

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

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Thursday, February 17, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
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# At Special Court...

## Four charges dropped against AFRC

Judges of Trials Chamber II, of the UN-backed Special Court for War Crimes in Sierra Leone, have formally agreed to let the Prosecution delete four charges dealing with attacks on UN Peacekeepers from the original 18 charges against three Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) indictees. In a ruling

handed down on 15<sup>th</sup> February, the Judges ordered that "counts 15, 16, 17 and 18" of the amended consolidated indictment are hereby deleted." In the initial Prosecution motion to withdraw the four charges filed on February 7<sup>th</sup>, they argued that when the individual indictments were originally approved, "the evidence in the

possession of the Prosecution" seemed to be adequate enough to prove their case against the AFRC indictees "beyond reasonable doubt, in relation to the entire time

period" stated in the indictments. Now, they argued further: "new evidence obtained by the Prosecution ... has led the Prosecution to the view that the joint

criminal enterprise cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt after January 2000," the period relevant to counts 15 to 18. These counts (15-18) deal with "attacks on

UNAMSIL personnel" between the period "15 April 2000 and about 15 September 2000." Specifically, they include: "intentionally directing  
*Contd. Page 2*

## Four charges dropped against AFRC

*From Front Page*

attacks against personnel involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission (15); the unlawful killings, murder (16); violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular murder (17);

the abductions and holding as hostage, taking of hostages (18)." In their response to the Prosecution motion, Lawyers for Santigie Kanu alias Brigadier 55 stated that he "has no objections", while Alex Tamba Brima alias Gullit

"is content with the proposed amendment." According to the Judges, Brima Bazy Kamara "has not filed any response." In effect, the four charges dealing with attacks on UN Peacekeepers have been maintained for only the RUF indictees. The trials for the AFRC indictees are scheduled to start on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

Awoko

Thursday February 17, 2005

## ***SPECIAL COURT...***

# Witness tells how Kamajors amputated him

*By Theophilus S. Gbenda*

Prosecution witness TF2-006, testifying in the ongoing CDF trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, has testified how Kamajor militias amputated his fingers and rendered him non functional to date.

In his evidence in chief, the 60 year old witness who said he was a farmer, and recalled how during the height of the war, he was captured by a group of Kamajors armed with machetes.

According to the witness who testified in Limba, the Kamajors accused him of being a collaborator and wasted no time in hitting him with sticks and his hands placed on a stick where his fingers were chopped.

According to the witness, all his fingers except for his thumb, were chopped, and that the Kamajors were ridiculing him saying that the thumb that now stands alone represent the slogan "one love."

The witness further said in

his evidence in chief that he saw other people who suffered from similar fate at the hands of the Kamajors.

The credibility of the witness was however challenged when lawyers for the accused persons who are effectively boycotting the trials, started their cross examination.

The defence teams argued that the oral statement of the witness by all indication contradicts what he had earlier said to the prosecution.

The defence also argued that the witness in fact was a welder and that he had an accident while welding, which resulted to his fingers being chopped off.

This was however disputed by the witness who maintained that he had never been a welder.

In their opinion the trial chamber judges stressed that under the principle of orality, witnesses can amplify their statements adding that the burden lies on the defence to dig out the truth during cross examination.

When people fight each other, it's bad. When brothers decide to fight each other, it will not only be terrible but equally dangerous. This is exactly what came to mind when I listened to an interview granted by former Sierra Leone's Ambassador to United States of America, Mr. John Leigh.

From our little corner, we want to thank journalist David Tam Bayoh for going all out to get the former Ambassador and strong SLPP man.

The interview was important for myriad reasons.

Firstly, there have been of late rumours of Mr. John Leigh's intention to contest for the presidency of this republic.

There have also been rumours about why the SLPP strongman actually fell out with this government, which eventually culminated into factorizing him, not only outside his position but the political brackets as well.

The interview, which he granted to Citizens radio, came across this city and since it is a radio station that unreservedly speaks the minds of the suffering masses many of us heard the SLPP man loud and clear.

At the end of the interview, we were made to understand that there is great danger in allowing a fight between two friends or brothers. John Leigh knows so much about this government, and like Alfred Akibo Betts was, he can single handedly be a problem if he decides to stand against it.

Ever since the SLPP deputy-organizing secretary, Mr. Sheriff made it known that President Kabbah is a dictator, much of such revelations have been coming.

One such is what John Leigh made.

Mr. John Leigh's explanation that he started falling out of favour with the President when he was growing popular during the months of interregnum ought to be treated with every degree of seriousness.

The question however is

# Something To Think About

BY  
AHMAD  
NABABA

## A message for John Leigh: Sender: The suffering masses.

that why does any other man need to hate the other person for growing popular?

