

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



See photos of yesterday's handover of the detention facility in today's 'Special Court Supplement.'

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Tuesday, 17 November 2009

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

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 16 November 2009

Special Court Hands Over Detention Facility to Government of Sierra Leone



Acting Registrar Binta Mansaray hands over the key to the Detention facility to Attorney-General and Minister of Justice Abdul Serry-Kamal

The Special Court for Sierra Leone today handed over its detention facility to the Sierra Leone Prison Service. The ceremony, which was opened by Special Court President Justice Jon Kamanda, marks a significant milestone in the completion of the Court's mandate in Freetown.

The site now returns to the Sierra Leone Prison Service, where it will be used to house female prisoners.

“We are handing over a facility that meets international standards, which we believe the Sierra Leone government can utilize at any time they require a facility of maximum security or for other vulnerable groups,” said Acting Registrar Binta Mansaray in handing over the keys to Attorney-General and Minister of Justice Abdul Serry-Kamal.

Mr. Serry-Kamal immediately handed the keys to Moses Showers, the Director of Prisons.



Prisons Director Moses Showers

Mr. Showers stressed the needs of females prisoners which, he said, the new facility will provide.

“Females prisoners all over the world are a marginalized lot, Sierra Leone not being an exception,” he said. “Emphasis is usually placed for male inmates, and facilities provided for detention centres are usually concentrated for the development and welfare of male inmates.”

The detention facility site was previously operated by the Prisons Service as a facility for short-term convicts. The Special Court for Sierra Leone refurbished the two existing prison blocks, and in August 2003 transferred indictees from the temporary Bonthe Island facility.

Last month, the prisoners held at the Special Court were transferred to Rwanda to serve their sentences.

Today's event was attended by Sierra Leone's Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, the Chief Justice, the Chief of Defence Staff, and the Director of the Sierra Leone Prison Service, along with diplomats, Special Court staff, members of Civil Society, and journalists.

#END

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.

APC Govt. Takes Over Special Court

By Abdul Fonti

The All People's Congress (APC) led Government of Sierra Leone now possess one third of the eleven point five acres of the Detention Facility of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, situated at New England in Freetown. The ownership of the said premises was formally handed over to the Government of Sierra Leone on Monday 16th November 2009 at a ceremony held at the Special Court helipad premises.

Binta Mansaray, Acting Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone handed over the symbolic key of the Detention Facility to the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Abdul Seer Kamal, who then proceeded to hand over the key to the Director of Prisons, Moses Showers.

The occasion was graced by various highly placed personalities including the Chief Justice of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Her Lady Umu Hawa Tejan Jalloh, Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) Chris Charley, Army Chief of Defence Staff Major General Nelson Williams and Prisons Officers. Presentation of certificates and awards to prisons officers, in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the Detention Facility of the Special Court, forms part of yesterday's handing over ceremony.

Acting Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Binta Mansaray said they are very much satisfied with the performance of the court, adding that it has contributed immensely towards combating impunity in not only Sierra Leone but the sub region as a whole. She said over one hundred and fifty personnel of the Sierra Leone Prisons Department worked with the Special Court for Sierra Leone, whilst thanking

the Government of Sierra Leone for what she described as its excellence cooperation over the years.

She also expressed appreciation to the international community for providing funds and ensuring that the Court takes center stage in the system of international criminal justice.

Binta Mansaray lauded the efforts and courage of victims who explained their stories that led to the successful prosecution and conviction of those who bears the greatest responsibilities in the war that ravaged Sierra Leone.

The conviction of the indictees, according to Mansaray, will serve as a lesson to Sierra Leoneans in particular that they would be held to account for turning their backs on their own people.

Receiving the key to the facility, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice expressed hope that the detention staff will judiciously utilize the skills they have acquired from the Special Court.

He used the forum as an opportunity to inform his audience that the Sierra Leone Prisons Department is at the verge of restructure, adding that it will soon be known and called Correctional Services Department.

He thanked the United Nations, present and past governments of Sierra Leone and other stakeholders for their contribution towards ending the conflict in Sierra Leone.

The Director of Prisons Department, Moses Showers disclosed that the Special Courts Detention Facility would be adequately used for female prisoners.

Hon Justice Kamanda, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone delivered the welcome statement.

SPECIAL COURT DETENTION CENTRE FOR SALONE PRISION

BY AMADIABADI

The Detention Centre of the Special Court has been handed over the Sierra Leone Prisons Services.

This was part of the agreement between the Sierra Leone Government and the U.N. backed special Court for Sierra Leone.

According to the agreement, the Sierra Leone Government should take possession of the Special Court premises when the Court folds up after the trials of the AFRC, RUF and CDF members facing war crimes charges.

The trials in Freetown have been concluded and the Appeals Chamber has upheld the verdicts of the trial chambers. With that the court will fold up in December this year.

For now, the Court maintains a small stall backed by Mongolian and Sierra Leone security forces.

While the Detention Centre will go to the Sierra Leone prison, the courts, that is, the trial courts and the Appeals Chambers would be handed over to the Sierra Leone Judiciary.

