

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Monday, October 17, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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The Democrat. Monday October 17th, 2005.

Special Court, Nigeria and Taylor's Extradition

relations between the Mano River Union countries - Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia - improved tremendously. The recent historic Liberian elections and the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between the three countries lend credence to the above assertion.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has been piling pressure on the Nigerian authorities to extradite the former Liberian strongman. Although rejecting the

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request on security grounds Abuja had indicated to the UN-backed Court that it would consider extraditing Taylor if a democratically elected government in Liberia made the request. With elections in Liberia almost a thing of the past, the debate over whether Taylor should be indicted has started raging. But will Nigeria really heed calls by the Special Court to hand over Taylor if a request came from the democratically elected government in Liberia? It remains to be seen.

In an interview with BBC Network Africa, Rtd. General Abdul Salami Abubakarr, who brokered the exile deal said the issue of Taylor's extradition was in his words 'like over-beating a dead horse.' He went on to state that Taylor still wield significant influence in Liberia particularly among ex-combatants who have the capability to shatter the fragile peace there. More importantly, Taylor could have a stake in the new

political dispensation there as he sponsored nine of the twenty-two political parties that participated in the elections. Reports say all the nine political parties Taylor sponsored have some following and are likely to get representation in Liberia's two legislative houses. According to the former Nigerian Head of State, African leaders decided to send Taylor into exile to ensure that peace and stability reign in the sub-region.

General Abubakarr's latest pronouncement bears indication that the Nigerian authorities will not ever decide to, hand over their guest soldier for a trial for his alleged involvement in Sierra Leone's war. As a matter of fact Abuja has never clearly stated that it would extradite Taylor. It had always maintained that it would consider the request if a democratic dispensation was in place.

My opinion on this issue is this; in as much as we all want impunity addressed by punishing perpetrators of crimes to act as deterrent, we must be very careful not to reignite another round of trouble in that war-torn country or even the sub-region. All we need to do is exercise restraint until the situation actually stabilizes. Once an indicted war criminal is always an indicted war criminal until tried and proven otherwise. The solid fact here is that no matter how long it takes Taylor will be tried regardless of where.

What I think the international community should be focusing energy on now is consolidating peace in Liberia which has the potential to throw the whole sub-region into chaos again. The Liberian situation is still volatile.

Maybe we should give serious thought to this comment by the International Crisis Group: "If Taylor goes before the Special Court, it would signal the end of an era in Liberian politics. Yet no one should imagine that a trial in Freetown would solve all Liberia's problems."

Concord Times. Monday October 17th, 2005.

"Taylor was never a good leader"

...Ex-President Jimmy Carter

Story: Tanu Jalloh in Monrovia

Ex president of the United States of America (USA), Jimmy Carter Thursday told a press briefing organized by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Carter Centre at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia that the exiled former Liberian President,

Charles Gankay Taylor was never a good leader.

Mr. Carter, who co-led a forty-member multinational observers to Liberia, was responding to an allegation that the United States was somehow responsible for the almost fourteen years brutal war

Continued page 3

"Taylor was never a good leader"

From page 1

in Liberia.

"The woes of the people of Liberia were never caused by America," he exclaimed adding that Liberians had an election in 1997 and chose Charles Taylor as president; a leader who was to become the bane of progress and peace in the sub Region.

To him "choosing Taylor could have been the bad choice Liberians made," adding, "you must have learnt your lessons in the past."

The Chief observer maintained that the absence of a massive, robust and determined presence of the International community as observers in the 1997 elections suggested a very serious omission.

He however encourage Liberians saying "no sooner the elec-

tions are completed, especially in the peaceful manner in which it is being done so far, then the sanctions of almost ten years be lifted on Liberia.

To the National Elections Commission (NEC), he recommended that an expedited process is necessary in order to deliver fair and proper redress and to avoid jeopardizing compliance with provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

"While political parties and contestants who do not win office as a consequence of credible results should publicly accept the results as soon they become apparent, NEC could as well explain to them and the public the procedures of forwarding complaints or challenge electoral results," Carter suggested.

