos (1,322 pounds) of cocaine in an airplane bearing a fake Red Cross emblem at Freetown's international Lungi airport.

Police said the plane had come from Venezuela, which is an important exporter of cocaine shipments destined for Europe.

The seizure is a record for Sierra Leone and one of the biggest drugs hauls this year in West Africa.

Transport and Aviation Minister Kemoh Sesay said Tuesday maritime and port authorities had been ordered to step up checks on all boats in local waters.



## Reuters

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

### **S. Leone holds nine foreigners after cocaine haul**

By Katrina Manson

FREETOWN, July 14 (Reuters) - Sierra Leone police on Monday arrested nine foreign nationals, including four Colombians, two Mexicans and an American, following the West African country's largest ever seizure of cocaine, a senior officer said.

Officers at Lungi international airport north of Freetown on Sunday found 700 kg (1,545 lbs) of cocaine, five automatic rifles and ammunition aboard a plane with a Red Cross logo that landed there, but its crew managed to escape from the airstrip.

Immediately after the seizure, police set up checkpoints on roads leading away from the airport, which lies across the Sierra Leone river from the capital Freetown.

"We were able to arrest some people -- we have nine foreign nationals now. Four had Colombian passports, two Mexican passports. There was one American, one from Guinea Bissau and another ... white man," Sierra Leone Police Assistant Inspector General Francis Munu told Reuters.

Big cocaine seizures in West African coastal states in recent years show the region, with its unguarded coastline and sparsely populated interior, has become an important trafficking route for Colombian cartels shipping drugs to Europe.

"It's a very big seizure ... It's drawn attention to the fact that we have to do more. There must be many more flights like this," Michael Schulenburg, the head of the United Nations mission in Sierra Leone, told Reuters.

"It's something that governments can lose control over," he said.

Some of the foreigners were detained after they fled their vehicle into the bush to avoid a police checkpoint in the Port Loko area north of Freetown, Munu said. They were captured with the help of local residents.

Munu added the plane seized came from South America. "I think it was registered to Venezuela," he said.

A number of Sierra Leonean nationals had also been detained for questioning.

"The suspicion is that such aircraft can't land without having a local accomplice. The airport manager and the operations officer are now with police officers answering (questions about) whether they had prior knowledge of the landing," Munu said.

He added the smugglers had tried to conceal the plane's real registration by sticking a false number over it.

Colombian cocaine cartels started shipping drugs through West Africa a few years ago because their direct routes to U.S. and European markets were being blocked by anti-narcotics agencies. They have focused their operations especially on the tiny, poor former Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau.

Antonio Maria Costa, executive director of the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), urged the international community last week to act quickly to stop the cartels from taking over ancient trading routes in West Africa and the Sahel.

**United Nations**  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries**  
**15 July 2008**

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

**Newspaper Summary**

**Armed Robbery on the Increase – Police Launches New Operation to fight Crime**

(The Informer, The Inquirer, The News, New Democrat, National Chronicle, Daily Observer)

- The local dailies continued to reflect security concerns of the general public, particularly in the week of a reported increase in armed robbery in Monrovia and surrounding communities. Prominent newspapers- The Informer, The Inquirer, The News, New Democrat, National Chronicle, and Daily Observer - reported incidents of armed robbery in the Paynesville suburb and other communities.
- The latest upsurge has prompted calls for the government and the UN Mission in Liberia to act decisively and robustly in putting to a halt the prevailing security threats in the country.
- Reports said the Government was due to launch new security measure code named "Operation Disrupt and Dismantle" to curb the reported increase in armed crime.
- Meanwhile, Police Inspector General Munah Sieh ruled out any involvement of Police officers in the armed robbery attacks in the ELWA Community. Inspector Sieh said the fact that the robbers used arms to execute their plan clearly dissociates the participation of police officers in the incidents.
- In another twist, media reports suggest that the Government's proposal seeking to make armed robbery, terrorism and hijacking a non-bailable offence is likely to get legislative approval this week. The proposed bill already submitted to the National Legislature recommends tougher measures against armed criminals.
- The Liberia National Police (LNP) appears poorly equipped to fight crime. Despite the logistical constraints, the LNP, with support of their UN counterparts, has to some extent managed to suppress criminal activities in the last couple of months.

