

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



Drag-chain fishermen at Lumley Beach

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Tuesday, 17 July 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 16 July 2007

Inquiry Finds Special Court Provided Proper Care to Sam Hinga Norman

An inquiry into the events surrounding the death last February of Special Court indictee Sam Hinga Norman has concluded that proper care was provided to Mr. Norman during the entire time he spent in Special Court custody.

Mr. Norman died of a myocardial infarction, commonly called a “heart attack”, in Dakar, Senegal where he had been taken for hip replacement surgery. An independent autopsy found that he died of natural causes, and that his death was unrelated to the treatment which he received.

On February 23, Special Court President Justice George Gelaga-King appointed Justice Renate Winter to head an inquiry to look into the circumstances of Mr. Norman’s death. Justice Winter submitted that report to the President today.

Among the report’s key findings:

1. Mr. Norman died at L’Hopital Aristide Le Dantec on Thursday, 22 February, at around 11:00. He died in the presence of the Special Court’s Medical Officer and the Senegalese doctors and nurses who were called in to resuscitate him.
2. An autopsy with full pathological and toxicological examinations was conducted by independent pathologists. The findings of this inquiry confirmed that Mr. Norman died of natural causes from a myocardial infarction. There were no indications of violence, nor was poison found in his body.
3. Security at the hospital was tight. Outside security was provided by Senegalese security officers, and inside by both Senegalese security officers and security officers from the Special Court.
4. Allegations made by some media outlets and by Mr. Norman himself that he was being poisoned were completely unfounded.
5. Throughout his detention, Mr. Norman was treated by the Special Court’s Medical Officer. He arranged Mr. Norman’s treatment in accordance with the available advice of other medical specialists.
6. Registry staff responded quickly to Mr. Norman’s need for medical treatment, and ensured that adequate medical treatment was provided.
7. Mr. Norman had cardiac problems at the time of his arrival at the Court’s detention facility in 2003. Throughout his detention, the Special Court’s Medical Officer regularly checked Mr. Norman’s cardiac health.
8. During his detention, Mr. Norman suffered from several other health problems which

were immediately looked after. For any medical problem which required a specialised opinion, treatment was reviewed by specialists and regular check-ups were made.

9. Mr. Norman refused the doctor's advice to follow a healthier lifestyle. When asked a second time to do so he stated that he might be poisoned.

“In light of the above considerations, I find that proper care was taken by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the furnishment and provision of medical care for the late Mr. Sam Hinga Norman during the entire time that he spent at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Detention”, Justice Winter concluded.

She noted that, apart from Senegal, no country had volunteered to provide medical assistance to treat Mr. Norman's hip problem. The Special Court therefore had no other option than to transfer Mr. Norman, with his consent, to L'Hopital Aristide le Dantec in Dakar.

“I, therefore, find no reason to believe that the concerned authorities of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have failed in providing the best possible medical treatment available”, Justice Winter said.

“Concerning the medical care provided at L'Hopital Aristide le Dantec, I find, taking into consideration the evaluation of the independent medical expert, that international standards in diagnosis and treatment have been upheld”.

Justice Winter recommended that the Registrar continue to try and conclude an agreement with foreign states willing to provide medical assistance where such medical assistance is not available in Sierra Leone “well before the occasion to transfer a detainee may arise”.

#END

Awoko

Tuesday, 17 July 2007

AFRC indictees plead to Sierra Leoneans for forgiveness

By Betty Milton

The three convicted former members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) have in their pleas of mitigation asked Sierra Leoneans to forgive them for whatever atrocities they had committed during the reign of their government.

Alex Tamba Brima aka Gullit, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu aka 55 when asked by Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde of Trial Chamber II whether they had anything to say after their legal counsels

had pleaded for their sentences to be reduced, Gullit asked the people they have hurt to have mercy on him.

In his plea Bazzy said "I am just a young Sierra Leonean who joined the army to fight for my people not against them. I am not Charles Taylor, nor Johnny Paul Koroma who bears the greatest responsibilities. I rely on the experience of you [judges] for the judgment. I am saying sorry for all those who lost their lives during this war."

"I pray that as you have come to seek justice in Sierra Leone what we are asking from you who are

sitting up there, I know that you have children just like us.

I know that whatever the Prosecution has said was not what operated. What we are praying for now is peace and reconciliation. I want to say that this is a highly political court. We are soldiers who were trained to fight and protect the people. We don't know Taylor or Gadaffi and others who fueled the war in the country but we are now facing the trial. To you Justice Sebutinde you are an African from Uganda and you are aware of what has happening here as we were under supervision. The court says

those who bear the greatest responsibility and it should not have been three of us alone the ECOMOG, everybody, civil society were all angry in Sierra Leone. Consider your good office to give judgment and even what the Prosecution had said as they are here to Prosecute. As I'm standing here a Prosecution witness is presently campaigning with the ruling Political Party. We joined the army to fight against the RUF and now we are going to pay the price for peace" these were the words of the third accused Santigie Borbor Kanu.

The prosecution for their part submitted that the material tendered is not intended to shock the Trial Chamber's clarification, as the sentence reflects the crimes of all the accused.

Karim Agha talking about the superior responsibility said the accused were trained in the army to protect the

civilians but they used their professionalism to turn against the civilians.

About aggravating circumstances, the Prosecutor said that many victims were vulnerable persons and that the accused aimed at spreading terror among the civilian population.