It has not yet been determined by the Sierra Leone Government the category of prisoners to be kept at the Special Court Detention Center and whether the High Court, which is the main trial court of the Judiciary will be moved to the Special Court which will provide adequate rooms for all high court judges for court sittings.

The decision to hand over the Special Court detention centre to the Sierra Leone prison is welcome as it will ease congestion at the Pademba Road prisons which host more than half the number inmates it was interned for country wide.

Awoko

Tuesday, 17 November 2009

Female prisoners to use Special Court

By Betty Milton

The Prisons Department yesterday officially received the keys to the detention center of the Special Court which will be used for female prisoners who are now at the Pademba Road prison at a ceremony which took place at the Court.

Receiving the keys on behalf of the government the Attorney General Abdul Serry -Kamal gave a brief background of the agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the Special Court.

He said that the court has really done well for the people of this country not only in dispensing justice but also for the structures they have put in place.

Speaking about some staff of the Prison Department who was seconded to the court, Mr. Serry-Kamal said these security members who he said have been "reformed prisoner officers because you have got some training before coming to work at the court."

The President of the Court Justice Jon Kamanda in his statement said that the handing over ceremony marks a significant milestone for the country since they are at the final stage of its mandate.

He also stated that there is a long standing relationship and mutual understanding between the government of Sierra Leone and the Special Court.

This structure he went on is a tangible tool not only for the

people of the country but also a reform for the Justice Sector adding that the Sierra Leone Judiciary he said needs adequate structure to function well.

Justice Kamanda said he was happy that the facility will be used as a female reformation center as with facilities that meet international standard. The women in prison need certain facilities which include clean and regular water supply, health and other amenities and all of these are provided by this Special Court detention facility.

The Acting Registrar of the Court Binta Mansaray gave a background of the Court and the relationship between the Sierra Leone Government and the Special Court.

The government of Sierra Leone she said has been cooperative since the beginning. It started with the detention facility in Bonthe which was renovated and

Kono chieftaincy election...

Woman denied chieftaincy symbol

By Poindexter Sama

The pending Paramount Chieftaincy election in the country has met with hiccups especially in the Nimiyama chiefdom, Kono District in the eastern part of the country where a woman Madam Elizabeth Kumba Simbiwa Sorgboh Torto has been denied the Chieftaincy symbol because she is not a member of

handed over to the government and now the handing over of a facility which meets international standards.

The Acting Registrar also disclosed that they will not be only handing over a physical structure to the Prison Department but a total of 150 Prison Officers who have also been well trained men and women who can handle prison situation very well.

In his statement, the Director of Prisons Moses Showers said that when they were approached by the government to hand over the said land to the Court they were reluctant but that they were forced to do so.

"Now we have benefited more than what we expected. The Court has also provided us with well trained Prison Officers and we are proud of them since they can now handle prison conditions well", the Director said.

the Poro Society. This was made known when she brought a letter of petition against the Provincial Secretary Mr. Samuel K. Brima and his retinue of Paramount Chiefs Assessors Alhaji Sahr Cyrus Ngebuva and Alimamy Moiwai Farma to the Human Right Commission.

In her testimony she mentioned that her right to the throne is inherent in the fact that her great grandfather was a warrior

Awoko

Tuesday, 17 November 2009

UNIPSIL, Special Court to battle for Zain trophy

UNIPSIL and Special Court of Sierra Leone last weekend qualified for the finals of the Zain corporate tournament at the St. Edwards playing field at Kingtom.

In the first semi finals, Special Court defeated the United States Embassy by 2-0 while UNIPSIL defeated UTB on penalty shoot out 3-2 after 90 minutes in the second semi finals.

According to the Corporate & SME Manager Probyn Browne, the tournament was an eye opener to the corporate world by bridging the gap and creating a common ground for familiarities and business transactions.

Browne disclosed to Awoko that the Zain Corporate tournament for 2009 has been a success and they are expecting a competitive final with lots of passion in the game.

He explained that most of the executives at



Probyn Browne Corporate & SME Manager of Zain Sierra Leone

different institutions normally play Golf and other games but, football is being loved and played by most of the junior workers.

The Corporate Manager also said that the winning team will be giving a championship trophy while skillful and obedient players will be awarded with trophies the including referees. He also noted that, air time will also be giving out to the best behaved supporter of the tournament, adding that Zain has spent (\$21,000.00) twenty one thousand dollars on this year's tournament.

Probyn Browne expressed thanks and appreciation to all the participating teams for their good sportsmanship and fair play during the tournament and encouraged them to continue their loyalty to the Zain brand.

The Zain corporate final is expected to play this Saturday at the same grounds where everybody is invited to celebrate with Zain in a wonderful world.

SIERRA LEONE: War-wounded get micro-grants

FREETOWN, 12 November 2009 (IRIN) - Some 20,000 people wounded in Sierra Leone's war are receiving micro-grants as part of efforts to rebuild lives and livelihoods in the still fragile country.

