

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

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 of:

16-17 March 2006

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
Ibrahim Tommy
Ext 7248

Table of Contents

Sierra Leone Media

Charles Taylor arrives <i>The Exclusive -16.03.2006</i>	Page 3-4
Taylor's asylum threatened <i>Awareness Times -16.03.2006</i>	Page 5-6
Obasanjo jets in 27 th March <i>The New Citizen -16.03.2006</i>	Page 7-8
Attorney General is lying <i>The Spectator – 17.03.2006</i>	Page 9-10
Prison Watch blasts over Golley mistreatment <i>Awareness Times – 17.03.2006</i>	Page 11-12

International Media

Liberian President appeals for US support <i>VOA</i>	Page 13-14
Liberian leader gets red-carpet welcome in Washington <i>Mercury News</i>	Page 15-16
Liberian leader wows US congress <i>BBC</i>	Page 17
US Lawmakers: Liberia asks Nigeria for Taylor's extradition <i>VOA</i>	Page 18-19
Liberia: President's star rises on US Capitol Hill – Taylor's issue hangs around <i>The Liberian Times</i>	Page 20-21-22
President vows not to "sacrifice justice" for Charles Taylor <i>Reuters</i>	Page 23-24
A medical Mystery after Milosevic's death <i>International Herald Tribune</i>	Page 25-26-27
UN creates new human rights body <i>BBC</i>	Page 28-29
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 15 March 2006 <i>UNMIL</i>	Page 30-31-32

THE EXCLUSIVE

THURSDAY MARCH 16, 2006

Charles Taylor Arrives!

Contd. page 2



Charles Taylor

Former Liberian warlord, Charles Taylor who is in Nigeria by an ECOWAS, AU

and international community agreement to allow peace to prevail in the West African sub-region, will soon be handed over to the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone where he is wanted for his role in the decade long brutal civil war.

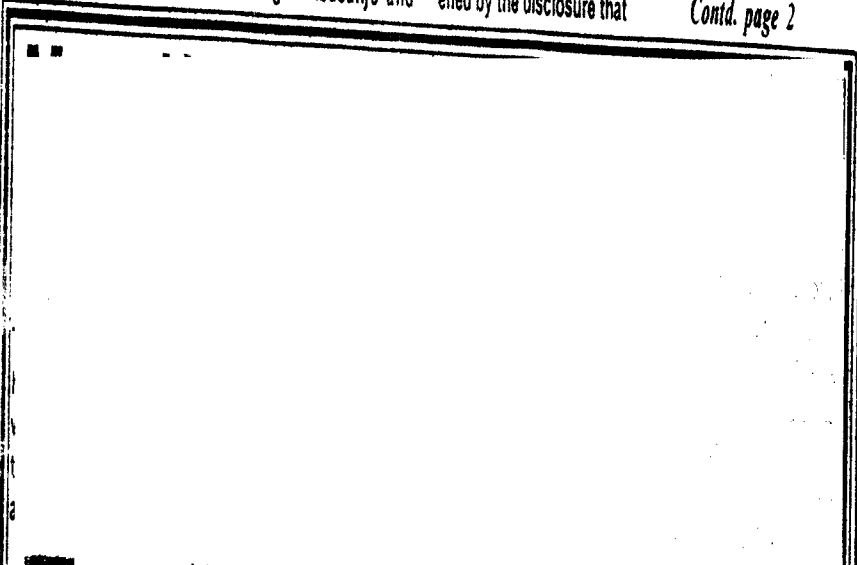
The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court, Mr. Desmond da Silva (QC), in welcoming the Liberian Government's announcement that

Taylor's temporary asylum in Nigeria is drawing

to a close after discussions with the Nigerian leader President Olusegun Abasanjo and

Liberian President Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Mr. da Silva, visibly heartened by the disclosure that

Taylor's extradition to Sierra Leone, which has been dragging on for three
Contd. page 2



All efforts to contact the Master and Registrar for her comments proved fruitless.

Charles Taylor Arrives!

From front page

years, is now a certainty, would like to see this deadlock removed once and for all. He assured the former murderous Liberian President that he will enjoy the same rights and safe guards provided to all other indictees under international law; stressing that the rights accorded to defendants before international criminal courts" are more generous than those in many domestic jurisdictions"

OBASANJO DISOWNS TAYLOR

In a spectacular move by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Head of State, President Olusegun Obasanjo has invited Mr. Taylor from his 'paradise' in Calaba State to the State House at Abuja to officially notify him by word of mouth and in writing that his time is now up and he will be handed over as agreed to a democratically elected Government in Liberia.

In meetings in Freetown with President Tejan Kabbah, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf assured Government that once Charles Taylor is handed over to her, she will send him to Freetown without delay and Mrs. Sirleaf had earlier given the same assurances to the African elder statesman in Nigeria.

NO RED CARPET IN MONROVIA

"Charles Taylor will neither get the red carpet rolled out for him in Liberia, nor will he receive a hero's welcome back home; the sooner we solve the Taylor issue the better for all of us", a senior Liberian diplomat in Freetown told The Exclusive. Diplomatic sources in Nigeria confirmed to this press on the line from Abuja that Nigeria is very serious about extraditing Taylor to Freetown at the earliest possible opportunity.

And credible press reports from Lagos and Abuja as well as Nigeria and Western diplomats in Freetown and Johannesburg, South Africa have lend credence to this new development.

MARRIAGE SCATTER IN CALABA

When Charles Taylor sought asylum in Nigeria, he wedded the beautiful daughter of the Calaba State Governor. But it appears this marriage would collapse because Mrs. Taylor of Calaba would certainly not make the Freetown trip with Mr. Taylor. We welcome news of the arrival of Mr. Taylor in Freetown and we are pleased he did not die in Nigeria while in protective custody there, because we would want to hear what the murderous warlord would have to say in his defense. Nigeria had for far too long been lambasted by the media in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and afar for holding on to Taylor. Perhaps our Nigerian brothers and sisters will now have a breathing space.