In his own submission Kojo Graham defence counsel for the first accused said that there is need for reconciliation and forgiveness, stressing that the principal architect Johnny Paul Koroma is yet to be brought to justice and this should be considered by the judges when giving sentence.

He stated that AFRC combatants have been reintegrated into the army he pleaded that the Judges "temper justice with mercy as to err is human and to forgive is divine."

He also pleaded for a shorter sentence as this is to foster reconciliation.

Defence counsel for the

second accused Kojo Daniels further urged the judges to issue a sentence which will enable his client return to his community again, sit with his people and atone for his crime.

The defence counsel holds that sentence request by the Prosecution is too long and not in line with the practice of the ICTR.

In his own submission Professor Knoops who is representing 55 said that the training which Kanu received in the army was not to command troops but how to use a rifle, and that while they were in the jungle he was asked to take care of the women and children and so he was there for the weak and defenseless.

He stressed that Kanu regrets all what happened to the people and like many people is seeking for a peaceful life. He added that the prosecution did not mention Kanu as a commander and therefore the judges should consider that when delivering sentence.

Concord Times
Tuesday, 17 July 2007

AFRC indictees await sentence

*By Ibrahim
Taravallie*

Judgment is expected to be passed on the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) indictees: Alex Tamba Brima, Ibrahim Bazy Kamara and Santigie Kanu who have been found guilty of 11-count charge for crime against humanity on Thursday at the Special Court.

The prosecution counsel asked for either a single "global sentence" of 60 years for Brima, 60 years for Kamara and 50 years for Kanu or multiple sentences to be served consecutively.

Karim Agha of the prosecution counsel stated that none of the three accused persons accepted responsibility for their crimes and none of them have shown any remorse.

The prosecution argued that there are no mitigating

circumstances that will call for a lighter sentence for any of the three convicted persons adding that they did not commit the crimes under duress.

They also argued that the second accused played a major role in the various crimes committed and their roles in the crimes was the gravity of the offence. The prosecution thereby submitted that the second accused played a lesser role in the offence than the first accused and pointed out that none of the accused persons are identical.

They also submitted that the gravity of the offence is the most important part of the sentence. Defense counsel for the first accused pleaded that the judges should temper justice with mercy saying: "To err is human but to forgive is divine" as they asked the court to promote the course of reconciliation.

In his plea, the first accused

person, Alex Tamba Brima said, "I pray that the honourable court will use this trial to bring peace and reconciliation in the country."

The defense counsel for Ibrahim Bazy Kamara said Bazy was a poor and ill-educated teenager who risked his life to fight against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels to restore peace in the country. The defense counsel submitted that Bazy did not, directly, participate in the crimes he is being convicted for by the court.

Defense counsel for the third accused Santigie Kanu submitted that the accused did not receive substantial military training and added that he felt betrayed by the government. They recommended that the prosecution's submission against Kanu be dismissed.

The Exclusive
Tuesday, 17 July 2007

Special Court...

***AFRC Indictees' Verdict Thursday**

*** Prosecution Recommends 60 Yrs. Each**

Verdict for three former soldiers of the Sierra Leone Army, Alex Tamba Brima, Ibrahim Bazy and

Santigie Borbor Kanu who were also members of the then Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, will be de-

livered on Thursday after a protracted trial on their role in the decade long conflict in Sierra Leone.

This was yesterday announced by presiding judge, Justice Sibatunde of the Special Court Trial

Chamber, after hearing the various submissions by the prosecution and the defence teams.

The three were indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious breaches of international humanitarian law.

If convicted, both Brima Bazy Kamara and Alex Brima will face not less than Sixty years jail term while Santigie Kanu might

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Special Court

From front page

go down for Fifty years according to the request of the prosecution.

The prosecution argued that there are no mitigating circumstances which would call for a lighter sentence for any of the three. None of them ever cooperated with the prosecution, they did not commit their crimes under duress and they never expressed remorse, the prosecution stated.

On his part, lawyer Kojo Graham for Alex Tamba Brima, stated that the sentence demanded by the

prosecution was excessive. He cited a number of mitigating factors which would suggest a shorter sentence including previous record of good character, desire to educate himself after detention, his family and his assistance to the Diamond Stars football club. Counsel for Brima Bazy Kamara, Mr. Andrew Samuels, also holds similar views as his colleagues and pointed to the fact that his client is a family man. Counsel for Santigie Kanu pleaded that his client be give a prison sentence commensurate

with the term he had already served which is, "just under four years," or alternatively, a limited sentence with two terms served concurrently.

The defence holds that there are no aggravating factors in the case that would suggest a longer sentence. He reminded the court of the Rwanda genocide in which those convicted by the IWCT received lighter sentences compared to that requested by the prosecution at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, in the case of the three.

Standard Times
Tuesday, 17 July 2007

SPECIAL COURT TRIAL...

AFRC judgment postponed

BY IBRAHIM BARRIE

After hearing submissions from both the Prosecution and Defence Counsels in the Special Court trial yesterday, the presiding judge of the counsel, Hon. Justice Julia Sebuntinde said the court will deliver its final ruling on Thursday July 19, 2007 at 11 a.m.

The Ugandan judge said the rea-

son for postponing the anticipated ruling is to give the counsel of three judges ample time to consider the submissions of both the Prosecution and Defence Counsels.