The initial grants of 300,000 leones (US\$80) each are part of a government "reparations" programme, implemented by the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA). The cash is aimed at boosting people's livelihoods, through training or a business start-up, as they await further health, education and other assistance. NaCSA's Amadu Bangura said they planned to continue assistance in 2010 but were short of funds for the reparations programme; current funding of \$3 million was made available by the UN Peacebuilding Fund. The commission is working on securing more funds and appealing to various donors.

Sierra Leone is still facing socio-economic challenges - some remnants of the war, others new. Finance Minister Samura Kamara noted falling diamond prices, decreasing remittances and imports, and drug-trafficking as new burdens. Sixty percent of youths are unemployed, according to the government.

With 300,000 leones a small-scale farmer could buy tools and rice seeds; an informal shopkeeper could purchase a start-up stock of biscuits and other goods. Grant recipients told IRIN that nothing would erase the

gang rapes endured in the war or restore amputated limbs, but they were grateful for the assistance.

"I am no longer able to do farming with the pain I experience from time to time," said Thomas Masuba, whose hand was amputated. "I will use the money to start a small-scale business, probably selling food and drink." Madam Kailakkah was a breast-feeding mother when she was gang-raped during the war. She said the initial grant was small but she would do her best to invest in farming. "The 300,000 leones cannot appease me, but [through the country's peace and reconciliation process] I have forgiven those rapists whom I still see around in nearby villages."

Assistance to war victims was among the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Amputees, victims of sexual violence, and others injured in the war are entitled to free medical care, and education and housing assistance under the reparation programme, Bangura said.

Alhaji Lamin Jusu Jarka, head of the national amputees and war-wounded association, said it was good that the government was providing micro-grants to "kick-start" reparations - many injured, unable to find jobs, depended on reparations - but "Delay in the overall implementation of the TRC recommendations is frustrating."



Alhaji Lamin Jusu Jarka, head of Sierra Leone's amputees and war-wounded association

and to be constructive in their criticisms emulating the tolerance exhibited by their good work." The Ambassador promised to be at the service of all

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Monday, 16 November 2009

Rebels and Government Exchanged Information With The CIA, Taylor Says; Denied Influencing Witnesses

Alpha Sesay

After his cross-examination got off to a stumble last week over the use of "new evidence," Charles Taylor today admitted to prosecutors that he shared information with the spy agency of the same country he has accused of plotting his downfall: the United States. Mr. Taylor also dismissed as "nonsense" prosecution allegations that he has been misusing his phone privileges while in jail to try to influence testimony of his defense witnesses.

When court resumed this morning, the prosecution's lead counsel Ms. Brenda Hollis indicated her team's willingness to go ahead with Mr. Taylor's cross-examination, having had more time to "rearrange strategies" after the court refused to allow the use of "new evidence" which had not been part of the prosecution's case and was not raised in Mr. Taylor's direct-examination. As the cross-examination proceeded, Mr. Taylor denied suggestions that he was an agent of the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). He admitted, however, that his rebel group, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), exchanged information with the CIA – a collaboration and exchange that continued into his presidency.

"The organization [NPFL] provided information to the CIA. The NPFL at the time did provide information to the CIA and there was information from the CIA to us too. There was exchange of information, mostly from between 1991-92," Mr. Taylor said.

"The NPFL and the CIA exchanged information on certain operations. They were mostly internal to the Liberia operation," he added.

Mr. Taylor explained that the collaboration with the CIA continued when he became president in 1997.

"The government of Liberia associated in so many ways in exchange of information with the CIA. Throughout my presidency, an agency of my government collaborated with the CIA," the former president said.

Despite this previous collaboration with an agency of the United States, the accused former president has consistently accused the United States of plotting his downfall through support to rebel forces who fought to unseat him in Liberia, and his subsequent trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Also in his cross-examination today, the prosecution accused Mr. Taylor of misusing his phone services in his Hague cell to influence prospective defense witnesses to tell lies in his favor. Mr. Taylor denied Ms. Hollis' suggestion that he has been calling prospective defense witnesses in Sierra Leone and Liberia, telling them to "testify in a certain way" or promising to give them money if they travelled to The Hague and told lies in his favor. Mr. Taylor has been "misusing the privileged access lines," Ms. Hollis suggested. Mr. Taylor denied these claims.

I have never misused the privileged access lines. To the best of my knowledge, I have never been advised that I cannot use the privileged access lines to talk to prospective witnesses," he said.

Mr. Taylor dismissed as "nonsense" Ms. Hollis' suggestions that when he (Taylor) resigned as president of Liberia and sought asylum in Nigeria, West African leaders had to accompany him to Nigeria because they wanted to make sure that he got to where he was supposed to go.

"Maybe that is your assessment. Your assertion that I would have escaped to another country is totally nonsense," he said.