Somebody has to grow popular simply because he is living to the expectations of the human race.

In the candid view of most of us, John Leigh was just bound to grow popular particularly during the period of AFRC/RUF madness in this country.

Without exaggerating any fact, during that period, one of the greatest hopes of then besieged Sierra Leoneans was the voice of John Leigh over the radio.

In fact, his radical chanting, demoralization of the junta and his personal conviction of throwing out that illegal regime went a long way to encourage the then suffering masses.

On many occasions, we had to listen to the voice of hope (John Leigh) before going to our burrows to lay out heads. In the final analysis, the people of this nation were really not decided as those hoodlums were eventually thrown out.

So to many Sierra Leoneans, especially those who stayed in Freetown during those darkest moments, John Leigh was, after God Almighty, our next strongest hope.

Why should John Leigh not be popular? Why should anybody grow offended by his popularity?

Be encouraged that a good can only be put down for sometime and never permanently.

Personally I was perplexed, shocked to the bones and amazed beyond comprehension when John Leigh revealed that he was not invited to be part of the celebrations marking the restoration of the SLPP government.

**"I listened to his views regarding the arrest and continued detention of Chief Sam Hinga Norman. Thank you Mr. John Leigh you are not only a patriot but also a pragmatic one"**

It seems as if Alfred Akibo Betts truly knew this man, this President Kabbah.

In a situation where no grudge was not nursed for John Leigh, it should have been President Kabbah who should have publicly presented John Leigh to the people of this country for the role he played leading to the return of democracy and sanity in this country. But no, he wouldn't have done so, since in his own thinking that would have been a way of marketing that patriot (John Leigh) for the leadership of this nation.

Whilst John Leigh was a firebrand, much feared even by the junta and its supporters, the voice of President Kabbah in those days was a source of great anger.

How can President Kabbah, if he truly loves this nation turn against John Leigh?

I have really not had the opportunity of seeing John Leigh in person, something that I am truly not yearning for, but I am a great admirer of his stance on issues and policies.

It was certainly against such background that many people grew to dislike the present crop of SLPP leadership.

I listened to his views regarding the arrest and continued detention of Chief Sam Hinga Norman. Thank you Mr. John Leigh you are not only a patriot but also a pragmatic one.

We very honestly stated your views as they were right. Like you actually stated, most Sierra Leoneans believe the arrest of Norman and other CDF leaders was politically motivated.

We have to agree with you because following the growing popularity of Chief Norman after the infamous January 1999 invasion, President Kabbah wanted to send Chief Norman to Nigeria as this country's High Commissioner there, but Chief Norman however refused on the grounds that he preferred to stay and protect his people.

Like John Leigh rightly mentioned, is imprisonment the reward that Chief Norman and his comrades are getting for fighting to redeem this nation and restore Tejan Kabbah to power?

The truth shall come to light and Chief Norman and others must be encouraged that, like Nelson Mandela after twenty-seven years on Robben Island, they will walk with heads upright from the Special Court detention.

That is as certain as the rising of the sun for tomorrow morning.

Thank you Mr. John Leigh for making some issues very clear during the course of that interview. Let it be known that people actually do not hate SLPP as a party. What people have grown to dislike most is the present crop of leaders.

It is not a secret that most of them are corrupt. There could hardly be any genuine person in their midst. If John Leigh came on a fact finding mission from us the down trodden, then when you go back, tell others that people are suffering.

Tell your brothers and sisters that the suffering is becoming unbearable. Let them know that the international community is actually doing well but the funds end up in the ministers' personal pockets.

Tell all those in the Diaspora that while the masses are suffering the ministers have no sympathy and are still inclined to building mansions all around Freetown.

The situation is terrible. There is need for sanity and patriotism to be restored.

How can the running of a state be reduced to friendship and the decision of a close female companion?

Tell them that Miss Isata Jabbie, alias I.J., is now made to decide most things in the country.

We are calling on John Leigh and all others to come and rescue not only SLPP from disintegrating but also the nation as a whole.

***In fact, his radical chanting, demoralization of the junta and his personal conviction of throwing out that illegal regime went a long way to encourage the then suffering masses.***



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## FOCUS Wants U.S. Pressure ECOWAS To Turn Over Taylor

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

February 16, 2005

Posted to the web February 16, 2005

A child rights advocacy group FOCUS is calling on the United States Government to pressurize the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) to turn over former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the United Nations backed War Crimes Court in Freetown to face justice.

In a letter to U.S. Ambassador John Blaney, the group accused the exile former President of violating one of the terms of the asylum he currently enjoys, through his interference into Liberian political affairs.

In a release, FOCUS said justice is fundamental to lasting peace and stability in Liberia and as such the trial of Mr. Taylor will set a precedent and guide against the recurrence of blood shed in war weary Liberia.