The ruling involves the trial of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) indictees: Alex Tamba Brima, Santigie Borbor Kanu and Brima Bazy Kamara.

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AFRC judgment postponed

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Arguing its case, the prosecution asks for either a single "global sentence" of 60 years each for Brima and Kamara and 50 years for Kanu or multiple sentences to be observed consecutively (one after the other).

The prosecution argued that there are no mitigating circumstances which would call for a lighter sentence for any of the three indictees who are already founded guilty of 11 counts charge of War Crime and Crimes Against Humanity.

The prosecution insists that the sentence imposed on Santigie Borbor Kanu would indicate a very long sentence of imprisonment.

"None of the three ever cooperated with the prosecution, they did not commit their crimes under duress, and they never expressed remorse," argued the prosecution.

The Defense Counsel for Alex Tamba Brima (Gullit) said that the sentence asked by the prosecution is excessive and the defense points to a number of mitigating factors which would suggest a shorter sentence.

The defense cited that the court should consider the accused family situation, good service record

and age at the time the crimes were committed.

The Defense Counsel for Brima Bazy Kamara described the sentence requested by the prosecution as too long and inconsistent to the practice of the ICTR. The Defense pleaded for a shorter sentence and for the court to consider the accused good behaviour while in detention and his young age when the crimes were committed.

The Defense for Santigie Borbor Kanu (Five-five) asks that the accused be given a prison sentence equal to the time already served (under four years), or alternatively a limited sentence with terms served concurrently. The defense cited that the trials of the genocide in Rwanda wherein convicts received lighter sentences than the prosecution demanded.

The Defense lawyer, Mr. Geert-Jan Alexander Knoops said his client is a survivor whose option at the time of the war was to join his colleague soldiers in the jungle after his wife had been killed.

The Dutch lawyer asserted that his client felt betrayed by the Sierra Leone Government

and that the accused was a corporal who had no commanding rule in the AFRC government. The defense said Kanu is 42 years old and sentencing him for 50 years will amount to life imprisonment. The accused was also described by the defense as somebody very humane as he protected women and children in war zones.

Santigie Borbor Kanu in his statement pleaded to the three judges that they should be mindful that they are parents with children and that demands equal justice.

According to the Special Court statute, the trial chamber shall impose upon a convicted person other than a juvenile offender, imprisonment for a specified number of years.

The trial chamber should take into account such factors as the gravity of the offence and the individual circumstances of the convicted person.

In addition to imprisonment, the trial chamber may order the forfeiture of the property and any assets acquired unlawfully or by criminal conduct and their return to their rightful owner or to the state of Sierra Leone.

The News

Tuesday, 17 July 2007

VIEW POINT

By Pastor Mohamed Sesay

Special Court verdicts: Those that got away

The most unfortunate thing about the Special Court trial is that they are limited to those people who are presumed to be the ring leaders behind atrocities committed between 1996 and the time of the end of the war.

Even though it was a case of Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE) which means that if one is guilty all the others charged in the enterprise are equally guilty, the real architects behind the crimes committed by the three people already found guilty will never be brought to trial.

In the cases against the AFRC members, only three stood in the place of all the others, rather a symbolic exercise than reality itself but behind and in front of those people are others who deserve to be locked up forever and the keys thrown in the deepest ocean.

Santigie Borbor Brima and the two others found guilty with him could never have been indicted if it had not happened that when they joined the army they found it in a situation which allowed for anarchy and rogue behaviour. Many people joined the army because of its discipline but when those three people joined up there was nothing like discipline in the Sierra Leone Army. It was every man for himself. In fact senior officers at the time were encouraging young recruits to get themselves involved in behaviour contrary to army rule.

The year 1992, when the NPRC overthrow President Momoh's regime, will go down forever in the history of this country as the year when Sierra Leone was turned into a nation of monsters with no single sympathy or empathy for the next man. Indeed the APC party, during their 24 years rule, did a lot of evil things against the Sierra Leonean people but their evil acts put together will never match those committed by the NPRC regime during their four years reign of evil. NPRC created a culture of collective evil, committing mass murders all over the place. What many people did not know is that between 1992 and 1996 Sierra Leone government soldiers killed more people and burnt more houses than Foday Sankoh's RUF rebels, but whereas the RUF's actions were looked at as illegal, NPRC saw government soldier's acts as legal and part of their normal duty.

At Lunsar, a soldier called Captain Yamaokachi Bangura (now dead), made himself complainant, police, judge and juror and gave orders for the extrajudicial killings of over sixty innocent lives including a police officer who, on the night of his murder was suffering from a severe tooth-ache, on the pretext that they were captured rebels found operating in the area. Capt. Yamaokachi took part in and encouraged young soldiers to take part in beheadings right in front of civilian women and children. Yamaokachi was evil itself made incarnate. Before beheading one man, he tied him behind a vehicle and dragged him stark naked at very high speed, peeling off the man's skin and cracking his skull. Yamaokachi so legalized his actions to the point that he planted red flags wherever his so-called rebels were buried. He and his soldiers were seen openly eating mutilated parts of murdered people. It did not stop there. Fake hero, Yamaokachi, put the people of Lunsar while he was based there, under heavy distress. He set up false attacks against Lunsar so that the people will look at him as a hero after his false fending off of them. His trick was to station government soldiers under his command at places like Murialdo, Tain Datha, Eye Clinic, Shell Company and under the cover of darkness they will start shooting all over the place pretending the town was under attack. After say two hours of intense firing he will then go round the town and announce that he and his men had 'repelled' the rebels. Lunsar, during his stay there was attacked ten times in one month. During one of his so-called attacks he even killed a baboon which was at a community centre and blamed the act on rebels.