Mr. Taylor agreed with Ms. Hollis that while in Nigeria, the host government imposed certain conditions on his asylum status – but such restrictions, he said, were not established specifically for him. He said that the

restrictions were part of Nigerian law for anybody obtaining asylum in the country. The restrictions, as stated by Ms. Hollis, included restrictions on Mr. Taylor's involvement in military and political activities in Liberia; not travelling out of Calabar, Nigeria, without authorization; and not talking to the press without informing the Nigerian authorities. Mr. Taylor responded that while in Nigeria, he had several press interviews and he was able to travel to visit several individuals, including then Nigeria president, Olusegun Obasanjo.

Mr. Taylor dismissed the notion that President Obasanjo imposed these restrictions on him because of evidence that while as president of Liberia, he had meddled in the politics of other countries and there were concerns that he would do the same thing with Liberian politics while in Nigeria.

"To suggest that Obasanjo will put these restrictions because I was meddling in other states is total nonsense," he said.

The former president dismissed as "misleading" prosecution suggestions that West African leaders invited him for peace talks in Ghana in 2003 and then forced him to resign as president of Liberia. Mr. Taylor told the lead prosecutor that her team needs to do their work well.

"If they do their work and stop misleading this court, that will be good," Mr. Taylor said. "I can tell you 100 percent that I volunteered to resign."

Mr. Taylor is responding to charges that he was involved in a joint criminal enterprise with Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor has denied allegations that he supplied arms and ammunition to the rebels in return for Sierra Leone's blood diamonds and that he helped them plan certain operations during which atrocities such as rape, murder and amputation of civilian arms were committed. From July 14 to November 10, 2009, Mr. Taylor testified in direct-examination as a witness in his own defense. He is currently being cross-examined by the prosecution.

Mr. Taylor's cross-examination continues tomorrow.

UN News

Monday, 16 November 2009

Sierra Leone: Edging Closer to End of Mandate, UN-Backed Court Hands Over Prison to Country

The United Nations-backed tribunal trying the worst acts committed during the decade-long brutal civil war in Sierra Leone today transferred its detention centre to the national prison service.

The handover of the facility, which is slated to house female prisoners, is the latest step in the completion of the mandate of the Freetown-based Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), which delivered its last judgment inside the country in October.

Last month, the eight prisoners convicted and held by the SCSL were transferred to Rwanda to serve their sentences. The remaining trial, involving former Liberian president Charles Taylor, is continuing at The Hague, where it was moved for security reasons.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the Sierra Leonean Government and the UN in 2002. It is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

Agence France Presse

Monday, 16 November 2009

Sierra Leone tribunal hands over prison

FREETOWN — As a first step towards winding up its presence in Sierra Leone, the UN backed Special Court on Sierra Leone on Monday turned over its jail to the government, which will make it a women's prison.

Last month the court handed down its final verdict in Freetown and the eight former rebels so far convicted have been transferred to serve their sentence in Rwanda, under a bilateral deal.

With the tribunal's only remaining trial, the case against Liberian former president Charles Taylor, taking place in the Netherlands for security reasons, the court is preparing to close its doors in Sierra Leone.

The court's former detention unit will be turned into a women's prison, Sierra Leone's Attorney-general Serry Kamal said at a special hand-over ceremony Monday.

The country's director of prisons, Moses Showers, who was given the keys to the facility, said some 35 women prisoners will be transferred from the maximum security Pademba Road prisons "to ease overcrowding".

"Female prisoners all over the world are a marginalized lot, Sierra Leone not being an exception," Showers said in a statement released by the court. He added that the new prison could help Sierra Leone meet the special needs of female prisoners, who are a vulnerable group.

Court sources told AFP that the hand-over of the remaining structures of the court are under negotiation, but funds of 200,000 dollars (133,000 euros) have been secured for a peace museum to be established in memory of the Sierra Leone war.

The decade-long conflict is considered one of the most brutal in recent history. Over 120,000 people were killed and many hundreds of thousands more were mutilated and raped by rival rebel factions fighting for control of the country's diamond mines.

Other options for the remaining court buildings, according to the sources, include parts of the complex being used as a judicial training centre and an associate court of the International Criminal Court (ICC) based in The Hague.

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 16 November 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberia's Elections Commission Chair Says His Life is Threatened

VOA November 16, 2009

The chairman of Liberia's National Elections Commission (NEC), James Fromayan says partisans of football legend George Weah's Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) party have threatened to burn down his house and eliminate him in the process. "The CDC people in particular have been the ones making threatening statements about me at some polling centers. They said they were going to burn my home. In fact they had hate messages on their FM station, King FM which had a whole of threatening statements about me," he said. Fromayan said given Liberia's recent violent history, he reported the threats to the Liberian police who in turn provided security for him and his wife. He said his commission will continue to do its work and would not be perturbed by the threats.

"We are doing what we are convinced is the right thing and those who want to come to power by using threats to intimidate us as chairpersons of the National Elections Commission, I think they are missing the point," he said. But the opposition CDC said its partisans made no such threats against Mr. Fromayan. Instead the party said the elections commission chairman was being paranoid.