AWARENESS TIMES

THURSDAY MARCH 16, 2006

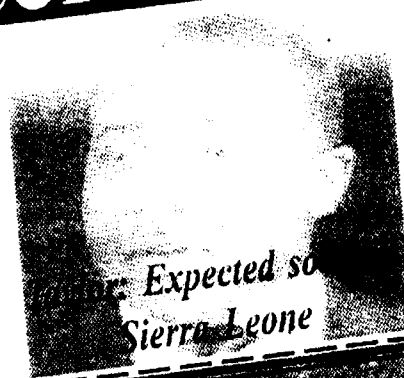
Minister of Law

Taylor's asylum threatened

By Sayoh Kamara

The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Desmond de Silva QC, past Tuesday welcomed

Contd page 2



Expected so
Sierra Leone

Taylor's asylum threatened

From front page

the announcement by the Government of Liberia that discussions have begun between Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, and Liberian President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, to end Charles Taylor's temporary asylum in Nigeria.

A Press Release from the Special Court quoted Mr. de Silva as saying, "I am heartened by today's announcement which stresses that both the leaders of Nigeria and Liberia are committed to seeing a resolution of this matter which has dragged on since August 2003. Charles Taylor has been indicted by this International Criminal Tribunal for his role in the civil conflict in Sierra Leone. The trials of nine indictees at the Special Court are already at an advanced stage. Mr. Taylor will enjoy the same rights and safeguards provided to all other indictees under international law. The rights accorded to defendants before international criminal courts are more generous than those in many domestic jurisdictions."

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

As date, the Prosecutor has indicted thirteen persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Sierra Leone. Two indictments, the release stated, were withdrawn following the deaths of the accused. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court and on trial.

The Prosecutor, according to the release, stressed that the Court's mandate covers only persons responsible for crimes in Sierra Leone—not in Liberia. He emphasised that he had no intention of issuing indictments against active Liberian politicians or any other specific groups of people.

Brief Chronology on efforts by the Special Court for Sierra Leone to bring Charles Taylor to Justice

On 3 March 2003 the Special Court Prosecutor signed a 13- count indictment alleging war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. The indictment was confirmed by the Trial Chamber on 7 March 2003 and ordered kept under seal.

The Prosecutor unsealed the indict-

ment on 4 June 2003, during Taylor's first trip out of Liberia since the signing of the indictment.

On 4 August 2003 Taylor went into exile in Calabar, Nigeria.

On 31 October and 1 November 2003 Taylor's lawyer, the late Terrence Terry, introduced a preliminary motion before the Special Court's Appeals Chamber unsuccessfully challenging the Court's jurisdiction to try him. The motion argued that as President of Liberia, Taylor enjoyed head of state immunity. He also argued that the Court was not an international tribunal and thus had no jurisdiction outside of Sierra Leone.

On 31 May 2004 the Appeals Chamber decided the Special Court was an international court and that a head of state does not enjoy immunity from prosecution before an international court. The motion was consequently dismissed.

On 24 February 2005 the European Parliament unanimously passed a resolution calling for Nigeria to transfer Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

On 4 May 2005 the U.S. House of Representatives passed a Resolution 421-1, calling for Nigeria to transfer Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

On 11 May 2005 the U.S. Senate passed the 4 May House Resolution by unanimous consent, joining the call for Nigeria to transfer Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

On 24 May 2005 members of the United Nations Security Council underlined the importance of ensuring that all those who have been indicted by the Court appear before it, thereby strengthening the stability of Sierra Leone and the sub-region and bringing an end to impunity.

On 30 June 2005 a coalition of up to 500 African and international civil society groups sent a declaration to the African Union (AU) demanding that Nigeria surrender Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Press conferences were held in 14 countries throughout Africa announcing the declaration.

On 11 November 2005 the U.S. Security Council passed resolution 1638 which gave the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) the powers to detain Charles Taylor should he ever be returned to Liberia, and apprehend and transfer him to the Special Court. This resolution clearly supports the views of the U.N. Security Council that Taylor should be brought to justice at the Special Court.

Obasanjo Jets In 27th March

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo has been slated to deliver the keynote address during the forthcoming Commonwealth-sponsored Investors Forum in Freetown.

The Nigerian High Com-

mission confirmed in Freetown yesterday that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo has been invited by the President of Sierra Leone, Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to Freetown to

Cont. back page



Olusegun Obasanjo

ADA | FEATURES | MEDIA | ON

OBASANJO

From page 1

present the keynote address at the Commonwealth-sponsored Investors Forum slated for 27th to the 30th of this month.

The Investment Forum, it is hoped, will seek to provide an avenue to discuss the investment potential in Sierra Leone, but more importantly, the Forum will also provide an opportunity to show case the investment opportunities in Sierra Leone. It is reliably intimated that some of the big names in private sector activities in diverse parts of the world will make their presence felt in Freetown during the three-day business opportunities meeting.

The Commercial Banks in Sierra Leone will play a pivotal role during the three-day meeting as some of the banking executives will provide information about products and services that are available within the banking sector in Sierra Leone. It is also known that the

Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone, Dr. J. D. Rogers; the Managing Director of the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, Alhaji Dr. Abdulai Kakay; the Managing Director of Rokel Commercial Bank who is also president of the Bankers Association, Henry Akie Macauley are expected to make statements during the course of the conference.

This is the very first time that the Sierra Leone government has taken the bull by the horn by putting in place a Forum that would attempt to sell the image of Sierra Leone abroad just as the occasion will also provide an opportunity for investors to learn about what Sierra Leone can offer in terms of available products and services. However, this is not the first time business men will congregate to discuss investment in Sierra Leone but observers believe that this Commonwealth-sponsored Forum, which will take place between the 27th and 30th March, is expected to be high profiled.