**BRE Pledges to Assist Liberia with Electricity**

(The News, The Analyst, Daily Observer, The Informer)

- The Buchanan Renewable Energy (BRE) has disclosed plans to construct a 35-Mega Watt Power Plant for Monrovia.
- Speaking at a news conference yesterday, BRE's Power President, Stanley Ridley said the plant would be built 50 kilometres outside Monrovia and would be run by rubber wood chips instead of diesel fuel or gasoline.
- Mr. Ridley said the construction of the plant estimated at US\$100 million would begin in January 2009 and completed in December 2010.
- Meanwhile, the Chief Executive Officer of the company, Mr. Jim Steele said the company has already invested over US\$15 million in equipment with an additional US\$8 million worth of equipment expected in September this year.

**"I Testified Against Taylor to Protect Myself" – Says Former President Blah**

(National Chronicle)

- In an interview, former President Moses Blah says the decision to go and testify in the trial of his ex-boss; Charles Taylor was to protect himself.
- Mr. Blah said he was concerned that he could have suffered a similar fate as Mr. Taylor had he refused to testify in The Hague.

## **Opposition Politician Claims Government Orchestrating Bad Security Situation to Let UN Troops Remain**

(New Democrat)

- [sic] A defiant National Patriotic Party (NPP) official has accused Government of orchestrating the deteriorating security landscape as a ploy to stall the departure of the UN Mission in Liberia. Mr. John Whitfield, Secretary General of the National NPP, an offshoot of the rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), on a radio talk show after his indictment for illegal possession of weapons, said there is no law in the country that forbids citizens from carry weapons. He said in a shouting voice, that the government should not hide behind the UN-ordered disarmament to deprive citizens of their alleged rights to be armed. Whitfield, expected in court next Thursday, also accused the government of being frightened of its own police force and therefore reluctant to arm the force because they (government officials) know what they did here. The defiant politician and former rebel official called on the government to step down, saying it has failed in its constitutional duty of defending the people. There are speculations that many officials of erstwhile rebel groups are armed, and that the current wave of armed robbery is controlled, with ex-fighters still mobilized.

## **Teacher Guilty of Raping 13 year old Female Student**

(The Informer)

- A 12-member petit jury at the Criminal Court "B" at the Temple of Justice on Monday brought down a guilty verdict against a classroom teacher for raping a 13-year old female student. Daniel Mortee, 45, who is a resident of the Matadi Estate, sexually abused the student after he invited her to his residence in December 2006.

## **Liberia Strengthens Ties with Namibia**

(The News, The Analyst)

- The leaders of Liberia and Namibia Monday held official talks centred on bilateral cooperation between the two countries.
- The discussions between President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba culminated with the signing of a framework agreement on economic, technical, scientific, cultural and tourism cooperation between the two nations.
- An Executive Mansion dispatch says President Sirleaf arrived in Windhoek Sunday afternoon at the start of a two-day state visit. The President and party were received upon arrival by her Namibian counterpart, President Pohamba, officials of government and members of civil society groups, as well as traditional dances and cultural groups.

## **Government Reviews National Health Plan**

(Daily Observer, The News, The Informer)

- The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has begun a 3-day conference to review the National Health Policy formulated a year ago. The conference, presently ongoing at the Samuel K. Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville, will highlight the successes and shortcomings in the implementation of the National Health Plan.
- Speaking to reporters Monday following an indoor programme, Health and Social Welfare Minister Dr. Walter Gwenigale said the review of the NHP which covers the period of one year is intended to identify discrepancies in the allocation of funds to various segments in the National Health programme of the country.
- Based on the findings from the conference, government would be in a position to determine which section of the health program needs more priority," he added. He said some of the general goals of the conference are to agree on priorities of action to facilitate the implementation of the next phase of the National Health Plan.

## **Radio Summary**

## **Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 10:20 am)*

### **BRE unveils major assistance package**

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

### **Former President Blah justifies travel to The Hague**

### **UN Human Rights Expert Wants Police Strengthen**

- The UN Independent Expert monitoring human rights activities in Liberia, Dr. Charlotte Abaka says there is a need to strengthen the Police and called for additional support to help the force tackle crimes.
- According to Dr. Abaka, though armed robbery was taking place around the world Liberia's case is unfortunately on the increase.
- Dr. Abaka comments came after she monitored a hearing on the draft act to establish the Independent National Human Rights Commission.

### **Liberty Party Differs With Government over Whitfield's Arrest**

- The opposition Liberty Party says the arrest of the NPP Secretary General, Mr. John Whitfield is an attempt to divert attention on handling the security situation in the country.
- Mr. Whitfield was arrested last week for publicly stating that he had a firearm in his possession to protect himself and his family.
- The Liberty Party said Mr. Whitfield may have interpreted the President's statement that the country's security has collapsed and government could not protect its citizens.
- Meanwhile, the opposition party said it is disappointed that government is contemplating re-vetting the newly trained Police saying amidst reconstruction challenges the country cannot afford engaging in trial and error process.