Ohanaeze Decries Detention of 517 Ndigbo in Liberia

Umuahia, Nov 16, 2009 (Daily Champion/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- National coordinator of Ohanaeze Ndigbo in Diaspora, Dr. Mithshell Nnanta has expressed deep concern over the detention of 517 Igbo in Liberia for criminal charges and sundry offences, and called on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to look into the plights of Igbo in foreign lands. The chieftain raised the alarm while addressing journalists in Umuahia after he was conferred with Honorary Doctorate degree in Humanity by Morns Cerullo Christian University in affiliation with Pacific Western University, San Diego California, USA. According to him, 215 detainees have been released following the intervention of Ohanaeze in Diaspora and his personal international connections, and called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, to initiate moves for the release of the remaining detainees.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

Confronting Camara And His Junta in Guinea

Nov 16, 2009 (Daily Champion/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Following the passing away of Guinea's long-time ruler, Lansana Conte, in December 2008, the medium-sized country sitting along Africa's west coast has barely escaped the international spotlight. Because of Guinea-Conakry's prominent role in issues, especially of peace-keeping, in and around the ECOWAS [Economic Commission of West African States] sub region, a wide-range of foreign governments and international institutions have gone out of their way to speak out and to take action. The real concern for Guinea, since Captain Dadis Moussa Camara took power late last year, is that the situation in the former French colony will implode, unless there is concerted efforts by the world community to ensure that, rather than plunge back to the era of near absolute dictatorship under Mr. Conte, Guinea takes the path of multi-party democracy, in which case, the perpetuation of military rule under whatever guise won't be acceptable. This has been the message that the international community says it wants to convey to Captain Dadis and the rest of his junta.

Cote d'Ivoire

Lawsuits Against Dole by Ivory Coast Plaintiffs Dismissed

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Dole Food Company, Inc. announced today that the Los Angeles Superior Court has dismissed the seven remaining lawsuits brought by Ivory Coast plaintiffs against Dole and three other companies. Previously, the United States District Court for the Central District of California had dismissed the eighth lawsuit based on lack of Federal subject matter jurisdiction and comity. Superior Court Judge Ann I. Jones ordered the dismissal of *Abagninin, et al. v. Amvac Chemical Corp., et al.* on November 10, 2009, bringing to an end the lawsuits brought by Ivory Coast plaintiffs who had alleged exposure to the nematicide DBCP three decades ago. Lawyers for the plaintiffs had filed a motion to withdraw as counsel of record after a witness in the Ivory Coast offered to testify that an attorney representing the plaintiffs had filed unauthorized claims and had fabricated medical evidence.

Local Media – Newspaper

CDC, UP For Run-Off

(The Informer, Liberian Express, The Inquirer, Liberia Journal, National Chronicle, The News, Heritage, The Analyst, Daily Observer, Public Agenda, New Democrat)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) says Congress for Democratic Change's (CDC) Geraldine Doe Sheriff and Clemenceau Urey of the ruling Unity Party (UP) have qualified for run-off election after the first round of the Montserrado County Senatorial By-election.
- The run-off election between the opposition CDC and the UP is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24.
- According to the NEC, none of the 10 candidates in the November 10 By-election received an absolute majority of 50 plus votes.
- Geraldine Doe Sheriff accumulated the total votes of 33,874 amounting to 35.5 percent followed by Clemenceau Urey with 28,329 amounting to 29.7 percent.

Liberia Ranks among Countries With High Yellow Fever Epidemic

(The Inquirer, The Analyst)

- A consultant of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says Liberia is among countries with high yellow fever epidemic.
- Ms. Jane Nagoba-Nyanzi, communications consultant of UNICEF said Liberia has had repeated cases of yellow fever outbreak since 1995.
- Ms. Nyanzi in a meeting with the National Traditional Council of Liberia said this year along, the country has experienced two separate outbreaks of yellow fever in Montserrado, Bong and Lofa Counties.
- The UNICEF communications consultant said the decision to vaccinate the entire nation was based on what she refers to as the potential danger yellow fever poses.
- She said the vaccination exercise would be administered free of charge and will last for 10 years.

Public Works Minister Inspects Several Renovation Projects

(The Informer, Daily Observer, Heritage)

- Public Works Minister, Samuel Kofi Woods has again called on the Chinese contracted company CICO to speed up and finish road rehabilitations in Monrovia before the current dry season slips away.
- Speaking during a tour of several infrastructural projects in Monrovia including the reconstruction of streets of the capital, Mr. Woods said although continuous rain has created some delay in the initial commencement of the work it was now moving at an aggressive pace.

European Commission Commits €165.9M to Liberia

(Daily Observer)

- The National Authorizing Office of the European Commission (EC) has announced a strategic assistance worth €165.9 million to Government for its post-war reconstruction.
- The Deputy National Officer of the National Authorizing Office at the Planning Ministry, Alvin Attah said the donation is geared toward improving infrastructure and the health sector in the country.