Senior officers, including a colonel witnessed a soldier nick-named Bolatey, which in Mende means 'cut throat', ate private parts of murdered women at Mokanji but never stopped him. Bolatey reigned supreme always 'capturing' female rebels and mutilating them and roasting their parts. One day he captured three age able ladies from a village called Mokotawa and in front of everybody beheaded them and roasted and ate their parts. The officers knew but turned a blind eye to that cannibal act making it appear to other young soldiers around like Santigie Borbor Brima that it was legal to do those things.

At Masiaka, soldiers who had a grudge against a man called Suba, who was living at Makite, brought him in and accused him of being a rebel. Their only evidence against him was two sailor buttons which they alleged were his rebel rank buttons. On that alone very senior officers in the NPRC government who were at Masiaka to arrange the recovery of six Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers' bodies who died in a rebel ambush at Mamoi, gave orders for Suba's execution.

Jembeh Bridge saw the mass murders of over two hundred innocent villagers accused by government soldiers based there of being rebels. The method of killing adopted by the soldiers was by trying victims by their ankles and dropping them down the bridge. As they were going down head first, soldiers and sometimes their civilian relatives will fire at them indiscriminately and as the bodies shake violently they will cheer themselves for a work well done. All this done in the presence of senior military officers.

A bridge at a village called Masesay which stands between Magbafth and Bunline along the Masiaka/Mile 91 highway once contained the bodies of over two hundred people who were summarily executed on the orders of the late Lt. Tumoni. Women, children the aged, all perished there accused by government soldiers of being rebels.

During the war government soldiers took it upon themselves to commit mass murders all over the country lying that the victims were RUF rebels.

When NPRC overthrew the despotic government of President Saidu Momoh they turned the army into a circus. Added to their combat uniforms they put on dark glasses, wore all colours of beret arranging them on their heads in any position that suited them. They went around with bandolier containing daggers, bayonets, pistols and grenades clipped all over their bodies. Some went around with rocket propelled grenade launchers and carrying guns ranging from AK47 to sub-machine guns. Belts had on them spent bullets. Foot wear included all types of boots, sandals and slippers. Some even went bare-footed.

When the NPRC took over decision was taken at the highest level for soldiers to be supplied with cocaine. This was discontinued only when some senior officers protested. This happened after two months supply was given. The policy on drugs was changed when it was decided that officers must turn a blind eye on the soldiers' drug taking activities so cannabis was smoked openly and many soldiers used very hard drugs.

During their four years stay in power NPRC divided the army creating much tension. Officers who were unconnected with those in government, lived in awe of soldiers who were attached to those in the junta. Nobody saluted anybody. Soldiers gave themselves unofficial ranks and demanded the respect that went with those ranks. The elite group that was referred to as the Rapid Deployment Force had in it only children who went through only three months training. A good number of them were killed when they were sent to challenge RUF rebels based at Makeni Rok Folla and Zogoda.

There was no control over the use and supply of arms and ammunition. Some soldiers had up to four guns and a large amount of ammunition which some kept in their homes. At the war front some faked attacks and just go on the rampage shooting at trees and buildings. Nobody questioned their actions.

Young soldiers like the three guilty individuals witnessed all those things and even took part in them. Those who were to set good examples for them to follow did even worse. Those children were let down by those who were supposed to be their mentors. They taught those children that wickedness was a good thing. They devalued human life. To those children murder was just one of those things. They did not feel any sympathy after killing somebody. They just went on with their lives as if nothing happened. Those children, who are now adults, became part of a system that has led them to their doom having been found guilty of mass murders.

Captain Yamaokachi, Lieutenant Tumani and Lance Corporal Bolatey are gone having fell by the sword that they lived by and taught others to live by. Yamaokachi was shot on his head at Tongo by one of those soldiers he himself trained to be bad after Yamaokachi stole a piece of diamond from him. For Lt. Tumani he paid dearly for his evil ways when after he became a rebel led other rebels to attack his former colleagues based at Fadugu. He was captured and beaten to death. Bolatey died in the hands of civilians after he was captured by them at Kasirie.

Many of the architects behind those evils committed by Santigie Borbor Brima and the other two are still alive but they have escaped justice because the Special Court picked on only those who are said to be the ring-leaders behind those crimes against humanity. The three men are ring-leaders only in overthrowing President Kabbah's government in 1997 but not ring-leaders behind the specified atrocities.

The real ring-leaders are those who recruited them, taught them to be bad and like hunting dogs, unleashed them to attack their fellow human beings. They are the very people that should have been in that dock but they must really be blessing their lucky stars at the Special Court's misjudgment taking on cases which they failed to research properly before pressing charges.

The News

Tuesday, 17 July 2007

Civil Society celebrates World Day for International Justice

The Civil Society in Sierra Leone today Tuesday 17th July, joins numerous activities around the globe to celebrate 'World Day for International Justice,' based on the theme "Justice and impunity, the way forward in Sierra Leone", with support from the Justice Sector Development Programme.