The organization recalled that Mr. Taylor conspicuously nurtured and aided human rights abuse in Liberia, including summary executions, rape, and rampant corruption during his presidency with impunity.

FOCUS asserted that Mr. Taylor's evil desire to destabilize the West African sub-region led him to have masterminded armed rebellion and insurrection in Sierra Leone which resulted into casualties, mayhem, amputation of thousands of women and children without being made to account for his misdeeds.

The release said former president Taylor is also believed to be the architect of several cross border raids into Guinea that destroyed lives and properties, thus creating misery and terror in the sub-region.

Meanwhile, the child rights advocacy organization is calling on the Liberian Human Rights Community to join the group to mount pressure on ECOWAS and the international community for the speedy trial of Mr. Taylor, the release signed by the FOCUS' Executive Director Anthony L.M. Boakai said.

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# "PA" NEWS

Wed 16 Feb 2005

print  close 

4:22pm (UK)

## New Police Guidelines on Suspected Forced Marriages

*By Neville Dean and David Barrett, PA*

New guidelines on how police officers should deal with cases of suspected forced marriage were launched today.

An international conference was held in London to raise awareness of the scourge of forced marriages and so-called "honour" violence against women.

The Metropolitan Police hosted the event which was co-sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office, and brought together a range of agencies and specialists working in the field.

The Met's Yasmin Rehman said: "We have officially re-launched the revised police guidelines which take account of recent development of legislation, particularly the Domestic Violence Bill and the Children's Act.

"We have also started a consultation process on the Met's strategy on forced marriage."

Lesley Taylor, chief prosecutor at Sierra Leone's Special Court, also addressed the event ahead of a series of trials there relating to women kidnapped and forced into marriage during the country's civil war.

Heather Harvey, from the Foreign Office's Community Liaison Unit, discussed the Government's re-launched forced marriage unit.

The new body – with six staff and an annual budget of £300,000 – was launched last month alongside new guidelines to help teachers and college lecturers spot suspected cases.

Aneeta Prem, the Metropolitan Police Authority's lead member for forced marriages, said: "I welcome working in partnership with other agencies and any dialogue that will help highlight the awful reality that many young people face.

"We have to raise awareness amongst communities and spread best practice.

"Many young women, as well as men, from a variety of backgrounds, including Asian, African and Eastern European, experience extreme pressure to conform to the expectations of their community and family against their own wishes – in essence an intense cultural clash.

"This can lead to depression or much worse.

"We look forward to an open dialogue on an issue which has been historically difficult to bring into the public arena so that practitioners are more empowered and enabled to respond."

The conference took place at Kensington Town Hall, west London.

### Latest News:

<http://news.scotsman.com/latest.cfm>

## Law conference to look at trials of Hussein, Milosevic

By Linda Myers

How can former heads of state accused of horrific crimes be prosecuted? Who should try the ousted leaders? And what are the special challenges in doing so?

Those questions are at the center of a symposium, "Milosevic and Hussein on Trial," at Cornell Law School Feb. 25 and 26, in which leading law scholars will look at the issues involved in holding the past leaders of the former Yugoslavia and Iraq and others accountable for their actions while in power.

The talks and panels are free and open to the public. Most events will take place in the Harriet Stein Mancuso '73 Amphitheater, Room G90, in Myron Taylor Hall.

On Friday, Feb. 25, at 4:30 p.m. international human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson will deliver the keynote address in Stein Mancuso amphitheater. He has defended members of the Irish Republican Army accused of terrorism and represented Human Rights Watch in the proceedings against former Chilean dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet. He currently is a judge in the appeals chamber of the United Nations Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Other noted participants include Tom Parker, former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority's Crimes Against Humanity Investigation Unit in Iraq; Lt. Col. Michael Newton, U.S. Army expert in international law, who helped establish the Iraqi Special Tribunal; Payam Akhavan, co-founder of the Iranian Human Rights Documentation Center; Ruti Teitel, a professor at New York University who is the author of *Transitional Justice*, which examines 20th-century transitions from authoritarianism to democracy in many countries; Natasa Kandic, a leading human rights activist in the Balkans; Mikhail Wladimiroff, a defense lawyer who has served as amicus curiae (knowledgeable adviser to the court) in the Milosevic case before the International Criminal Court in the Hague; Jerrold Post, a professor at George Washington University who is a specialist on the political psychology of leaders; and Ruth Wedgewood, a professor at Johns Hopkins University who has advised the U.S. Defense and State departments on international law issues.

Talks and panel topics are "Justice, Power and the Realities of an Interdependent World," "Global or Local Justice: Who Should Try Ousted Leaders?," "Perspectives on Transitional Justice: Collective Memory, Command Responsibility and Political Psychology of Leadership" and "The Trial Process: Investigation, Prosecution and Defense." Discussants will look at evidentiary rules, rights of the accused and social and political effects of such trials.