Freedom of Information Act Gets More Support

(The Monitor, Public Agenda)

- The Press Union of Liberia has announced the arrival of a two- member delegation from the Carter Centre to renew support for efforts to advance the passage of the Freedom of Information Act.
- The Carter Centre Access to Information Manager/Associate Director, Laura Neuman and Senior Project Associate on Access to Information Initiative, Sarah Dougherty will meet with stakeholders to learn more about the state of the draft law and provide observations in light of emerging international standards and the way forward.
- According to a PUL statement, the visit is a follow-up to similar mission in October 2008 which was aimed as sharing thoughts on the bill and supporting its enactment.
- The Freedom of Information Act was one of three bills submitted to the Legislature in April 2008 by stakeholders, including the Ministry of Information and the media community. The Bills have been locked up in committee room for well over one and a half years.

Trial in the Angel Togbah Murder Case Resumes Today

(Liberian Express, New Democrat, Liberia Journal, National Chronicle)

- Murder suspects Hans William and Mardea Paykue will for the third time today return to court in the Little Angel Tokpah alleged murder case.
- The body of the Little Angel Tokpah was in late 2007 found hanging in the bathroom of the suspects who claimed that she had committed suicide.
- The murder case will be held in the Criminal Court 'B' at the Temple of Justice.
- Hans and Mardea have persistently denied involvement in the death of little Angel with their family members saying their prolonged detention at the Monrovia Central Prison was not justified.

Catholic Church Inducts Coadjutor Archbishop of Monrovia Archdiocese

(The News, The Inquirer)

- The Vatican has named a Coadjutor Archbishop to assist the ailing Archbishop Michael Francis of the Monrovia Archdiocese.
- He is a 65-year-old Archbishop Lewis Jerome Zeigler, formerly of the Archdiocese of Gbarnga.
- Speaking during his induction Sunday he pleaded with Liberian politicians to work together in building a vibrant, prosperous and stable Liberia.
- The Most Reverend Zeigler will serve as Coadjutor Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Monrovia until Archbishop Michael Kpakala Francis currently incapacitated can attain the retirement age of 75.

Lawyers Protest "Coaching" Taylor in Court

(New Democrat, The Analyst, Public Agenda)

- With the cross examination of the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor put up until today , prosecutors have demanded that he should have limited access to his lawyer in order to elicit direct answer from him in establishing the truth.
- Senior Prosecuting Attorney, Brenda Hollis said she wanted the court to restrict Mr. Taylors communications with the defense counsel during the cross examination.

- On Tuesday, the prosecution told the court they could not proceed with the cross examination Wednesday after the Trial Chamber ruled that the prosecution should stop using the fresh Lome Peace Agreement document to question Mr. Taylor.
- Miss Hollis said the prosecution needed time to properly "rearrange strategies" for the cross-examination of the former Liberian president on trial for his alleged role in crimes committed during Sierra Leone's brutal conflict.

LACE Provides Job Opportunities in River Gee County

(The Inquirer, The Monitor, Public Agenda)

- The Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE) has launched the Cash for Work Temporary Project in River Gee County.
- In a release issued in Monrovia, the Executive Director of LACE, Ramses Kumbuyah said phase-one of the project provides temporary employment opportunity for 1000 beneficiary workers across the county while the second phase will target 500 beneficiary workers.
- According to the release, Mr. Kumbuyah said the agency is actively involved in building schools, bridges, culverts and markets in the county.
- He said about US\$120,000 will be invested in the county's economy at the close of phase-one of CFWTEP.

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

Senator Nelson likens Weah Statement To Political Immaturity

- Grand Kru County Senator, Blamo Nelson says the recent comment by Congress for Democratic Change's Standard Bearer George Weah warning of possible trouble during the by-election lacks basis and merit.
- Senator Nelson said Ambassador Weah's statement that he foresees problem if the by-election was fraudulent could stir-up passion and emotion and further endanger stability.
- According to Senator Nelson, leaders including Ambassador George Weah and others should not advocate violence instead they must help to sustain the peace.

Liberia Ranks among Countries With High Yellow Fever Epidemic

President Sirleaf Wants County Superintendents Include Citizens In Decision Making

- County superintendents and their deputies across the country have ended a one-day retreat in Grand Cape Mount County.
- The retreat was intended for the superintendents and their deputies to review the poverty reduction strategy and the county development agenda.
- Speaking during the retreat President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said superintendents must consult their citizens in every aspect of their work.
- President Sirleaf said the lack of communication misinforms citizens of developments in their communities.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky F.M., and ELBC)

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

Catholic Church Inducts Coadjutor Archbishop of Monrovia Archdiocese

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky F.M., and ELBC)

Criminal Court 'B' Hears Hans, Mardea Murder Case

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

CDC, UP In November 24 Run-Off

Reuters

Monday, 16 November 2009

US to attend Hague court meeting as observer

By International Justice Desk



Washington D.C

The United States will attend an International Criminal Court (ICC) meeting this week as an observer for the first time since The Hague court was set up in 2002, President Barack Obama's war crimes envoy said on Monday.