FRIDAY MARCH 17, 2006

"Attorney General is lying"

... *Omrie Golley*



Golley: blasted A.G

Treason suspect Omrie Golley has said in court

yesterday that the Attorney General and Minister of Justice Mr. Fred Carew is frustrating the

trials and he is also a liar as he said he was in the Supreme Court on the

previous day together with the defence Lawyer Charles

continued page 2

“Attorney General is lying”

Margai deliberating on constitutional matters raised in the ongoing treason trials. The argument came about after Golley had responded to question raised by the presiding Judge Justice Ademusu, that Mr. Margai is still his Lawyer. The Attorney General pointed out that the state has complied with its legitimate function to provide the accused persons with a counsel, since his hired defence counsel had consequently being absenting from the trials. He added that

Omrie Golley is not competent to prefer otherwise. The A.G maintained that, Golley and Margai are “using tactics to derail the due process of the law.” Mr. Carew further protested that, the state appointed defence counsel Osho Williams who had already accepted the briefing and the presiding judge had agreed to proceed with the matter come yesterday’s adjournment. These hallucinations were however countered by Golley who vehemently explained that constitutional matters connected

helping with...
to lack of preparation by the defence team, health matters etc. are currently being treated at the supreme court with the accused persons fully represented by Lawyer C.F. Margai. He said, knowing this fully well Golley went on, “it is the Attorney General who is trying to frustrate the trial. This argument which was held by the presiding Judge Ademusu, who advised that the issue of who represent, Golley and two others would have been resolved by the next adjournment which is scheduled for the 23rd...”

...land encroachers

AWARENESS TIMES

FRIDAY MARCH 17, 2006

... TO GIVING KNOWLEDGE TO THE PEOPLE. Friday March 17th, 2006,

Prison Watch blasts over Golley mistreatment



Omrie Golley

Prison watch-Sierra Leone, an indigenous NGO established primarily for the

protection and promotion of the rights of persons in detention and

prisons has in a press release issued yesterday, Thursday, 16th March, condemned

what it described as "the uncouth manner (without

Contd: page 2

Prison Watch blasts over Golley mistreatment

From front page

... in which the three accused persons Omrie M. Golley, Mohammed ... and David Kai Tongay who ... tried for treason before ... Ademusu of High Court NO. 2 ... in court on the 3rd March

The ... states 'As a bulwark for ... rights of persons in detention and ... we strongly believe that the ... presumption of innocent by these three ... accused persons requires that they ... should be given treatment appropriate ... their unconvicted status.' The ... Watch release went on to argue, ... and other related complaints by ... first accused, Mr. Omrie Golley, ... mistreatment in the hands of prison ... officers at Pademba Road Prisons, lack

of access to his required food and medication clearly contravene the provisions of the UN Standard Minimum Rules on Detention and Article 10(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states that 'All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human persons'." The release made a solemn call for the realization of the rights of these persons by stating, "Therefore, we call for urgent action to be taken to address these concerns of the first accused by the Prison Department so that his (Mr. Omrie Golley's) fundamental rights as an unconvicted person shall be respected and guaranteed."

one
sig
int
wa
the
Si
as
St
su
th
A
E
L
c
l
:

... re-brand Sierra Leone

... among Sierra Leonean.


[Print](#)

Liberian President Appeals for US Support

By Dan Robinson
 Capitol Hill
 15 March 2006

Robinson report - Download 325k [↔](#)

Listen to Robinson report [↔](#)

In an address to the U.S. Congress, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has appealed to Americans to support her efforts to bring lasting peace and stability to her country

President Sirleaf began by noting the strong historical ties between Liberia and the United States.

Liberia was founded in 1847 by freed American slaves, with a constitution based on the American model and its currency pegged to the U.S. dollar.

Moving to more recent developments in her country Ms. Sirleaf thanked the Bush administration for helping to facilitate the negotiated exile in 2003 of former President Charles Taylor, which created the conditions for the election that brought her to power:

"Thanks also to President Bush, whose strong resolve and public condemnation and appropriate action forced a tyrant into exile, and thanks to you, the members of this august [noble] body, who spurred the international effort that brought blessed peace to our nation," said Ms. Sirleaf.

Members of Congress are concerned about President Sirleaf's ability to avoid another outbreak of civil conflict in her country after 14 years of bloodletting between rival militias.

A congressional committee recently approved \$50 million in support, but held up another 128 million dollars in regular budget funds.

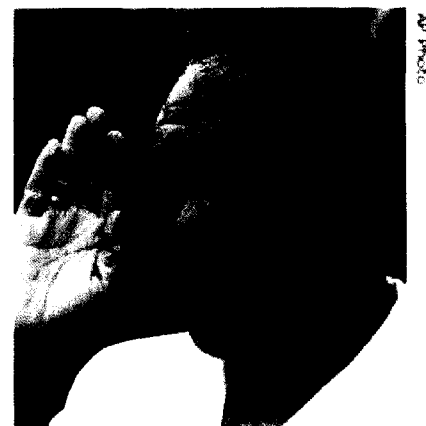
Saying Liberians want neither patronage nor dependency, President Sirleaf listed some of the problems she faces.

"Mismanagement, corruption, bad governance, massive looting of public treasury and assets," she said. "Unlike the tsunami in Asia, and Katrina here in your own country, where the destruction and human casualty were caused by nature, we participated in, or stood silently by, in our own self destruction."

President Sirleaf's address to a joint meeting of Congress, an honor bestowed on a number of foreign leaders in recent years, preceded her scheduled meeting with President



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during speech to joint meeting of US Congress, March 15, 2006



Charles Taylor (2003 file photo)

Bush next week.

She hopes for a commitment of more U.S. assistance, and sought to reassure lawmakers that money will not be wasted.

"We will demonstrate that democracy can work, even under the most challenging conditions," she added. "We will honor the suffering of our people, and Liberia will become a brilliant beacon, an example to Africa and to the world of what the love of liberty can achieve."