The conference's main sponsor is the law student-run *Cornell International Law Journal*. Co-sponsors include Cornell Law School and groups within the school and across campus. For a complete schedule, see this Web site: <http://organizations.lawschool.cornell.edu/ilj/>.

**February 17, 2005**

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Help stop the crisis in

## I'm Not a Monster - Adolphus Dolo Opens Up

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

February 16, 2005

Posted to the web February 16, 2005

"Look, I am not a monster that people think I am. I am intelligent and I know what I want in life," says Adolphus Dolo, a former General of the former Government of Charles Taylor.

Mr. Dolo, born March 21, 1963 in Sehngbein or Sanniquellie, Mahn District, invited the press to his Adolphus Entertainment center yesterday to express his concern about a wave of what he called negative media reports against him and his county - Nimba.

The former General took nearly three hours to retrospect on his experiences during the 14-year war, dating from 1990 when, according to him, he escaped near deaths including one on the UN Compound in Sinkor at the hands of soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) acting on behalf of the late President Samuel Doe.

"If you knew me in 1989 you could never have thought I could have hit anybody with a bottle, lest to talk about carrying a gun. But you see the thing was that I got involved in the war as a result of situation," said Mr. Dolo, son of Dunbar Pious Patrick Dolo, a Mano, and Edith Gorbanay Fangalo, a Gio.

Dolo said his path was not of war, though he disclosed that his father was a soldier. "I did not start this war; the war chose me," he asserted.

However that happened, Dolo indicated that he is a natural person and wondered why "so much negative things are being written about me. Why are journalists not getting my side?" According to him, he got involved with the war in the country during the April 6, 1996 fracas, and disclosed that it was during that time that he first met Alhaji Kromah and Charles Taylor.

Dolo, known during his war days as "Peanut Butter", refuted media reports that he was an obstacle to peace.

"I was not, I am not, and will never be an obstacle to peace. If others saw me that way, Gen. Opande did not see me that way, Gen. Owonibi does not see me that way, UNMIL does not see me that way," said Mr. Dolo.

On why his name was placed on travel ban list, Dolo said all that was due to the negative "unverified" reports against him in the press and by international pressure groups and human rights organizations.

According to him, "UNMIL has received the most cooperation from the former GOL than any other warring parties, and if there was any general who cooperated most with UNMIL, that has got to be him." Dolo, who said he eschew militarism for politics, noted that unlike other areas, there was no arms seen in public in Nimba.



County where he controlled at the time before the commencement of the disarmament process.

The former General however described the Liberian civil crisis as a "tribal war and not civil war". He said the way the tribes - Gios and Manos on the one hand, and the Krahns got at loggerhead was the result of the row that existed between two friends, the late President Samuel Doe and former Commanding General of the AFL Thomas Quiwonkpa.

The panacea, Dolo said, for reconciliation and peaceful co-existence is for elders of Grand Gedeh and Nimba counties to advise their children that, "we are not enemies". "You may not believe it, the elders of the two counties are getting along fine, they do things in common, but it is their children who are causing all the problems," he said He said his regrets of the war are the massive loss of "precious lives", and row between his kinsmen and members of the Mandingo ethnic group, adding, "Mano people spoke Mandingo and Mandingo people spoke Mano.

We were one people, now how come we became bitter enemies."

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## Lawyer Pleads For Detainee

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

February 16, 2005

Posted to the web February 16, 2005

The legal counsel of Dalibor Kopp, the 44-year old detained Czech Republic national, wanted by his government for extradition on arms trafficking charges, says his client came to Liberia as a businessman and not former president Charles Taylor's arms dealer as previously suspected.

Cllr. Jonathan Williams, a professor of the Louise Arthur Grimes School of Law, University of Liberia, says his client should have been out of jail since last weekend after 30 days of a protracted detention in keeping with the law.

But he maintains that Kopp's continuous detention despite tendering "sufficient bail for his release is a violation of the law".

Cllr. Williams, an international lawyer, argued that "a fugitive before a court for extradition is entitled to be released if the punishment is not death or life imprisonment." He said his client was invited to Liberia during the Taylor administration by the Czech Republic Consul General, Kapel Socror, for investment purposes in the country.

On his arrival in Monrovia, the lawyer said, Kopp was introduced to the Foreign Minister who was then Monie Captan.

According to the lawyer, Captan offered Kopp his warehouses at his farm in Paynesville to establish a toilette tissue factory. Kopp accordingly established the factory, the lawyer said.

Kopp got attracted to a Liberian lady, Maria Davies, and took his newly found lover to the Czech Republic and married her there.