Stephen Rapp, US ambassador-at-large for war crimes issues, said Washington wanted to

engage more with the world's first permanent war crimes court -- even though any debate about the United States joining the court could be many years away.

"Our government has now made the decision that Americans will return to engagement at the ICC," Rapp told a news conference in Nairobi, adding that this was consistent with a shift towards greater engagement that started in 2005.

The United States signed the ICC treaty when US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's husband Bill was president, but it was never ratified by Congress. Clinton's successor as president, George Bush, later rejected the idea of joining the court.

"Great regret"

Secretary of State Clinton said during a visit to Kenya in August that it was a "great regret" the United States was not yet a full ICC signatory.

"We are not a ratified state. The question of whether the United States would move forward on that is still, I think, many years away," Rapp told reporters in the Kenyan capital.

"But we certainly are looking to engage with the ICC to ensure that in places where there are no other avenues for accountability that it will be an effective instrument for ensuring that individuals are brought to justice," he said.

The court has jurisdiction only over crimes committed after 1 July 2002, in countries that have ratified its treaty.

Rome Statute absentees

With the addition of the Czech Republic, 110 countries have now ratified the Rome statute. Absent from the list are the United States, Russia, China and Israel.

Rapp said he would be leading the US delegation attending the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) on 18-26 November in The Hague. The ASP is the ICC's management oversight and legislative body.

One factor behind Washington's decision not to ratify the treaty was concern that US officials or servicemen and women could risk ICC investigation for their roles in wars.

"There remain concerns about the possibility that the United States, upon whom a great deal of the world relies for security, and its service members might be subject to politically-inspired prosecutions," Rapp said.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Tuesday, 17 November 2009

ICTR overturns genocide conviction of mr "Z"



Arusha, Tanzania

The UN's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) appeals chamber has acquitted a Rwandan leader who was

sentenced to 20 years in prison over the 1994 genocide because of shortcomings in the evidence.

The Appeals Chamber reversed Protais Zigiranyirazo's convictions for genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity and entered a verdict of acquittal. It then ordered his immediate release from the United Nations Detention Facility in Arusha, Tanzania.

On 18 December 2008, Trial Chamber III found Zigiranyirazo guilty of committing genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity by participating in a joint criminal enterprise to kill Tutsis at Kesho Hill in Gisenyi Prefecture on 8 April 1994 and sentenced him to two terms of 20 years of imprisonment. He was also found guilty of aiding and abetting genocide in relation to the killing of Tutsis at a roadblock in the Kiyovu area of Kigali and sentenced to one term of 15 years of imprisonment. The Trial Chamber ordered that these sentences be served concurrently.

The Appeals Chamber reversed Zigiranyirazo's convictions after finding several serious factual and legal errors in the Trial Chamber's assessment of his alibi in respect of both events on which his convictions were based.

Zigiranyirazo was born on 2 February 1938 in the Giciye Commune, Gisenyi Prefecture, Rwanda. He was the brother-in-law of the late former President of Rwanda, Juvenal Habyarimana. Zigiranyirazo became a Member of Parliament in 1969. In 1973, he was appointed Prefect of Kibuye and then served as Prefect of Ruhengeri from 1974 until 1989. After his resignation, he studied in Canada and returned to Rwanda in 1993 to work as a businessman.

Zigiranyirazo was arrested in Belgium on 26 July 2001 and transferred to the Tribunal on 3 October 2001. His trial commenced on 3 October 2005 and closed on 29 May 2008. He was assisted by John Pilpot and Peter Zaduk, both from Canada..

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 16 November 2009

International Prosecutors issue a rally call for greater international cooperation

By Karl Dowling



Kigali, Rwanda

A call for greater international cooperation in the capture, prosecution and transfer of suspected war criminals has been issued by international justice prosecutors from around the globe.

By Karl Dowling

The Fifth Colloquium of Prosecutors, a meeting between the prosecutors of the major international criminal tribunals, was hosted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Kigali, Rwanda.

A press release issued following the meetings, which took place from 11-13 November, called on states to ensure their legal systems can effectively prosecute or extradite war crimes suspects, to fully cooperate with and execute the requests of international criminal tribunals, to become party to the Rome Statute if they have not already, and to seriously consider the adoption of a convention on the suppression and punishment of crimes against humanity.

Wide range of topics

The concept paper issued before the closed meeting took place suggested covering a wide range of topics. These included the organisation, structure and management of the tribunals, the tracking, arrest and transfer of fugitives, the exercise of universal jurisdiction, and how to strengthen the system of international criminal justice.

The suggested topics also included the management of evidence, witness management, trial preparations and the procedure for delays, international cooperation and relations with national prosecuting authorities.

The Fifth Colloquium of Prosecutors was attended by prosecutors from the ICTR, International Criminal Court (ICC), International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL).

Previous meetings

The meeting was first hosted by the ICTR in 2004 in Tanzania, the home of the Rwandan tribunal. This time it was held in Rwanda itself, the scene of the 1994 genocide. The UN estimate that 800,000 people lost their lives during the genocide.