She also said Liberia is determined to join the global fight against terrorism, while demonstrating that the transformation from war to peace can succeed.

The Liberian leader thanked Nigeria for accepting Charles Taylor under an internationally negotiated agreement.

While stopping short of saying Liberia has, or will, formally request Taylor's extradition to face war crimes charges, she added Liberia has "little option" but to see that justice is done.

Print

Posted on Wed, Mar. 15, 2006

Liberian leader gets red-carpet welcome in Washington

BY AP/WIDE WORLD
and the Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The nation's capital rolled out the red carpet Wednesday for Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, applauding her as Africa's first elected female head of state.

The American-educated Johnson-Sirleaf kicked off her first U.S. visit as president by addressing a joint session of Congress, an honor usually reserved for royalty, war heroes, pioneering astronauts and more seasoned heads of state.

Barely three months in office, Johnson-Sirleaf, 67, becomes only the fifth African leader - and the first since former South African President Nelson Mandela nearly a decade ago - and eighth woman to address House and Senate members.

"I am deeply touched by the honor bestowed on my small but proud West African Republic of Liberia ... and on myself," she said to a standing ovation. "By this invitation, you have paid one of the greatest tributes there is to those who laid down their lives for my country to be free and democratic. I can only say a big thank you."

Johnson-Sirleaf's speech, her address on Friday to the United Nations Security Council and her meeting next Tuesday with President Bush all honor her personal success story and reward Liberia's transition to democracy after 14 years of civil war and iron-fisted rule by exiled ex-president Charles Taylor.

Her political ascent and strong-willed focus have earned her the nickname "Iron Lady" at home. She ran for the Liberian Senate in 1985, during which she criticized the country's military regime, which first imprisoned, then exiled her. She returned and ran for president against Taylor in 1997, but lost. Taylor fled to Nigeria in 2003.

Last November she scored an 18-point victory over popular former soccer star George Weah, campaigning as a reformer who would trim a bloated government, end corruption and rebuild the country's war-scarred infrastructure.

"She's an extremely bright woman with great experience, and she's tough," said Lester Hyman, an attorney who represented the Liberian government from 1997 to 1999. "She's not perceived at all as being weak. She will be the breath of fresh air Washington is looking for."

Her U.S. visit is largely symbolic. But between speeches and lunches, Johnson-Sirleaf is expected to talk to administration officials about increasing aid to Liberia and the prospects of extraditing Taylor to face a special court in Sierra Leone on war crimes charges, Africa experts say.

Liberia is burdened with crippling poverty: 80 percent of its 3.24 million people live below the poverty line. Yet the country has an abundance of timber, gold, rubber and other natural resources. Unemployment is estimated at 85 percent, and Monrovia, the seaside capital, lacks electricity and running water.

"This is a crucial time for her," said Susan Rice, a former assistant secretary of state for African affairs under President Clinton. "There is a window of opportunity in this post-conflict era to demonstrate to the people who elected her that democracy can put bread on the table. ... If she can't deliver from here, she'll be off to a bad start."

Aid to Liberia has dropped from about \$520 million in fiscal 2004 to \$350 million the next year and only \$250 million this year. Administration officials say aid has dropped because they've reduced funds for peacekeeping as stability replaced civil war. A bipartisan group of 14 House lawmakers, led by Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, D-R.I., is pressing for more aid to Liberia.

"We are concerned that the president's supplemental request does not include critically needed assistance for Liberia in fiscal year 2006," the lawmakers wrote this week in a letter to a House subcommittee. "Unless the newly elected administration of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf can quickly access essential resources now, Liberia's hard-won progress to date could be imperiled."

Johnson-Sirleaf may be new to her office, but she's an old hand when it comes to dealing with the United States. Born in Monrovia in 1938, she earned a degree in accounting from the University of Wisconsin and a master's degree in public education from Harvard.

After serving as Liberia's assistant finance minister, she worked in Washington from 1973 to 1977 as an economist for the World Bank. After a stint as vice president of Citibank's Africa regional office, Johnson-Sirleaf served as vice president of Equator Bank in Washington from 1986 to 1992. In 1992, she became director of the U.N. Development Program's regional bureau for Africa.

© 2006 Mercury News. All rights reserved. Reproduction is prohibited without written permission. Reserved.
<http://www.mercurynews.com>



Liberian leader vows US congress

Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has become one of the few women to address a joint sitting of the United States congress.

In a speech which was frequently interrupted by standing ovations, she said US aid was helping to restore peace to Liberia and West Africa.

She promised to make Liberia "America's success story in Africa."

Liberia was founded by freed US slaves in 1847 and many Liberians see the US as their "big brother".

After her speech, congress promised an extra \$50m in aid for Liberia, still recovering from 14 years of civil war.

Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf is due to meet President George W Bush next week.

Meanwhile, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has urged the Security Council not to make big cuts in the 15,000 UN peacekeepers in Liberia over the next few years, because the peace remains fragile.

Justice

Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf also thanked Mr Bush for putting pressure on Liberia's former President Charles Taylor to step down in 2003, to end the war.

Some leading US politicians want Mr Taylor to face justice for allegedly backing brutal rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

He is currently in exile in Nigeria but Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf only mentioned his name once.

She said her priorities were reconstruction and reconciliation but "Liberia has little option but to see that justice is done in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations and the broad international community".

Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo has said he will only hand Mr Taylor over to an elected Liberian leader, not to the UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone.

Ed Royce, vice chairman of the US House of Representatives International Relations subcommittee on Africa, on Wednesday said many people were "still waiting" for Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf to ask Mr Obasanjo to keep his promise.

Copyright © 2006 BBC NEWS:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/p/ffr/1/2/hi/africa/4812060.stm

006/03/16 10:16:00 GMT


[Print](#)

US Lawmakers: Liberia Asks Nigeria for Taylor's Extradition

By Dan Robinson

Washington

17 March 2006

Robinson reopr (mp3 file) [Download 2.7mb](#) ↵



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

U.S. lawmakers say visiting Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has told them her government has formally asked Nigeria to turn over former president Charles Taylor so he can face trial on war crimes charges. Lawmakers delivered the news after meeting the Liberian leader on Capitol Hill.