The News. Monday October 17th, 2005.

Norman demands witness identity

Head of the defunct Kamajor militia group and Special Court indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman has demanded that certain witnesses should identify themselves by appearing face to face instead of disguising themselves.

He said if witnesses do not come out openly and identify themselves whilst

testifying in the court, he would not continue the trial. The only witnesses that he not protest against

are those that were sexually abused. According to Hinga Norman, those witnesses that conceal their

identities while testifying are telling lies on him. He if they come out in the open in court whilst testifying, they would be afraid to tell lies. Meanwhile the court has ruled that witnesses will not be allowed to show up whilst testifying because it was a personal decision.

Standard Times. Monday October 17, 2005

BROKE!

Special Court needs US\$25 million

BY SANTIGIE KAMARA

Sources within the Special Court of Sierra Leone have revealed to this press that

the US government might not be able to make its contributions to the Special

Court, which is in need of a staggering US\$25 million to carryout it functions.

The source maintained that

the initial money donated to the court by some European countries had almost finished and if no more fund-

ing could be accessed, the court would not

CONTINUED PAGE 11



Justice Ayoola Special Court President

Special Court

FROM PAGE 1

month.

It is not clear whether the Court would be able to secure the said amount of money within the stipulated time frame.

Great success for the First Moot Court Competition

BY ABUBAKARR KARGBO

"This is a good opportunity for Sierra Leone." This is really a great competition." "It was so challenging." "I hope there will be another Moot Court soon."

These were the comments heard during the Moot Court Competition on International Humanitarian Law in Sierra Leone that took place on Monday 10th October at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

For its first edition, the event which was organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross was a great success.

A hypothetical humanitarian crisis in Eldorado (an imaginary country) was presented to five teams of three students drawn from Fourah Bay College and Milton Margai College of Educa-

tion and Technology.

The teams had to answer questions in relation to IHL concerning events occurring during that crisis.

Which crimes did the parties of the conflict commit? Were the actions prohibited by IHL? Can these actions be prosecuted before the International Criminal Court? What could be the defence of the accused?

After extensive arguments and vigorous debate by students, coupled with legally minded questions from the members of the jury, Osman Jalloh, Drucil Taylor and Gerald C.D. Cole, students of the Law Department of Fourah Bay College emerged as the winning team. Gerald C.D. Cole received the award of the best speaker.

The winning team is presently undergoing a series of standard training programmes to meet the high standards required at the international stage of the competition in Arusha, Tanzania from the 12-20th November 2005.

The competition was witnessed by a large collection of observers from the public including relatives of the competitors, students, IHL specialists and members of the Fourth Estate.

In collaboration with the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the First Moot Court Competition was organized by the International Committee of Red Cross within the framework of its mandate to support the efforts of states in disseminating International Humanitarian Law.



Taylor trial may be out of Africa

By Joseph Winter
BBC News website

Liberia's warlord-turned-president-turned-asylum-seeker Charles Taylor looms large over the future stability of much of west Africa and yet he hardly figured in the recent election in his home country.

He has been indicted on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the United Nations-backed court in Liberia's neighbour Sierra Leone - accused of backing that country's brutal rebels.

He is currently in asylum in a mansion in south-eastern Nigeria, which is refusing to hand him over to the court.

Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo says that would go against the terms of the deal under which he agreed to step down as Liberia's leader in August 2003, to end a 15-year war and stop rebels from rampaging through the capital, Monrovia, which they were poised to enter.

Now, a new potential solution is being mooted.

Peacekeeper pullout

It is being suggested that Mr Taylor could be tried by the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague, the court's chief prosecutor Desmond de Silva told the BBC News website.

"Mr Taylor undoubtedly still controls forces which could destabilise the region," said the British lawyer.

"A number of countries - both Western and African - take the view that perhaps the interests of peace and security could best be served by a trial outside the region."