While in the Czech Republic, however, Cllr. Williams said, his client was told not to return to Liberia.

"His business partners in Liberia were plotting against him so as to deport him and take his toilette tissue factory," he claimed without naming the partners.

After former president Charles Taylor departed Liberia under a hail of bullets, according to Cllr.

Williams, Kopp received a letter from the transitional government dated January 26, 2004, inviting him to explore business opportunities in Liberia.

"He came with a delegation to Liberia as evidenced by another photo taken at the Executive Mansion. In that picture, Vice Chairman Wesley Johnson is featured prominently among other persons. Kopp and his partners then established a trade and investment corporation in the country," he said.

He however noted that Kopp's presence in Liberia took a dramatic turn when Czech police officers arrived in the country early this year to seek his extradition.

Records say on January 12 this year, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), along with a court officer, some UNMIL officers, two Czech police officers, and the Jordanian police unit arrested Kopp at his house in Congo Town, Monrovia, and charged him with "illegal trade with military materials, including ammunition and heavy weapons." The records show that immediately after his arrest, Kopp was sent to jail at the Monrovia Central Prison, pending extradition.

Kopp's arrest was soon reported to the Czech Republic authorities. NBI was advised to inform Interpol ASAP officially so that the extradition could be carried out as soon as possible, records say.

When we went to court, we asked for a bail under chapter 8, sub section 8.1-8.8 of the Criminal Procedure Law of Liberia," said the lawyer.

According to Cllr. Williams, the defendant has been in custody since January 12, this year, more than 30 days as required by law.

"He is still languishing in jail despite the fact that we filed a US\$75,000 bail bond with two Liberian surety guarantees, but the court, without recourse of the law, extended the 30 days to 45 days and demanded that the two surety guarantees be replaced with property valuation in the amount of US\$50,000, making a total of US\$75, 000," said Cllr. Williams.

He said they tendered the bail in keeping with the law and the demand of the judge but that the judge has not approved the bond and that the defendant continues to languish in jail.

"I have contacted the senior membership of the legal section of UNMIL and they told me that UNMIL is not a party to this case and that the matter of Dalibo (Kopp) is not justiciable before the court and that it is a private matter between the Czech Republic and Dalibo," he said further.

He said two Czech officers of UNMIL have been keeping surveillance on the detainee's wife According to the lawyer, the condition of his client was not good as he continues to spend a protracted period in jail in violation of his rights under the law.

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*Federal Document Clearing House Congressional Testimony February 16, 2005  
Wednesday*

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Federal Document Clearing House Congressional Testimony

**February 16, 2005 Wednesday**

**SECTION:** CAPITOL HILL HEARING TESTIMONY

**LENGTH:** 3397 words

**COMMITTEE:** HOUSE FINANCIAL SERVICES

**SUBCOMMITTEE:** OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

**HEADLINE:** TERRORIST RESPONSE TO U.S. FINANCIAL DEFENSES

**TESTIMONY-BY:** DOUGLAS FARAH, AUTHOR

**BODY:**

Statement of Douglas Farah Author

Committee on House Financial Services Subcommittee on Oversight and  
Investigations

February 16, 2005

Thank you, Chairman Kelly, for the invitation to talk today about the role of commodities in terrorist financing. I believe it is an extremely important area that has not received the attention it deserves from the intelligence and law enforcement communities, either before or after 9-11.

Commodities such as gold, diamonds and tanzanite have played a vital role in the global terrorist infrastructure. Gemstones have played a particularly important role in al Qaeda's financial architecture. Diamonds, in particular, have been used to raise money, launder funds and store financial value. Gold, for a variety of cultural and logistical reasons, has been used primarily as a way to hold and transfer value. These commodities are not tangential to the terror financial structure, but a central part of it.

Diamonds have also been used extensively by Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in the Middle East that have a long tradition of access to diamonds in West Africa through the Lebanese diaspora there.<sup>1</sup>

Since the late 1990s, diamonds and tanzanite have played an important role in both financing terrorist activities and helping terrorists move their money outside the formal financial sector.<sup>2</sup> Gemstones are ideal for several reasons: they hold their value; they are easy to transport; they do not set off metal detectors in airports; and they can be easily converted back to cash when necessary. This is especially true of "blood diamonds," or diamonds mined by armed groups, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, in order to finance their wars. Diamonds mined in these areas are outside government control, where illicit trade has flourished for years and where it is easy for

clandestine structures to operate while drawing little attention from the law enforcement or intelligence communities.

Al Qaeda sought to exploit gemstones in West Africa, East Africa and Europe almost since its inception. Al Qaeda, the Taliban and the Northern Alliance all exploited Afghanistan's emerald fields to finance their activities, so gemstones were not an unknown revenue source.