The news came in a surprise announcement by House lawmakers engaged in a debate on a multi-billion dollar spending bill to fund U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Republican Congressman Ed Royce rose to express concern that President Sirleaf, who addressed Congress on Wednesday, had not yet formally requested Charles Taylor's extradition from Nigeria. "Taylor must face justice for the killing and maiming that he engineered. Bringing him to the Special Court [for Sierra Leone] will end the cycle of impunity that destabilizes West Africa. And most pressing to today's business, Taylor remains a threat to the progress that the U.S. has done so much to achieve," he said.

Congressman Jim Kolbe, who chairs the House Foreign Operations Subcommittee, then rose to make this announcement, after a meeting he and a House Democrat had with President Sirleaf: "We asked this question, specifically: Will there be an extradition request? I asked it three times, and got the same answer three times, that it has been done. She used the word done three times. So the request for extradition has been done," he said.

Taylor has been in Nigeria since an internationally-negotiated agreement in 2003 secured his exile from Liberia. He has been accused of 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, set up in 2002 to try those behind killings during that country's long civil conflict.

Recent news reports have raised questions about whether President Sirleaf had made a formal request to Nigeria's President Obasanjo.

Congressman Kolbe elaborated on what he said he was told by the Liberian leader:

"She went on to tell us that President (Olusegun) Obasanjo is now consulting with African leaders from the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to consult with them to make sure that the extradition will not in any way destabilize the very fragile peace that exists there," he



Charles Taylor
(2003 file photo)

said

In her address to Congress Wednesday, President Sirleaf had thanked Nigeria for accepting Charles Taylor, but mentioned nothing about any formal extradition request.

However, she said Liberia, in her words, had little option but to see that justice is done.

The House of Representatives approved \$50 million in economic support funds for Liberia, under an amendment first approved last week by the House Appropriations Committee, submitted by Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr.

In his surprise announcement Thursday, Congressman Kolbe said lawmakers will continue to watch the situation closely.

[Print](#)

The Liberian Times

**Liberia: President's Star Rises on U.S. Capitol Hill –Taylor's Issue Hangs Around
Mar 16, 2006**

by Rodney D. Sieh / Contributing Writer

The President of "Africa's Lone Star State" made it through the halls of the United States Congress with flying colors. Following the footsteps of Edwin Barclay and William R. Tolbert, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf appeared before the Joint Session of Congress Wednesday not to beg for aid, but to plea for help in helping Liberia get back on its feet.

Over the last few years U.S. assistance to Liberia have fallen from US 520 million dollars in fiscal 2004 to 350 million dollars the next year and only US 250 million dollars this year. It was important that Sirleaf made it known that she was not seeking a handout and she delivered with flying colors. Besides, Liberia has been blessed to have the likes of a few lawmakers on the hill who have the country at heart and they have been pushing for more financial aid to Liberia over the last few weeks.

Last week, Sen. Patrick Kennedy's House Appropriations Committee approved an additional 50 million dollars in emergency assistance for Liberia on an amendment offered by Kennedy's colleague, Rep. Jesse Jackson.

Kennedy worked on the bill to include additional assistance for Liberia in the emergency supplemental funding bill currently before Congress. Kennedy led 14 of his Democratic and Republicans colleagues in urging additional assistance for emergency needs: restoring electricity and road-building, re-integration of an ex-combatants, civil-service reform, and security services reform.

Said Kennedy, "President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has only a narrow window to prove to the Liberian people that she can deliver before reactionary forces will begin to manipulate discontent towards conflict and strife. America needs to take the lead in demonstrating strong international support for President Johnson Sirleaf, and indeed, the international donor community is waiting for the U.S. to demonstrate that leadership given the strong historical ties between the U.S. and Liberia."

Support from Kennedy, Jesse Jackson Jr. and others on the Hill will go a long way in helping Sirleaf accomplish her goals. "I have many promises to keep. As I won elections through a free and peaceful process, I must preserve freedom and keep the peace. As I campaigned against corruption, I must lead a government that curbs it. As I was elected with the massive vote of women, I must assure that their needs are met."

Those needs may only be met if sanctions are lifted against Liberia and officials in the new government demonstrate to the rest of the world that they mean business in weeding out corruption.

Sirleaf carefully reminded lawmakers that she is doing the things necessary to warrant the lifting of sanctions. “During my first few weeks in office, by curbing corruption we have increased government revenue by 21 percent, relative to the same period last year.”

Sirleaf said she has ordered the cancellation of non compliant forestry concessions and fraudulent contracts and required senior government appointees to declare financial assets.

The issue of Charles Taylor

On the eve of Sirleaf’s speech before the joint session of the U.S. Congress, the Human Rights Watch called on the Bush Administration to give Sirleaf all the support she needed in bringing former dictator Charles Taylor to justice. “The Bush administration has played a positive role in pressing for Taylor to face trial at the Sierra Leone war crimes court,” said Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch. “Now the administration needs to see this through by giving Liberia’s new president strong backing to request Taylor’s surrender. She should not be expected to shoulder this burden alone.”

On the floor of Congress Wednesday, Sirleaf paid homage to Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo and other regional leaders for their role in accepting to host Mr. Charles Taylor. “Liberians are deeply grateful. But I say here, as I have said before, Liberia has little option but to see that justice is done in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations and the broad international community.” It is a stance Sirleaf has been persistent with since seizing coming to office.

Over the past two weeks, Sirleaf-Johnson and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo discussed former Liberian President Charles Taylor, according to news reports. In 2003 Taylor left Liberia for Nigeria. In taking Taylor in as a temporary measure, Nigeria acted with the support of the United States, the African Union and other actors in the international community in efforts to secure a peaceful transition in Liberia.