He also points out that United Nations peacekeepers are due to leave Sierra Leone by the end of the year, potentially leaving the court more vulnerable to attack.

A trial in The Hague might also placate the fears of some Liberians who fear Mr Taylor would not receive a fair trial in the Sierra Leone capital, Freetown.

The chairman of the War Affected Amputee Association, Lamin Jusu-Jarka, has welcomed the suggestion of a trial in The Hague, saying he would be happy as long as Mr Taylor faces justice.

Controlling forces

Liberians have only just voted on who they want to succeed Mr Taylor and the last thing they want is a return to war.

From the evidence we have, he used our diamonds to fuel the war and cause untold hardship to our nation

Frederick Carew

Liberian justice minister

The Revolutionary United Front rebels Mr Taylor is accused of arming in exchange for diamonds were guilty of horrendous atrocities - not just killing and raping but the systematic mutilation of tens of thousands of civilians by hacking of their feet or legs with machetes and axes.

"That man is a great enemy to our country. If people see him here, they will want to kill him," said taxi-driver Gibrilla.

Justice Minister Frederick Carew is more diplomatic but just as keen to see Mr Taylor face justice.

"From the evidence we have, he used our diamonds to fuel the war and cause untold hardship to our nation," he said.

Mr Carew is frustrated that Mr Taylor has still not appeared in court more than two years after he was indicted.

"Sierra Leone cannot put pressure on Nigeria [West Africa's power-house], we can only make requests," he said, arguing that the Western powers do not want to be seen to be going back on a deal they helped broker in 2003.

Mr de Silva, however, denies that agreement ever involved an amnesty from prosecution and that even if it did, a small group of countries cannot grant immunity for crimes allegedly committed against the whole of mankind.

"If they could, international law would become a laughing stock," he said.

Mr Taylor has recently been accused of plotting a coup in neighbouring Guinea, as well as involvement in Ivory Coast's civil war. And yet he retains considerable popularity in his home country.

James Bleetan, editor of the New Standard newspaper, says if Mr Taylor had contested the 11 October polls, he would have won easily - as he did in the last elections in 1997.

President's task

None of the 22 candidates to replace Mr Taylor was eager to mention him during the campaign, not wanting to commit themselves either way for fear of alienating either the international community or potential voters.

Even the leader of his National Patriotic Party, Roland Massaquoi, tried to keep quiet.

The party members, however, did not, chanting: "Our pappy, dat dey carry, dey go bring back," in Liberian English during their rally, meaning "Our leader, who they took away, will be brought back".

Nigeria has always maintained that it would only hand Mr Taylor over to an elected government in Liberia, who would then decide what to do with him.

The new president is due to be inaugurated in January and while most Liberians think his or her first priority should be building schools and hospitals, their leader will certainly come under strong pressure to answer the Taylor question once and for all.

Turning him over for trial in The Hague just might be acceptable to all concerned and allow both Liberia and Sierra Leone to concentrate on the huge task of rebuilding their shattered nations.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/4345120.stm>

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ZNet | Africa

Charles Taylor Should Face Trial

by Joseph Grosso; October 15, 2005

The past few years has seen the American media periodically shift focus on a variety of "most wanted man" types. Starting with Osama bin Laden following the 9/11 attacks, then soon spreading to Mullah Omar, then to Saddam Hussein. Presently the main name is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian coordinator of the Islamic element of the Iraqi insurgency. Yet it could be argued that perhaps the worst criminal of all (equal even to that of Hussein but with less an arsenal and time) has largely escaped such notice while living in a luxurious government guesthouse in Nigeria for nearly the past two years.

Charles Taylor served as president of Liberia from 1997-2003; prior to this he was a leading figure in a brutal eight-year civil war that racked the nation and surrounding region. Currently Taylor is under indictment by the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone for his training and support of the murderous RUF in next door Sierra Leone who achieved headlines for their choice tactics of hacking off the limbs of civilians in their path (in many instances these attacks were committed by drugged up teenagers; estimates are that up to 80 percent of RUF soldiers were child soldiers, (the Liberian civil war also saw huge numbers of children fighters), eventually overthrowing a democratically elected government. All in all Taylor's wars left two West African nations destroyed, hundreds of thousands dead, and millions more displaced. Life expectancy in both countries is now under 50 years of age (about 42 and dropping in Sierra Leone).