There is strong evidence of al Qaeda's ties to the African diamond trade, despite the reluctance of some in the U.S intelligence community to acknowledge the link. The data comes from the testimony of al Qaeda members convicted of the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in East Africa; my own investigations into the ties in West Africa, particularly to Charles Taylor in Liberia and his allies in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in **Sierra Leone**; investigations by the London-based NGO Global Witness; Belgian police investigations; and most recently, a growing body of evidence accumulated by the U.N.-backed **Special Court for Sierra Leone**, charged with investigating crimes against humanity in that brutal conflict. In two reports presented to some members of Congress, the Court's chief prosecutor and chief investigator- each with 30 years experience in the Department of Defense-have summarized the large volume of evidence of these ties from sources that are different from and independent of other investigations. I would be happy to provide members of the committee with any of these documents.

Groups like al Qaeda and Hezbollah chose West Africa as a base because in states such as Liberia, **Sierra Leone** and most others in the region, governments are weak, corrupt and exercise little control over much of the national territory. Some states, like Liberia under Charles Taylor, were in essence functioning criminal enterprises. For the right price, Taylor let al Qaeda, Russian organized crime, Ukrainian organized crime, Balkan organized crime, Israeli diamond dealers and Hezbollah, operate under his protection. Yet Taylor's regime could still issue diplomatic passports, register aircraft, issue visas and enjoy the benefits accorded to a sovereign government.

Because of this, Taylor issued airplane registrations to Victor Bout, one of the world's largest illegal weapons dealers. Bout was later discovered not only to be selling weapons to most sides of most civil wars in Africa, but also to the Taliban AND the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. He often took his payment in diamonds. Until very recently he was also flying for the U.S. military in Iraq.

The documentary and anecdotal evidence point to two distinct phases in al Qaeda's diamond activities. The first started sometime before 1996, when bin Laden lived in the Sudan, and was aimed at helping finance the organization. The latter years overlap with the large-scale, al Qaeda dominated purchase of tanzanite in East Africa.

Wadi el Hage, bin Laden's personal secretary until he was arrested in September 1998, spent a great deal of time on gemstone deals. During his trial in New York, El Hage's file of business cards, personal telephone directory and handwritten notebooks were introduced as evidence. He was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the East Africa bombings. The notebooks contain extensive notes on buying diamonds, attempts to sell diamonds, and appraising diamonds and tanzanite. There is a page on Liberia, with telephone numbers and names. His address book and business card file were full of the names of diamond dealers and jewelers, many

containing the purchaser's home phone number. It is not clear how profitable al Qaeda's gemstone ventures were. What is clear is that the efforts to acquire gemstones, particularly diamonds, were frequent, widespread and a matter of priority of al Qaeda. In late 1998, following the al Qaeda attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es- Salaam, Tanzania, al Qaeda moved to the second phase of its diamond operation. The impetus was the Clinton administration's successful freezing of some \$240 million in assets belonging to Afghanistan's Taliban government and bin Laden, the rogue regime's guest. The move caught both the Taliban and al Qaeda by surprise because they apparently did not realize the money, mostly held as gold reserves in the United States, could be targeted.

The picture of al Qaeda's activities in West Africa changed dramatically in the latter half of 2000, when senior al Qaeda operatives arrived in Monrovia, Liberia. Having set up a monopoly arrangement for the purchase of diamonds through Taylor with the RUF, al Qaeda buyers went on a spree that lasted several months. But here the intention was not to make money, but rather to buy the stones as a way of transferring value from other assets. In order to do this, the al Qaeda operatives were paying a premium over the going rate for uncut stones, leaving regular buyers without any merchandise to purchase.

What is particularly interesting during this phase was the collaboration between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. While al Qaeda operatives on the ground supervised the trade, the middlemen handling the diamonds were Shi'ite. Further muddying the waters as the collaboration between Islamists in the West African diamond trade, with Israeli diamond merchants. Despite the war in their homelands, both Israeli and Lebanese diamond merchants continue to do business with each other. There are numerous other documented cases of al Qaeda-Hezbollah cooperation, but the tie in the financial field is relatively unexplored.

The pace of the al Qaeda purchases picked up beginning in January 2001 and lasted until just before 9/11. Telephone records from the middlemen handling the purchases shows telephone calls to Afghanistan up to Sept. 10. The available evidence points to al Qaeda purchasing some \$20 million worth of RUF diamonds during the 14 months prior to 9/11. The evidence suggests a rapid, large- scale value transfer operation that allowed the terrorist group to move money out of traceable financial structures into untraceable commodities.

In the terrorist financial architecture, the use of gold is different than that of precious stones. Gold seems to be used primarily to store value and facilitate the movement of money across the world's financial markets.