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

### **Police Inspector General Rules Out Police Involvement in ELWA Robbery**

- Police Inspector General Munah Sieh has ruled out any involvement of Police officers in the armed robbery attacks in the ELWA Community.
- Inspector Sieh said the fact that the robbers used arms to execute their plan clearly dissociates the participation of police officers in the incidents.
- Speaking to journalists on Monday, she dismissed as untrue claims that a Police officer only identified as Yekeh was involved in the armed robbery attack in King-Gray and called on those linking the officer to the incident to report to the Police.
- Officer Yekeh has also denied claims that he was the mastermind of the King Gray robbery.

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

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BBC

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

## Sudan 'will block genocide case'

**Sudan has said it will do all it can to block the work of the International Criminal Court, which has accused the nation's leader of genocide in Darfur.**

President Omar al-Bashir's most senior adviser told the BBC the allegations were designed to generate hostility between tribal groups in Darfur.

Ghazi Salaheddin said that if the ICC pursued the case it could jeopardise relations between Sudan and the UN.

Meanwhile, the UN is withdrawing about 200 non-essential staff from Darfur.

The UN said the decision to pull back staff from the joint UN-African Union Darfur mission, Unamid, came after recent violence and as a precaution after the genocide accusation.

In the capital, Khartoum, the UN told its staff to stay at home as thousands of Sudanese took to the streets rallying in support of their president.

Mr Bashir, who says the accusations are lies, is accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur.

Judges at the ICC, an independent body, are yet to decide if there are reasonable grounds to issue an arrest warrant against Mr Bashir.

Some 300,000 people have died as a result of the conflict in Darfur since 2003, while more than two million people have fled their homes, the UN estimates.

Sudan's government denies mobilising Arab Janjaweed militias to attack black African civilians in Darfur since rebels took up arms in 2003.

### 'No jurisdiction'

In a BBC interview, Ghazi Salaheddin said Sudan did not recognise the ICC's jurisdiction and it would be rallying support among its allies to try to block proceedings.

Efforts to indict a sitting head of state would set a dangerous precedent, he said.

Allegations of genocide by the ICC's chief prosecutor were designed to generate hostility between tribal groups in Darfur, Mr Salaheddin said.

"On the allegation of genocide, an international commission sanctioned by the United Nations has come and investigated the situation in Sudan and has concluded that there was no genocide. So genocide is out of the question," he said.



Protesters turn out in Khartoum in support of President Bashir

Mr Salaheddin denied the government of Sudan was blackmailing the international community by failing to provide security guarantees for peacekeepers and humanitarian staff.

He said that Sudan would be seeking support from its allies in the Arab League, which is meeting on Saturday to discuss how to respond to the ICC's accusations.

The UN runs large-scale humanitarian operations in the region and has thousands of peacekeepers in Darfur as part of a joint mission with the African Union (AU).

### **African Union dilemma**

In its first reaction, China expressed grave concern over the ICC prosecutor's decision to seek the arrest of Omar al-Bashir.

A foreign ministry spokesman said the court should try to help bring stability to Sudan and not to undermine it.

He said China would continue to consult with other members of the UN Security Council about whether to block the ICC but would not speculate on possible results of talks.

Meanwhile Russia called for "restraint" from all sides.

Russia's ambassador to the UN said Sudan and the UN must "exercise restraint and find solutions that will help the people of Sudan and resolve the crisis in Darfur".

The US, which is not part of the ICC, offered some praise on Monday for prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo's charge.

"In our view, recognition of the humanitarian disaster and the atrocities that have gone on there is a positive thing," state department spokesman Sean McCormack said.

But the African Union urged caution. Speaking on behalf of the AU chairman, Tanzanian Foreign Minister Bernard Membe said the ICC should suspend its decision on whether to seek Mr Bashir's arrest until problems in Darfur were resolved.

The Peace and Security Commissioner for the AU, Ramtane Lamamra, has flown to Sudan for a meeting with Mr Bashir and other members of the government.

The AU Commission expressed concern that "hard-won gains made in the search for peace and reconciliation in the Sudan" could be jeopardised.

Foreign ministers of the 15 countries currently serving on the AU's Peace and Security Council are expected to meet in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital where the AU is based, next week.

The charges against President Bashir put African countries in an acutely difficult position, says the BBC's Liz Blunt in Addis Ababa.