A good sense of what life was like for a child soldier in the RUF comes from Douglas Farah's book *Blood from Stones*: "One thing the children do remember vividly is the preparation for what they called "mayhem days", sprees of killing and raping that lasted until the participants collapsed from exhaustion. They said they were given colored pills, most likely amphetamines, and razor blade slits near their temples, where cocaine was put directly into their bloodstreams. The ensuing days were a blur; the children often remembered only the feeling of being invisible, before the drugs wore off." ¹

In addition to the sheer carnage, is Taylor's economic plundering of the region: It is estimated by the U.S. government that, as a warlord, Taylor had about \$75 million a year passing through his hands; according to a recent report by the International Coalition for Justice, after becoming president this number grew to at least \$105 million a year (Taylor wasn't shy about helping himself to public funds).

Much of the money went towards funding the proxy war in Sierra Leone, weapons purchases for which came with the help of many organized crime groups, including al-Qaeda, all of whom extracted millions of dollars in diamonds and timber. During his reign Taylor allowed an array of predatory logging interests access to Liberia's forests clearing parts of significant forest reserves.

In August 2003, with rebel armies against Taylor's government converging on the capital city of Monrovia and vowing to kill Taylor, he was granted political asylum in Nigeria in a sinister compromise where according to the Special Court he continues, in violation of his asylum conditions, to interfere in Liberia's politics by contributing money to nine of the twenty-two presidential candidates in the recent Liberia elections. The Special Court has also publicly accused Taylor of the assassination attempt against Guinean president Lansana Conte and it is believed that Taylor still receives up to \$1 million a month in revenue.

It should never be forgotten that the U.S. government has a long history of depraved involvement in Liberian politics. Basically founded by freed American slaves in 1820 (along with a smaller number of slaves freed from ships intercepted along the African coast) through the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color in the United States (later known simply as the American Colonization Society)- lest of course too many free slaves make the still enslaved restless. The capital city Monrovia, named after James Monroe, was established in 1822 and until the American Civil War stopped colonization in 1861 about 12,000 slaves were repatriated. Eventually, after some repatriates were killed

by disease, the repatriates merged their settlements, expanded into the interior, and established the state of Liberia.

For all purposes this minority ruled over the diverse indigenous majority for 110 years and always proved to be a loyal ally of American geopolitical interests. As part of an effort to break the British monopoly of rubber (after World War I the U.S., driven by its automobile industry, became the world's largest consumer of rubber), Firestone established the world's largest rubber plantation in Harbel (originally renting the land for six cents an acre) in 1926. From 1926 until 1977 when Firestone left the country it is estimated that the company made a total profit of \$410-415 million, of which the Liberian government received only about \$110 million². Firestone's example led to further American exploitation of Liberian resources as between 1962-1973 nearly \$300 million worth of ore was sent out of the country by the American controlled National Iron Ore Company (the Liberian government's share added up to only \$2.5 million).³

By the time the Reagan years came along Liberia was ruled by Samuel Doe, who came to power in a bloody military coup initially supported by many Liberians (including many Leftists); Doe was the first Liberian president not to have descended from the settler elite and seized power bearing a message of reform: music to the ears of long suffering citizens. However it was not to be as Doe proved to be worse than his predecessors regarding corruption while further poisoning ethnic division by favoring his own ethnic Krahn over numerous other groups (while leaving the settler elite power structure largely in place).