July 17th, of international concern, commemorates the day on which the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) was adopted by the international community in 1998. the ICC is the world's first permanent international tribunal capable of trying individuals accused of the most serious crimes

namely, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes; when the courts in the countries in which those crimes are committed are unable or unwilling to do so. Each year, human rights activists around the world use this day to host events and activities to promote international justice, and specifically to raise support for the ICC. This year, activists in Sierra Leone will bring attention to the work of the International Criminal Court, the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) as justice mechanisms. Civil Society groups will work with justice sector institution officials to ass a proclamation marking July 17 as International Justice Day in the country, and organize group discussions within various communities and on radio across all its regions. The

international and national implications of justice and impunity would be discussed, to bring out the ordinary Sierra Leonean's perception of justice, taking into consideration the prevailing socio-economic situation.

As of 1st January 2007, 104 countries are State Parties to the Rome Statute of the

International Criminal Court. Sierra Leone signed the Rome Statute on 17 October 1998 and ratified it on 15 September 2000. the recognition of the evolving system of international justice that has emerged in the past century provides new tools of accountability for the most serious violations of international humanitarian and human

rights law.

"Addressing justice and impunity in Sierra Leone is a great stride towards victory for the protection of human rights, the advancement of human security, and the progress of our national legal systems", said Mr. John Caulker, Acting National Chairman of the CCJSCG.

African Standard
Tuesday, 17 July 2007

Special Court signs enforcement agreement with British Government

The newly appointed Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), Mr. Herman von Hebel, on 10 July 2007 signed a Sentence Enforcement Agreement with the British Government.

Minister for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth office of the British Government, Lord Mark Malloch-Brown signed on behalf of his government.

After the signing ceremony, Lord Brown said: “signing this agreement enables the UK to give effect to our commitment to imprison former Liberian president Charles Taylor if he is convicted by the Special Court and demonstrates again our strong support for the Court.

“I pay tribute to the Court’s work in bringing to justice those accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes during Sierra Leone’s civil war. This is making a major contribution to the cause of international justice and is an essential part of the process of restoring and maintaining stability in Sierra Leone.

“We must all continue to make clear that there can be no impunity for those who would commit the most serious crimes. I therefore urge the international community to maintain its support, financial and otherwise, for the Court so that it can continue this important work. This is the third Enforcement Agreement for the Court. The other two are with the Governments of Sweden and Austria.

BBC Network Africa

Monday, 16 July 2007

LEAD-IN: And now to Sierra Leone, where the UN-backed Special court will today start hearing arguments concerning the sentencing of three former commanders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. That's the military junta that overthrew the government of President Tejan Kabbah ten years ago. The three men, Alex Tamba Brima, Santigie Borbor Kanu, and Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, have been found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Allieu Kamara was spokesperson for the now-defunct junta during the time of its reign, which was typified by violence and brutality. In Freetown our correspondent Lansana Fofana asked him what he made of the legal process.

KAMARA: This country has suffered far too long. I believe these young guys have suffered far too long. They have been behind bars for quite awhile. And justice today must be delivered with temper, with mercy.

But this certainly, I mean Sierra Leoneans believe that these were the architects of the destruction of the state and the horrific atrocities that were committed, and therefore they must pay a dear price.

KAMARA: I am not trying to justify the atrocities that were committed, nor am I here to exonerate anyone. What is important here is that these young guys have suffered and we are now in a threshold of development, we are now in a threshold of reconciliation at the same time consolidating the peace. As one-time spokesman for the AFRC, I'm saying it here categorically: peace and reconciliation is paramount.

So you are saying that they should not be locked behind bars

KAMARA: What I'm saying here is that the Justices should temper justice with mercy – that is paramount. They are human, they have made mistakes. And to err is human, to forgive is divine. And I believe that forgiveness is not an occasional act – it is a permanent attitude. And each and every Sierra Leonean must be responsible enough to forgive what has happened, because the way forward is peace and reconciliation.

Now the leader of the military junta, the AFRC of which you were the spokesperson, Johnny Paul Koroma, is alleged to have died or disappeared into thin air. Is it because the real key players of that military junta are not around that you're asking that these other commanders be released?

KAMARA: That is not what I'm saying. The whereabouts of Johnny Paul Koroma is a \$60 million question. So many rumours have come out that he has been killed or he is dead. What is important here is the consolidation of peace and the consolidation of our developmental process.

You were the spokesperson of the military junta, the AFRC. Looking back at those years, do you regret?

KAMARA: My brother, I honourably regret each and every minute I spent with the AFRC.

Why is that?

KAMARA: I have made that apol...

Why is that?

KAMARA: Because I do believe they derailed the development and peace of this country. I genuinely believe in peace, I genuinely believe in change. I became part of the revolution to espouse peace, to espouse development, and to espouse the peace for each and every one of us, because the RUF were not giving us a break. Everything was let loose, and I thought it was an opportunity to bring both of them together, to work towards making Sierra Leone a better place. But unfortunately everything went haywire. So many hoodlums became part of the system, and atrocities were definitely committed. And I owe it at this particular moment to once more say I'm sorry, though I have done it so many times in so many diverse ways.

Former spokesman for Sierra Leone's AFRC junta, Allieu Kamara.