The Colloquium of Prosecutors has also been hosted by the SCSL in 2005, jointly by the Hague-based ICC and ICTY in 2006, and in 2007 by the ECCC.

As well as covering a vast range of topics, participants visited the Gisozi and Murambi genocide memorial sites while in Rwanda.

Voice of America

Monday, 16 November 2009

Kenya said to Give Shelter to Financier of Rwandan Genocide

By Alan Boswell
Nairobi

The U.S. ambassador on war crimes accuses Kenya of continuing to harbor a chief financier of the Rwandan genocide. The American official also expressed U.S. support for the decision by the International Criminal Court's prosecutor to begin proceedings against the suspected perpetrators of violence in Kenya.



Wanted poster for Felicien Kabuga

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp met with Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga and Kenya's Justice Minister Mitula Kilonzo.

The ambassador, who served for six years at the Tanzanian-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, says the man widely believed to have been the chief financial backer of the Rwandan genocide, Felicien Kabuga, has long found safe haven in Kenya.

The former prosecutor against Rwandan genocide perpetrators says Kenyan authorities have given no backing to their claims that Kabuga has left the country, against collected evidence to the contrary.

"I have seen pictures of him in Kenyan neighborhoods. The ICTR has continued to press with Kenyan authorities for effective action to bring about his arrest. Even arriving last night I received fresh information of his presence in Kenya. The latest response of government authorities is, 'Oh, he has left. He was here at one time but he's gone.' The

ICTR says, 'Well, if he has left, and you are saying that, show us the evidence,'" Rapp said.

Kabuga was the founder and financier of Radio Milles Collines, notoriously known now as Radio Hate, which helped instigate thousands of Hutu Rwandans to turn against and kill their Tutsi neighbors. He is also accused of importing massive shipments of machetes for use in the genocide.

The fugitive is believed to have entered Kenya during the presidency of Daniel arap Moi. A Kenyan journalist was mysteriously found dead in 2003, just days after publishing a piece about Kabuga's continued presence in the city.

Ambassador Rapp also said the United States is disappointed in the Kenyan government's lack of will to try the chief organizers of the 2008 post-election violence that left about 1,300 Kenyans dead and hundreds of thousands displaced.

The ambassador says the United States fully supports the action by ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo to seek pre-trial investigations in Kenya.

"This case will proceed, and we hope with an expeditious investigation, with arrest warrants or summons for those who bear the greatest responsibility by mid-2010. That certainly would be our hope," Rapp said.

The United States is not a party to the ICC, despite its public support for Ocampo's prosecution in Kenya.

U.S. authorities have announced a review of its policy towards the international court. Rapp says the United States is deciding to "engage" the court.

"Our government has now made the decision that Americans will return to engagement of the ICC, and on Wednesday, two days from now, I will be leading the American delegation at the Assembly of States Parties at the International Criminal Court, in observer status," Rapp said.

He said any future ratification of the ICC treaty by America would be years away.

Reuters

Friday, 13 November 2009

Rwanda wants UN to send genocide convicts home

By International Justice Desk



Kigali, Rwanda

The United Nations genocide court in Tanzania is reneging on its promise to transfer Rwandan convicts to serve the remainder of their sentences in their homeland, Rwanda's justice minister said.

Tharcisse Karugarama said he did not understand why the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) had not returned convicts when Rwanda's jails were deemed sufficient for those convicted by Sierra Leone's war crimes court.

"We signed an agreement with [the] ICTR to transfer the convicts to serve out their sentence here. So far they have not done it. We don't know why," he told Reuters on Monday.

Genocide

About 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred by Hutu militias within 100 days during the 1994 genocide.

Since its establishment in 1994 the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania, has convicted 38 people for their role in the genocide and acquitted six. Rwanda, Italy, Benin, Swaziland, France, Sweden and Mali have signed an agreement to host convicts.

Last week, the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) moved eight people convicted of crimes during a decade-long civil war to the "UN block" in Rwanda's Mpanga prison.

It was the first time international convicts had been imprisoned in Rwanda.

ICTR spokesman Roland Amoussouga said the decision on where to house convicts lay with the court and so far no decision had been made with regard to the designation of Rwanda.

He said in the case of the Sierra Leone convicts, it was the ICTR registrar who advised that court to explore with Rwandan authorities the possibility of an agreement for the prisoners.

Language barriers

Originally, the Sierra Leone court wanted its prisoners to serve their sentences in the French-speaking West Africa countries of Benin or Mali, but could not do so due to language barriers, Amoussouga said.

Karugarama said justice would be better served if the ICTR convicts were sent from Arusha to Rwanda, and that they would enjoy better access for their relatives.

"ICTR are on record as saying the facilities are much better than those in Arusha. So it will be a contradiction and a mystery if they don't send the prisoners here," Karugarama said.

Special Court Supplement
Handover of the Special Court Detention Facility to the Sierra Leone Prison Service
Monday, 16 November 2009