Taylor has been accused of 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The crimes include killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and the use of forced labor by armed groups. The Special Court was set up in 2002 to try those most responsible for war crimes committed during Sierra Leone’s armed conflict. Said Sirleaf: “while we seek national unity and reconciliation, we must not sacrifice justice.”

Barclay. Tolbert have been here before

Taylor will get his day in court, but what Liberia needs in the immediate term is a chance to make things right. Africa’s oldest republic has always been a country in need. Decades of corruption, greed, nepotism and war has left the country in dire straits. Even in its weakest moment, Liberians have been known to exhibit pride. As President Barclay did during his address before the House of representative some sixty-three years ago:

"Although we have neither large armies, air forces, nor navies to contribute, we have what is important in the prosecution of the war – natural resources and strategic positions which we have freely placed at the disposal of the United Nations as our contribution to the cause of liberty and human dignity." It was all Liberia had to offer the great United States in a time of war.

Some forty years later Tolbert, before the joint session of the U.S. Congress lamented the conditions of a country which continues to languish at the bottom of poor heaven.

Said Tolbert: "When noted economists can rank our nation among those holding the worst place among 59 developing nations today and describe it as being in urgent need of aid to balance its development process; when foreign journalists can visit Liberia and portray it as depressing and appalling; when we review the entire spectrum of unique and historic relations with this great American citadel of splendor and power, we can perceive a clearly evident need for closer and more meaningful cooperation between our two nations."

Today, Sirleaf's challenges are indeed enormous as Liberia still ranks among the world's poorest nations. It is a task that will require the help of all of her people to get the job done. As the president puts it: "The cost of our conflict runs wide and deep, manifested in varied ways. Mismanagement, corruption, bad governance, massive looting of public treasury and assets. That should be a great place to start. How her ministers respond to the task? Only time will tell.

Sirleaf has already laid the path for them to follow. "I have many promises to keep. As I won elections through a free and peaceful process, I must preserve freedom and keep the peace. As I campaigned against corruption, I must lead a government that curbs it. As I was elected with the massive vote of women, I must assure that their needs are met." The president has spoken but the key to the success of the 'darling of the moment would be how she and her Cabinet translate all of this great fanfare en route to becoming "America's Success Story in Africa". Even more important, how would they translate their moment in the sun into success for Sirleaf, Sirleaf's legacy and a country in desperate search for lasting peace - and a return to prosperity.

LIBERIA: President vows not to 'sacrifice justice' for Charles Taylor

16 Mar 2006 19:01:25 GMT

Source: IRIN

MONROVIA, 16 March (IRIN) - Liberia's president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf told the United States Congress that she would not sacrifice justice on the matter of exiled former president Charles Taylor who has been indicted for war crimes by a UN-backed special court.

Sirleaf, Africa's first female president, addressed the Joint Session of the US Congress on Wednesday and said:

"But while we seek national unity and reconciliation, we must not sacrifice justice....Liberia has little option but to see that justice is done in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations and the broad international community."

Sirleaf also thanked Nigeria for giving Taylor exile - a move that enabled the signing of a 2003 peace deal and the end of 14 years of on-off fighting - and US President George Bush for leading international pressure that forced Taylor to step down.

"I respect the life-saving role that our West African neighbours, particularly Nigeria, played at no small cost to them in accepting to host Mr Charles Taylor," Sirleaf said. "Thanks also to President Bush, whose strong resolve and public condemnation and appropriate action forced a tyrant into exile."

Taylor's government was accused of supplying rebel forces in neighbouring Sierra Leone with support and arms. As part of Sierra Leone's return to peace, a UN-backed court has indicted those considered most responsible for war crimes during the country's ten year civil war, among them Charles Taylor.

Nigeria has always maintained that it would hand Taylor over to the Special Court on the request of a Liberian elected government. But Sirleaf, inaugurated as president in mid-January, previously said the massive job of rebuilding war-battered Liberia, which has no electricity or running water, came first.

Also on Wednesday the New York-based international rights group, Human Rights Watch (HRW) called on the US to back the Liberian government in seeking Taylor's surrender for trial.

"The Bush administration has played a positive role in

pressing for Taylor to face trial at the Sierra Leone war crimes court," said Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Programme at HRW. "Now the administration needs to see this through by giving Liberia's new president strong backing to request Taylor's surrender. She should not be expected to shoulder this burden alone."

And the bid to bring Taylor to justice appears to be moving. This week Sirleaf's government said that it has asked Nigeria to begin consultations with the African Union and regional economic group ECOWAS on the Charles Taylor issue.

"The Governments of Nigeria and Liberia are determined and committed to arrive at a solution during these consultations that will be acceptable to the international community and the United Nations, and at the same time guarantee the rights of Mr Taylor under international laws," said a statement issued by the Liberian government.

But members of the former ruling National Patriotic Party, which Taylor used to head, said in the Liberian capital Monrovia that it was untimely to decide the fate of their former leader.

IRIN news

[Printable view](#) | [Email this article](#) | [Send comments](#)

© 1998-2001 Reuters Limited. All rights reserved. Republication or redistribution of Reuters content, including by framing or similar means, is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Reuters. Reuters shall not be liable for any errors or delays in the content, or for any actions taken in reliance thereon.

International Herald Tribune

A medical mystery after Milosevic's death

By Elisabeth Rosenthal and Marlise Simons The New York Times

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2006

ROME Frustrated and filled with skepticism about Slobodan Milosevic's litany of medical complaints, the UN war crimes tribunal at The Hague at times failed to investigate them adequately, according to several doctors who had recently examined the former Serbian leader.

"His medical condition was not good, so we asked for additional tests to evaluate his cardiac situation," said Dr. Florence Leclercq, a French cardiologist who examined Milosevic for about three hours in November. "But these investigations were never performed, and now that's a problem." A tribunal official said it was not possible to comment while an inquiry was under way.