Transcribed by the Office of Press and Public Affairs

BBC Focus on Africa

Monday, 16 July 2007

LEAD-IN: In another case of sentencing on the continent, Sierra Leone's UN-backed Special Court has held a mitigation hearing in Freetown for the three convicted members of Sierra Leone's defunct Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, or AFRC. The Prosecution in the case involving Alex Tamba Brima, Ibrahim Bazy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu want their men to be sentenced to between 50 and 60 years in prison. But the Defence say their clients have paid the price for their crimes and show genuine remorse – and that in the interest of peace and reconciliation, the men should have their sentences significantly reduced, as Lansana Fofana reports.

Defence lawyers for the three ex-AFRC commanders argued today that the indictees should have their sentences reduced to a minimal level, and that the Judges should dispense justice with mercy. The Prosecution asked for between 50 and 60 year sentence for the indictees whom, they claim, deserve to spend long terms in jail for the alleged atrocities they are accused of having committed. Karim Agha is the lead counsel for the Prosecution.

AGHA: The Prosecution submits that all three of the accused – Brima, Kamara and Kanu – should be sentenced to extremely lengthy terms of imprisonment with little graduation in sentences, reflecting the gravity of their crimes, the overwhelming aggravating circumstances present in their cases...

For their part, the accused persons pleaded for clemency and expressed remorse for the horrific atrocities committed by the military junta during its nine-month stay in power, and that is from May 1997 to February 1998. One of the indictees is Santigie Borbor Kanu, alias "Brigadier Five-Five". This is what he had to say through an interpreter:

KANU: I stand for peace and reconciliation and I pray that the honourable Judges of this Chamber use their wisdom to bring peace and reconciliation to the people of Sierra Leone and assuring [indistinct] the victims of this situation.

The three AFRC indictees and the other militia leaders have spent about four years in jail, and judgment in their trial is expected to be passed on Thursday this week. They were all convicted on an 11-count charge of war crimes and crimes against humanity

Lansana Fofana in Freetown.

Transcribed by the Office of Press and Public Affairs

Rapaport News
Monday, 16 July 2007

Sierra Leone: Three Men Await Sentencing for War Crimes

By Jeff Miller

RAPAPORT... After a Sierra Leone court found three guilty on 11 of 14 counts of war crimes in June, prosecutors asked the court for a combined 170 years jail time for Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara, and Santigie Borbor Kanu on July 16, 2007.

Deputy prosecutor Christopher Staker argued that since the three didn't accept responsibility for the war crimes, and hadn't cooperated with investigators that the sentence fit the crime.

The men's defense lawyer Kojo Graham suggested the court take into account the need for reconciliation.

The court is to decide sentencing on July 19.

The three men are reported to have been supported by Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, who is awaiting his own trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone currently residing at The Hague. Taylor's trial is expected to begin August 20, 2007, after two false starts.

Agence France-Presse

Monday, 16 July 2007

Long Sentences Sought for Heads of Rebel Forces in Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, July 16 (Agence France-Presse) — Prosecutors in the war crimes court for Sierra Leone called Monday for long prison terms for three rebel leaders convicted of crimes against humanity during the country's civil war.

“All three should be sentenced to extreme lengthy terms of imprisonment,” the deputy prosecutor, Christopher Staker, told the United Nations-backed court.

He asked for 60-year terms for Alex Tamba Brima, 35, and Brima Bazzy Kamara, 39, and a 50-year term for Santigie Borbor Kanu, 42.

In June, the court found all three guilty of 11 of the 14 charges against them, which included murder, rape and enlisting child soldiers. Sentencing is scheduled for Thursday.

The defense lawyer, Kojo Graham, urged the court to “consider the need for reconciliation as an important issue in relationship to sentencing.”

The three rebel commanders, who all pleaded not guilty, were believed to have had the support of Charles Taylor, then the president of Liberia, in exchange for Sierra Leone diamonds. Mr. Taylor is on trial in The Hague on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in connection to the Sierra Leone civil war.

By the time the decade-long civil war ended in 2001, 120,000 people had died. Thousands of others had been mutilated, with their arms, legs, ears or noses chopped off.

The defendants will serve their sentences in Sweden and Austria. Each of the three asked for forgiveness.

Created in January 2002, the Sierra Leone court is a hybrid of international and local law under a deal between the West African country's government and the United Nations.

The three convicted men belonged to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, a rebel faction led by Johnny Paul Koroma, which toppled an elected government in 1997 and joined forces with the notorious main rebel Revolutionary United Front.

After ousting President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in May 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council set up a junta that ran the country for nine months before embarking on terror campaigns that included burning children to death.

Cocorioko website

Monday, 16 July 2007

Hinga Norman Family Rejects Special Court Finds on Death of Chief Norman

The family of the late Former Coordinator of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) and Ex-Interior Minister, Sam Hinga Norman, has told COCORIOKO that it does not accept the latest release on Norman's death, by the Special Court of Sierra Leone. Talking exclusively to COCORIOKO this afternoon, Rev. Alfred Sam Foray, who had by his side Mr. Sam Hinga Norman Jr. described the investigation of the court on circumstances causing Chief Norman's death as private, secretive and not in conformity with the family's demand for an open, transparent and public investigation

Today, the Special Court public announcement. saying that : 'An inquiry into the events surrounding the death last February of Special Court indictee Sam Hinga Norman has concluded that proper care was provided to Mr. Norman during the entire time he spent in Special Court custody. Mr. Norman died of a myocardial infarction, commonly called a "heart attack", in Dakar, Senegal where he had been taken for hip replacement surgery. An independent autopsy found that he died of natural causes, and that his death was unrelated to the treatment which he received. On February 23, Special Court President Justice George Gelaga-King appointed Justice Renate Winter to head an inquiry to look into the circumstances of Mr. Norman's death. Justice Winter submitted that report to the President today'.(See full release below this article

The Norman family said what it requested was a public inquest on circumstances leading to the death of Chief Norman, not a private, internal and secret inquiry.