They supply almost all the troops for the joint AU/UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, and are also the countries most likely to be called upon to carry out any arrest warrant, she says.

## The Guardian

Wednesday, 16 July 2008

Opinion

### **For all Bashir's bravado, he is marked as damaged goods**

The Sudanese president will soon find his security council allies can't shield him from the impact of being cast as global pariah

Justifying his move this week to seek an arrest warrant for the president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, the international criminal court's prosecutor, said: "I don't have the luxury to look away. I have the evidence." It was a characteristic riposte from Luis Moreno-Ocampo to a barrage of warnings last weekend that the prosecutor should not interfere with the difficult situation in Darfur and damage any last chances of a peace deal (not that in four years Bashir has ever attended the Darfur peace talks). In fact, the ICC has less room for political manoeuvre than its critics allege. That may yet prove its greatest strength.

Contrary to the fears expressed when the ICC was first set up - most notably by the United States, which raised the spectre of a rogue vigilante prosecutor stalking the world - Ocampo has followed a highly conservative prosecutorial strategy. Although the prosecutor has the powers to initiate an investigation himself, all the situations other than Sudan that have come before the ICC have been referred by the national governments of the countries concerned. Congo, Uganda and the Central African Republic turned to the ICC as a way of targeting atrocities committed by rebel forces. Such "auto-referrals" were barely contemplated at the Rome negotiations that established the ICC.

The unique contribution of the ICC was to provide the mechanism for international prosecutions where crimes were committed in furtherance of a state policy or plan.

The situation in Darfur, which was referred to the ICC by the UN security council in March 2005, is such a case. Given the evidence against Bashir that his investigation has thrown up, Ocampo's discretion is severely limited, and does not encompass guesswork about future political negotiations or judgments about which way members of the security council will vote. Nor should it. He is a prosecutor, not a diplomat, and the credibility of the ICC depends on that distinction being maintained. As well as requiring any arrest warrant to be approved by a panel of judges, the ICC's statute provides extensive avenues to challenge a decision not to prosecute.

The prosecutor's move was nonetheless bold. In charging Bashir with genocide, together with war crimes and crimes against humanity, he has thrown at him the most resonant crime in the ICC's book, if not the easiest to prove. It recognises an intent to destroy the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa peoples of Darfur, an attempt which continues today in armed attacks on the 2.5 million civilians living in displacement camps and the obstruction of humanitarian assistance. One of the factors the ICC's judges will weigh in while considering Ocampo's request for a warrant is whether an arrest is necessary to prevent Bashir from continuing to commit his crimes.

If the warrant is issued, what will happen? The security council is unlikely to agree immediate enforcement action, with a veto expected particularly from China, which buys most of Sudan's oil and sells its arms. Two Sudanese suspects whom Ocampo indicted last year, a government official and a leader of the notorious Janjaweed militia, are still at large (Bashir promoted the official to minister for humanitarian affairs).

Sudan will go on denouncing the ICC and no doubt will also continue its policy of obstructing the deployment of the joint UN-African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur. To avoid arrest Bashir will not travel to any of the 106 countries that are party to the ICC statute, but then he wasn't doing much travelling anyway. He would have been aware of the prosecutor's ability to seek a sealed indictment, like the one which in May trapped Jean-Pierre Bemba, a former vice-president of the Congo and the ICC's biggest fish in custody to date. If Bashir travels to other states that are not party to the ICC, he will claim the immunity from which heads of state customarily benefit under international law, although he might not get it without a fight.

So an arrest warrant for the Sudanese president will be a milestone in the early history of the ICC, but probably not the turning point many expect and some fear. The same can not be said for Bashir, who will come to understand that the independence of the ICC from the UN means that its decisions cannot just be rescinded by his allies on the security council. In the two recent cases where serving heads of state have faced an international indictment - Slobodan Milosevic by the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Liberia's Charles Taylor by the special court for Sierra Leone - the diplomatic controversy quickly subsided and the indictees soon found their national power base crumbling away. Politicians do not like to be led by an international pariah, even if, or especially if, they are themselves implicated in his crimes. They were both inside a prison cell within three years.

Heads of state often make the mistake of believing too literally the legal fiction that they are the embodiment of the state. Soon, not just Bashir's enemies but his friends too will realise that he is damaged goods. China does not need Bashir to continue doing oil deals in Sudan. He is unlikely ever to recover.

*· Mark Lattimer is the director of Minority Rights Group International and co-editor with Philippe Sands of the book Justice for Crimes Against Humanity*