For months before his death Saturday, Milosevic and the tribunal had been sparring over his health: Was he so perilously ill that he needed medical evacuation or was he exaggerating the usual maladies of a 64-year-old man to evade justice? His death ended prematurely a four-year-long trial, suspended more than 20 times because of his illness, but only deepened the medical mystery.

Preliminary autopsy results said he had died of a heart attack, although doctors who examined him just months ago said they did not believe he had significant heart disease. Likewise, tests done before he died detected the presence of a medicine he had not been prescribed, one that would have put him at grave risk by reducing the effectiveness of his blood-pressure pills.

Court officials and some scientists have been quick to insinuate that Milosevic was secretly ingesting the extra medicine to exacerbate his medical problems, so that he could be transferred to a clinic in Moscow, where his family now lives.

But some confidants, including doctors who spoke to him in his last weeks of life, said Milosevic was alarmed by his poor health and feared that prison doctors, as well as Dutch special consultants, were providing inadequate treatment.

Dr. Patrick Barriot, another French doctor who frequently visited Milosevic, said he suffered symptoms of increasingly severe high blood pressure in the six months before his death, including headaches, visual changes and a constant thrumming noise in his ear. The pressure routinely read 180/110, he said, well above safe limits.

"Each time I saw him, he was clearly deteriorating, more and more tired," said Barriot, a former military doctor who came to know Milosevic when stationed in what was then Yugoslavia, who has testified as a defense witness.

What is certain is that Milosevic's blood pressure - a problem since the start of his four-year trial - recently had become increasingly difficult to control. Prison doctors long suspected that he was not taking his medicine, said Dr. Donald Uges, one of two Dutch toxicologists consulted on the case.

After several weeks of sleuthing, the toxicologists recently determined that Milosevic ingested the antibiotic rifampicin, which would blunt the effect of his blood pressure medicine. Uges, as well as tribunal officials speaking on condition of anonymity because an investigation is under way, suggested that the antibiotic was taken intentionally, smuggled in by visitors.

But Barriot dismissed that charge, saying that Milosevic had called him several times recently "very anxious about his blood pressure" and about whether detention-center guards were giving him the right medicine, a worry he also brought up in court.

Leclercq said that when she and two other doctors examined Milosevic on Nov. 4, "his cardiac situation was extremely difficult to evaluate."

Carla Del Ponte, the tribunal's chief prosecutor, said that she knew Milosevic was ill and that she had a folder of 150 motions and reports from various doctors concerning his health. "If there was one person who was not overlooked it was Milosevic," she said.

Last fall, because of concerns about his declining health - notably severe phantom noise in his ears - Milosevic requested a consultation with the outside doctors, which Barriot helped to arrange. The experts included Leclercq, Dr. Margarita Shumilina, a Russian vascular specialist, and Dr. Vukasin Andric, an ear specialist.

Shumilina and Andric concluded that his hearing problems were "symptoms of disordered brain circulation because of hypertension," according to a confidential report, part of which was read to a reporter by a lawyer familiar with the case.

The team suggested a six-week break in the trial to "reduce or at least stabilize" Milosevic's symptoms, a suggestion that was met with skepticism by the court, whose own experts had concluded that the hearing problems were not indicative of serious vascular problems, and that rest would have no effect.

Judge Iain Bonomy said the whole consultation was highly suspect because of political ties between Andric and Milosevic, but the trial was suspended for one month.

By January, Milosevic's blood-pressure readings became increasingly erratic, with levels as high as 260/180, Andric has said in the Serbian press.

Irate at charges that he had not been taking his medicine, Milosevic agreed to new blood tests.

It was in part that examination that led prison doctors to suspect foul play, perhaps by Milosevic, Uges said. Was there some substance that would nullify the blood-pressure medicines? "We realized that the only thing that could do this was rifampicin," he said. A blood sample was found to contain the compound.

Some experts said rifampicin itself was unlikely to explain Milosevic's death, since he did not die of a stroke, a far more common problem with high blood pressure. Also, its effects on blood pressure could have been counteracted by increasing the dose of his blood-pressure medicines, said Joris Delanghe, a toxicologist at Ghent University in Belgium.

Milosevic, who was 64 and had a history of smoking and high blood pressure, may well also have had undetected heart disease, doctors said.

"Refractory hypertension exists, and some patients are hard to treat," Delanghe said. He added that for Milosevic, the mental stress of being imprisoned must have been "a major cardiovascular risk factor in itself."

Elisabeth Rosenthal reported from Rome for this article, and Marlise Simons from The Hague



UN creates new human rights body

The UN General Assembly has voted overwhelmingly to create a new human rights organisation for the world body, despite United States criticism.

The 47-nation UN Human Rights Council will replace the current 53-country UN Human Rights Commission.

The existing body has been heavily criticised for having countries with poor human rights records as members.

The US voted against the plan, saying the reforms did not go far enough, but pledged to work with the new council.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan welcomed what he called an "historic resolution... that gives the United Nations a much-needed chance to make a new beginning in its work for human rights around the world".

He had proposed the changes last year to replace the discredited commission, which has in recent years included countries accused of gross human rights violations such as Sudan, China, Cuba and Zimbabwe.

Tighter rules

The resolution, which had been negotiated over many months by Assembly President Jan Eliasson, was approved by 170 members of the 191-nation assembly.

Three nations abstained. Israel, Marshall Islands and Palau joined the US in voting against the plan.

NEW HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Every UN member state eligible to join
Elected by secret ballot, needs absolute Assembly majority
Each member serves for three-year term
All UN members will eventually have rights record reviewed
Systematic violators of human rights could be suspended

Members of the assembly burst into applause when the result was announced.

The new council will comprise members who are elected by secret ballot by an absolute majority of the General Assembly.

There will be periodic reviews of membership, and any state accused of systematic human rights violations could be suspended.

The US had wanted a smaller body to be created, with members chosen primarily for their commitment to human rights.