Rev. Samforay said that the former Vice-President, Joe Demby, who represented the interest of the family, and Chief Norman's son, Mohamed Lansana Jawara, were in Senegal when the autopsy on Chief Norman was held. Dr. Demby was present and was asked to give a detailed report of what he saw. Demby provided it in a document that ran into 5 pages, but Sam foray complained that the court did not consider this report in its investigation.

In his report, Dr. Demby wrote, in part : In my opinion, therefore, while I do accept the autopsy findings, yet I do record here that Mr. Sam Hinga Norman died due to medical negligence and the failure of the Special Court to provide an enabling environment, i.e proper medical facilities "Dr. Demby felt that the hospital was not ideal to handle the case. He said that Mr. Norman was kept in a cubicle without proper medical care. He also said that only 2 pints of blood were given to Hinga Norman, which were insufficient for his problem. He stated that in the two weeks following the surgery he underwent in Senegal, Chief Norman bled for the duration of two weeks, continuously. He lost more blood than the 2 points were able to replenish.

Samforay observed that there was nothing in the blood type to show that the 2 pints of blood in fact adhered to Mr. Norman's blood type. He complained that the very court, in its autopsy report, stated that they had broken two of Mr. Norman's ribs while trying to resuscitate him. He said that the court should have mentioned that in its findings but this was not done

In response to questions from COCORIOKO, Rev. Samforay said that the Special Court knew that Hinga Norman bled for 2 weeks because they took the soiled bedsheets to Freetown. Asked to dilate on the medical facilities provided Norman, Rev. Samforay said that the chief was not taken to a hospital where Senegalese VIPs were treated, as they implied. Rather, he went on, the chief was kept in a cell for indigent people.

Rev. Samforay complained further that all the information the court got from the family was not included in the report. The findings, he concluded, were not relevant to the observation the family made in Senegal.

The court, he went on, did not have the courtesy to show the family the reports of the findings before it was released. "At least, they should have respected us by letting us see the report before publication", Samforay complained.

REV. SAMFORAY WILL BE MAKING A PUBLIC RELEASE TONIGHT.

Irish Times
Thursday, 12 July 2007

Liberia prosecutor sure they'll get their man

MARY FITZGERALD
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

The chief prosecutor in a trial linking former Liberian president Charles Taylor to atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war is hopeful the landmark tribunal will stay on schedule despite a number of delays since it opened last month.

"I think we're all set now with the idea that deadlines will have to be observed with only a little leeway," Stephen Rapp, a former US attorney in Iowa, told *The Irish Times*.

Taylor, the first African leader to be tried on charges of crimes against humanity, initially boycotted the trial when it opened in The Hague. Established in 2002 to try those held most responsible for Sierra Leone's civil war, the UN-backed court usually sits in the country's capital, Freetown. Taylor is being tried in the Netherlands because of fears his trial would spark fresh unrest in Sierra Leone.

After dismissing the trial as a charade, Taylor sacked his lawyer and demanded a stronger defence team before making a surprise appearance at the trial earlier this month.

The court has now agreed a monthly sum of \$100,000 to cover Taylor's legal costs, hoping the new team is in place before the next session which is due to start on August 20th. Taylor is entitled to legal aid because the court has ruled he is unable to pay for his own defence, despite prosecutors suggesting he has millions stashed in bank accounts around the world.

"It's a better package than any international accused has at any court," Rapp said. "It would be very hard for him to complain about. It's disturbing to me that we're spending this money on his

legal representation and there are victims that can't even get 100 dollars but it's important that justice be done."

The indictment alleges that Taylor (59) sponsored and armed the Revolutionary United Front, Sierra Leone's main rebel group, in exchange for diamonds smuggled out of the country. He is accused of directing child soldiers, fuelled with drugs and alcohol, in a civil war that lasted for more than a decade and resulted in tens of thousands being killed, raped and mutilated. "Who's responsible for what happened - is it the young children who chopped off limbs? No - it's the people who enlisted them, the people whose greedy motives were driving the whole thing. That's why holding the person at the top responsible is so important," said Rapp. The case is expected to last around 18 months and will include evidence from 150 witnesses.

Rapp, in Ireland to take part in

a seminar at Trinity College, Dublin, says the evidence against Taylor is "abundant".

"We have 62 people listed as linkage witnesses, some of whom are former insiders close to Taylor in Liberia. Others are individuals in Sierra Leone who were able to see people under his direct command serving as facilitators and commanders in a number of operations. The evidence is very strong and compelling." Dependent on voluntary international donations, the court needs to raise around \$60 million to complete its work on deadline. Ireland has contributed a total of €2.25 million so far. "When we look at the funding possibilities and the time frame, it's a tight situation," Rapp admitted. "But we understand that the project of international justice is also on trial here so we have to do this efficiently, we have to make sure the case is presented as succinctly as possible so that justice will be done and seen to be done."



Stephen Rapp: "We understand that the project of international justice is also on trial here". Photograph; Matt Kavanagh

Associated Press

Monday, 16 July 2007

Vandals deface Pro-Taylor billboards in Liberia

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - Vandals have used paint to black out two billboards in Liberia's capital that supported Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president now on trial for war crimes committed in neighboring Sierra Leone.