Cultural and regional factors made gold a favorite commodity of both the Taliban and al Qaeda. Much of the money they had was stored in gold. In the waning days Taliban control of Afghanistan, Sheik Omar and bin Laden sent waves of couriers carrying gold bars and bundles of dollars--the treasury of the country and the terrorist movement--across the porous border of Afghanistan into Pakistan.

From the Afghan-Pakistan border area, the money and gold were consolidated and taken by trusted couriers to the port city of Karachi, Pakistan. There, the Taliban consul general Kaka Zada oversaw the movement of the wealth to the desert sheikdom of Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The transfer to Dubai relied on couriers and the virtually untraceable, informal money transfer system known as hawala, a method widely used across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia. Zada also

personally acted as a courier at least once, taking \$600,000 in a diplomatic pouch to Dubai in late November 2001.

Such money movements are not unusual. Pakistani officials estimate that \$2 million to \$3 million a day are hand carried from Karachi to Dubai, a flight of less than an hour. But in the three weeks from the end of November to mid-December there was a large spike in the amount of money traveling that route, reaching \$6 million to \$7 million a day. Once in Dubai much of the wealth of the Taliban and al Qaeda was converted to gold bullion and scattered around the world. Gold, unlike cash, is exempt from almost all reporting requirements that govern currencies, making it much harder to trace.

Demand for gold in India and Pakistan is extremely high for religious, cultural and legal reasons. Gold has significance in ceremonial rites for Hindus, and is widely used for dowries in marriages. But for centuries gold has also been the preferred medium of exchange for businessmen and traders on the Indian subcontinent. Gold is a traditional hedge against inflation, hoarded as a security against times of high inflation or hardship. The annual demand for gold in India is estimated by Interpol, the international police agency, to be an astonishing 800 metric tons, almost triple that of the United States.

Because gold imports into both Pakistan and India have traditionally been restricted and subject to high tariffs, gold smuggling from Dubai, where the gold trade is unregulated, has been enormously profitable for decades. Dubai's location is ideal, making it a nexus of myriad smuggling networks that flow through Iran, India, Pakistan, the Arab world, to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

During the war to control Afghanistan, the Taliban was broadly backed by Pakistani and Indian businessmen who wanted a single authority to guarantee their merchandise could move by truck across Afghanistan. The Taliban promised to clear the roadblocks of petty warlords, and in exchange received from the transportation syndicates substantial financial backing, much of it in gold.

Donations to the Taliban and al Qaeda from wealthy Saudi backers were also often made in gold.<sup>10</sup> When U.S.-led forces occupied Afghanistan they found al Qaeda training manuals that included not only chapters on how to build explosives and clean weapons, but sections on how to smuggle gold either on small boats or concealed on the body. Using specially-made vests, gold smugglers can carry up 80 pounds, worth up to \$500,000, on their person. Cash is far bulkier.

Gold continued to play a vital role in al Qaeda finances in recent times. In the summer of 2002, elite European intelligence units monitoring al Qaeda's movements forwarded an alarming report to their U.S. counterparts: Al Qaeda and the Taliban were shipping large quantities of gold through Karachi to Sudan. The gold was being sent by boat to either Iran or Dubai, where it was mixed with other goods and flown by charter airplanes to remote airstrips in Sudan. The gold was obtained through a "commodity-for-commodity exchange," Pakistani intelligence officials said, meaning heroin and opium stashed by the Taliban and al Qaeda was traded to drug traffickers for the precious metal. The gold was packed in boxes and represented only a small portion of the cargo on each charter flight. Estimates of the value of the gold ranged from several hundred thousand dollars to several million.

Sudan was familiar territory for bin Laden, and his history there has been retold

often. But it is worth a brief recap.

In April 1991, he had moved there with several hundred combatants, welcomed by the fundamentalist Islamic government, the National Islamic Front. Bin Laden even married into the family of NIF leader Hassan al Turabi, wedding Turabi's niece.

In May 1996, under heavy pressure from the United States and anxious to rehabilitate its international image, Sudan asked bin Laden to leave, and he returned to Afghanistan. However, many of bin Laden's businesses in Sudan remained active and he remained close, economically and politically, to many leaders of the NIF. Bin Laden "has banking contacts there, he has business contacts there and he is intimately familiar with the political and intelligence structure there," said a European intelligence official. "He never fully left Sudan despite moving to Afghanistan."

There are several lessons one can draw about the financing of Middle Eastern terror in West Africa and the terrorist use of commodities.

One is that terrorist groups are sophisticated in their exploitation of "gray areas" where states are weak, corruption is rampant and the rule of law nonexistent. They correctly bet that Western intelligence services do not have the capacity, resources or interest to track their activities there.