It wanted a two-thirds majority vote, and a ban for countries subject to UN sanctions because of rights violations.

"We did not have sufficient confidence in this text to be able to say that the Human Rights Council will be better than its predecessor," said John Bolton, the US ambassador to the UN, explaining the reason for voting no.

"That said, the United States will work co-operatively with other member states to make the council as strong and effective as it can be," he added.

© 2006 BBC NEWS:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/go/pt/hi/06/03/15/hi/europe/4810538.stm>

Printed on 06/03/15 19:40:00 GMT

Printed on 06/03/15

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 15 March 2006**

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

International Clips on Liberia

VOA 14 March 2006

Liberian President to Address US Congress

By Dan Robinson
Capitol Hill

Wednesday the Liberian president will address what is called a joint meeting of Congress, an honor given to foreign leaders, the most recent being Italy's prime minister.

President Johnson-Sirleaf is expected to receive a warm reception from lawmakers gathered in the House of Representatives chamber. But her address takes place amid an undercurrent of unease among supporters in Congress of Liberia's political and economic recovery efforts. Just last week, the House Appropriations Committee approved \$50 million in economic and humanitarian aid as part of a multibillion dollar supplemental bill funding U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. says while the United States has helped Liberia in its peaceful transition from former President Charles Taylor to President Johnson-Sirleaf, more needs to be done:

Liberia: Nailing the American Dime

Monrovia, Mar 14, 2006 (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Newly elected Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf will address the US Congress on Wednesday in what will be a crucial opportunity to secure funds to rebuild a country left battered by war.

Underlining the close historic link between Liberia and the United States, Sirleaf will be the first African leader to address a joint meeting of the US Senate and House of Representatives since South African President Nelson Mandela more than a decade ago.

Liberia axes police chief for freeing suspected Russian rapists

MONROVIA, March 15, 2006 (AFP) - Liberian authorities have suspended the country's police chief after he released from detention five Russians under probe for rape, the police officer said. The five, who were employees of a UN contractor, have left the country, the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL) said. Alfred Karlay, who has been acting police director for less than a month, awaiting the return from the US of the substantive police had, Beatrice Munah Sieh, said he was suspended Tuesday.

Irish Times 15 March 2006

UN asks Ireland to keep troops in Liberia.

Connor Lally

LIBERIA: Ireland's role may be extended in a major United Nations peacekeeping mission in Liberia after the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, wrote to the Taoiseach urging him to reconsider Ireland's planned withdrawal at the end of the year, The Irish Times has learned. Mr Annan wrote to Mr Ahern last week to request that Ireland's 430-strong quick reaction force troops in Liberia be maintained there for at least an additional six months, to June 2007.

International Clips on West Africa

Congolese FM in Ivory Coast for AU over peace talks

ABIDJAN, March 15, 2006 (AFP) - The foreign minister of the Republic of Congo, which chairs the African Union, was Wednesday in Ivory Coast for talks among international peace brokers to monitor progress, the government said.

Rodolphe Adada arrived Tuesday and held talks with Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny who last year was named by mediators to head a transitional government expected to patch up the country divided into two since a 2002 insurgency.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

President Nominates Governance Reform Commissioners

- An Executive Mansion press release said yesterday that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had nominated commissioners of the Governance Reform Commission, including Dr. Byron Tarr, Dr. Elwood Dunn, Yarsuah Weh-Dorliae, David Kortie and Alphonso Nimene. Former Interim President Dr. Amos Sawyer had earlier been nominated to head the commission.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

UNMIL Confirms Suspected Russian Gang Rapists' Escape

- In a press statement issued in Monrovia yesterday, UNMIL confirmed that the Russians earlier accused of gang raping two Liberian women, had fled the country.
- The alleged rapists were reportedly released into the custody of their legal counsel, Joseph Nagbe, who is also a member of the Liberian Senate.
- Under Liberia's justice system, flight of a suspect in such manner is a presumption of guilt.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Acting Police Inspector-General Suspended

- Liberia's Solicitor-General and Acting Justice Minister Tiawon Gongloe said yesterday that he was suspending Acting Liberian National Police Inspector-General Alfred Karley for unprofessionally conducting himself in a case involving five suspected Russian gang rapists who have already fled the country.
- A press statement issued in Monrovia said that Cllr. Gongloe thought Col. Karley should have known that gang rape was not bailable because it was a felony of the first degree.
- Cllr. Gongloe also suspended Police Detective Prince Jomah for mishandling the Russians who had been placed into his care.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Economic Governance Steering Committee Says Transitional Government Incurred US\$20 Million Domestic Debt

- The Economic Governance Steering Committee says the former National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) during its two-year tenure, incurred a domestic debt of US\$20 million.
- According to a press statement, the Committee also said that the NTGL left Liberia in a state of financial disarray but that the Ministry of Finance was revising the national budget to accommodate government spending for the rest of the year.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

No Mandate to Indict Suspected Liberian War Criminals Says Special Court

- Allaying fears that the Special Court for Sierra Leone would indict other suspected Liberian war criminals as soon as former President Charles Taylor appears before it, Chief Prosecutor Desmond de Silva said that the Court does have a mandate to prosecute only those indicted for war crimes in Sierra Leone and not in Liberia, adding that the court had no intention to indict Liberian politicians or any specific groups of people, a press statement issued in Freetown said.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

New Foreign Minister Poised to Clean Liberia's Image Abroad

- Speaking at a ceremony to assume his job as Foreign Minister yesterday, Ambassador George Wallace said that he would take steps to improve Liberia's negative image abroad. He lauded former Foreign Minister Thomas Yahya Nimley for making efforts to acquire new embassy blocks in London, Paris and Abuja.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Man Stabbed for Supporting Taylor's Extradition

- An eyewitness told police sources yesterday that a man was stabbed in an argument over whether former President Charles Taylor should be transferred to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

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. Jeddi Armah at armahj@un.org.