The billboards showed a smiling Taylor next to the slogan «Charles Taylor is Innocent» and quoted his parting words when he was forced out of Liberia: «God Willing, I Will Be Back.» They were put up on one of Monrovia's main streets by a group of Taylor supporters who have worked to raise money for his trial.

Residents said the two signs were covered over with black paint when they woke up Sunday morning. Martin Kollie, who lives on the street with the signs, said no one appeared to have seen the vandals.

The billboards and the weekend defacement reflect a split in Liberia's attitude toward the man who many saw as a populist leader when he launched an uprising in the late 1980s, but who now is charged with backing rebels that chopped off people's limbs and turned legions of children into drugged-out soldiers.

Few in this country of 3 million came out of years of civil war completely innocent, and Liberia has been struggling to rebuild a peaceful democracy with a population in which neighbors turned on each other over years of fighting.

Philip Wesseh, managing director of Liberia's largest paper, the Enquirer, said the vandalism showed how far Liberia still has to go.

«It shows the level of hatred that we still have in the society,» Wesseh said. Liberia still has very little in the way of an economy, or infrastructure like roads or electricity, and violent crimes like rape are still rampant.

Sando Johnson, a former House Member on the ticket of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Party and member of pro-Taylor group, said the incident appeared to have been planned in advance _ suggesting that it was not a random act of vandalism.

«Street lights in the area went off for some time. And after the act had been committed the lights came back on,» he said. The billboards were already faded before the incident, leading some to suggest that vandals had previously tried to deface them with water or acid.

The group, the Association for the Legal Defense of Taylor, said it has reported the defacement to police, which has sent a team to inspect the area.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 16 July 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

There were no relevant stories in the international media today.

International Clips on West Africa

Tough sentences urged for Sierra Leone rebel chiefs

FREETOWN, July 16, 2007 (AFP) - Prosecutors in the war crimes court for Sierra Leone on Monday called for a total of 170 years jail for three rebel leaders convicted of crimes against humanity during the country's civil war. "The sentencing must reflect the criminal responsibility of each of the accused persons. The recommended sentences fit the criminal responsibility of their acts," deputy prosecutor Christopher Staker told the UN-backed court. He asked for Alex Tamba Brima, 35, and Brima Bazzy Kamara, 39, to be jailed for 60 years each and Santigie Borbor Kanu, 42, to be jailed for 50 years.

Local Media – Newspaper

Investigative Panel to Submit Findings on Port Scuffle Today

(The Monitor)

- The board of inquiry set up to investigate a scuffle involving some security personnel at the National Port Authority (NPA) is due to submit its findings to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf today. The panel headed by National Security Advisor H. Boima Fahnbulleh was recently set up to investigate circumstances that led to last Monday's clash between officers of the Liberia National Police and the Liberia Sea Port Police which left at least one person dead and several others wounded.

Liberian Soldiers Set for Advance Training in U.S.A.

(The Analyst)

- Several recently commissioned officers of the new Armed Forces of Liberia are set to leave for the United States of America to attend a "Warrior Course." The initiative is in continuation of the United States support to the restructuring process of the new army.

Rights Group wants Legislative Proceedings Halted on Assets Freeze Bill

(National Chronicle and Heritage)

- The issue of the bill to freeze or confiscate the assets of corrupt public officials, which was recently submitted to the National Legislature by President Sirleaf, appears to continue to generate public debate. The Independent Civil and Human Rights Center has expressed its opposition to the bill and wants the Supreme Court to halt the National Legislature from conducting further proceedings regarding the proposed assets freeze bill.

Press Union President Gives UN Ultimatum

(The Monitor)

- The President of the Press Union of Liberia, George Barpeen, has purportedly given the United Nations Security Council a 10-day ultimatum to provide hard core evidence against those Liberians who are subject to the travel ban and asset freeze.
- Mr. Barpeen told a news conference on Sunday that the UN Security Council has so far failed to provide evidence against those accused of embezzling millions of dollars in the country. However, members of the executive committee of the Union appeared to be divided over the statement by Mr. Barpeen.

Calm Returns within Local Fuel Market following Superficial Shortage

(The News)

- Calm has returned within the local fuel market following a weeklong confusion characterized by gasoline hunt and hikes in transport fares. The Government recently acknowledged the hike in basic commodities including gasoline but warned against superficial shortage. Transportation fares were also increased sharply due to the increment in the price of gasoline.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

President Lauds Liberia’s Development Partners

- Speaking at a programme to mark France’s independence during the weekend, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf lauded France for its support to Liberia in the areas of health, education and human resources development adding that relations between the two countries have arise with the reopening of France’s diplomatic mission in Liberia after the civil war.
- According to an Executive Mansion release, President Johnson Sirleaf recalled the many contributions by France in training nurses, doctors, teachers, reopening of the French institute and granting more than 1 million dollars for budget support while upholding the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Southeastern County Senator Unhappy about Running of Refinery

- In a Radio Veritas interview yesterday, Grand Kru County Senator Cletus Wotorson said that it was unacceptable the manner in which the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company was being operated by the current management and called on the management to put in place measures to curb the shortage of petroleum products on the Liberian market.

Journalist Asks Lawmakers to Pass Controversial Bill

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.