A second lesson is that terrorist groups in these areas learn from their own mistakes as well as each other. They are adaptable in ways that make them extremely hard to combat. Hezbollah has been using diamonds from West Africa to finance its activities for at least 20 years, perfecting smuggling routes to Europe and Lebanon, developing a network of middle-men and successfully embedding its financial structure within the diamond trade. Al Qaeda operatives plugged into the same network. A third lesson is that small clues and critical analysis matter in tracing terrorist funding and the use of commodities, but there has been a limited understanding of the financial structure of al Qaeda and Hezbollah before and after 9/11. The intelligence community carried out its first comprehensive assessment of al Qaeda's financial structure in 1999. The 9/11 Commission found the same to be true for the entire intelligence community in looking at al Qaeda's organizational structure. Rather than understanding the complex web of commodities, charities and individual donors that filled al Qaeda's coffers, the conventional wisdom in the intelligence community was that bin Laden was using his personal wealth to finance his organization's operations.

A fourth lesson is that terrorist networks and criminal networks can overlap and function in the environments of failed states, like that of Liberia. Commodities like diamonds are the coin of choice as the different groups provide different services to governments or rebel groups in exchange for cheap access to commodities.

A fifth lesson is that the intelligence community reacts very poorly to information it does not initiate.

Within the culture of the community, the assumption was that the initial diamond stories made the CIA look bad, and therefore had to be attacked. So was the information passed on by **Special Court** for **Sierra Leone** investigators. More than two years later the tide is changing. But if the terrorist use of commodities is to be understood and effectively cut off, the intelligence community must begin to look beyond the traditional methods of raising and moving money, and begin to look at commodities more seriously.



There are several steps that must be taken to begin to combat the use of commodities by terrorists.

The weapon most often brandished, but that is the least effective, is to institute new, sweeping regulations on commodity traders. This will simply drive even legitimate businessmen underground or out of business. New regulatory burdens to halt the fraction of illegal activities that benefit terrorists in the diamond industry, gold trade or hawala transactions would hurt millions of people. This is especially true of the hawala system, which primarily benefits millions of families in India and Pakistan who live off the remittances sent through this system by family members working on the Arab Peninsula.

What is really needed is the most difficult and time consuming to carry out: building up intelligence-gathering capabilities on the ground in the "grey areas" or "stateless areas" of the world where the illicit commodity trades flourish and where terrorists have made significant inroads. These areas include parts of West Africa, much of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, parts of East Africa and swaths of Southeast Asia. Only specific information gathered at the points of origin in the commodities trade can really help monitor and decipher how the businesses operate.

For example, in **Sierra Leone**, Liberia and the DRC, a network of Lebanese diamond traders, related by family and political ties, have traditionally moved the bulk of the "blood diamonds." These kinship networks that are central to this commodity trade need to be mapped and understood as a first step toward defining what action can be taken. It is also essential to understand these groups, operating in areas of the world where computers and telephone communication is haphazard at best, rely on personal

contacts, family ties and couriers for much of their operating structure. High-tech monitoring of their communications, successful against other types of groups, is much less useful in these circumstances. The intelligence deficiencies are not surprising. At the end of the Cold War, no region of the world suffered more dramatic intelligence cuts than sub-Saharan Africa. More than one-third of the CIA stations were eliminated entirely and those that remained were left with only minimal staffing. Even as the Clinton administration began increasing funding for intelligence in the late 1990s, the region's capabilities and budget remained static.

As the capacity to monitor events on the ground is being rebuilt, there are steps that can have an impact. The most urgent is to begin to seriously work with the commodity industries themselves. There is a knowledge base there that can be tapped into, because many of the important players are not only concerned about terrorists' use of their commodity. They also want to clean up their image. While unwilling to act as government agents, many in these communities are willing to share information and ideas on how to clean up and safeguard particular trades. This is important because these groups are small and know the players. Many are anxious to help put the more disreputable elements out of business.

Nicky Oppenheimer, chairman of the De Beers Group and an important voice in the diamond community, has recognized that the terrorist threat is real. In March 2004 he said that among the greatest challenges facing the diamond and jewelry industry "is the vulnerability of the industry, as with other commodities, to misuse and abuse by criminals and the perpetrators of terror...In a world where our personal security,

that of our families and communities, is under real and present threat, we must take notice and take action.

Efforts to deprive terrorists of their funds means, necessarily, depriving them of their safe havens. The new havens are in parts of the world we have long ignored, the spreading swaths of stateless territories and rogue regimes. Until we recognize this and begin to understand the true nature of terrorist finance, their money will continue to flow.

Given the nature of the transactions, the growing pace of globalization and the untraceable nature of these transactions, they are likely to remain an integral part of terrorist financial structure for the foreseeable future.

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