At first ostracized by neighboring African countries (for coming to power in a coup, though this period wasn't one of enlightened African statecraft), callous Cold War politics brought massive increases in aid from a U.S. government in fear that Liberia landing in the Soviet or Libyan spheres after Doe sent out diplomatic feelers eastward. American aid reached \$90 million in 1986, including \$14 million in military assistance, a full third of the Liberian government's revenues. Total aid from 1981-1985 was over \$500 million, while American private investment during Doe's decade long tenure added up to over \$5 billion⁴. During this time Reagan labeled Doe "a dependable ally, a friend in need".

In return "Chairman Doe", as Reagan affectionately called him during a White House visit in 1982, gave the U.S. government consistent UN support, resumed Liberia's diplomatic relations with Israel (relations had been discontinued after the 1973 war in the Middle East), broke relations with Libya, and allowed the CIA to use Liberian territory as a operations base (including to ship arms to UNITA in Angola).

As the economy plunged due to Doe's mismanagement and corruption, American aid allowed the unjust status quo to fester until the end of the Cold War when the aid dried up and Liberia predictably imploded with Charles Taylor's (himself a former member of Doe's government) invasion from Ivory Coast, which eventually turned into the eight-year civil war that engulfed the region.

However as the Coalition for International Justice's report profoundly closes:

But there is no reason for Taylor to escape justice. The grotesque nature of the wars he financed over fourteen years- the unspeakable acts of violence he encouraged and rewarded, the profound suffering that continues for hundreds of thousands in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the cripples, the amputees, the disfigured, the widowed, the child soldiers, and the dead- are all well documented.

This year the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution calling on the Nigerian government to deliver Charles Taylor to the Special Court of Sierra Leone. As the Liberian people vote this week in perhaps their first truly free election, it is time for the international community to join this chorus and declare Charles Taylor a "Most Wanted Man" and demand he be delivered to Sierra Leone for trial and inevitably solitary prison. From an American perspective this can be the first step to repay many a payable debt.

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No chance for peace in west Africa unless Charles Taylor stands trial

By Tiawan Saye Gongloe

Friday, Oct 14, 2005, Page 9

Though exiled two years ago, former Liberian president Charles Taylor still looms large in the country's first elections since the end of its brutal civil war. But, despite the advent of true democratic elections, Liberia and all of west Africa will be trapped in an unending cycle of violence unless Taylor is put in the dock for war crimes.

The presidential poll held on Tuesday could help Liberia determine a new course. But Taylor has wielded a heavy hand in the campaign, his impunity making a mockery of international justice.

Nigeria, which is giving Taylor sanctuary, is obliged to turn him over to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, created by the UN in 2003 to prosecute those responsible for the bloodletting in west Africa in the 1990s. Indeed, Nigeria now holds the key to peace in the region.

But Nigerian President Olosugun Obasanjo has, so far, turned a deaf ear to calls to surrender Taylor. Instead, Taylor is housed in a villa on the sandy beaches of Calabar on Nigeria's southeastern coast, as key international players -- including France, the UK and South Africa -- remain silent.

The list of Taylor's crimes is long, and the evidence against him is overwhelming. As a rebel leader, he waged an eight-year uprising against Samuel Doe in Liberia -- a conflict that left 300,000 people dead and displaced more than a million others in a population of just 3.3 million. As president, he launched a rebellion in 1991 against Sierra Leone's government with the forces of Foday Sankor, using machetes to mutilate women and children.

In 2000, Taylor used those same thugs to attack Guinea, in an assault that left hundreds dead and destroyed the city of Guekedou. In 2003, while Taylor was under rebel attack, he organized and supported an incursion into Cote d'Ivoire. Taylor's warmongering also paved the way for military coups in Sierra Leone and the Gambia.

The women and children whose limbs Taylor ordered to be hacked off bear testimony to his

brutality, and the countries left in turmoil make clear that there can be no durable peace in west Africa unless the man who unleashed these conflicts is stopped. Even if there were instant peace, the region will pay the price for Taylor's bloodlust for decades to come. So will the world.

Indeed, Taylor continues to incite trouble. His efforts to undermine regional stability range from an assassination attempt against Guinean President Lansana Conte earlier this year, to which he has been linked, to using his fortune to influence Liberia's elections, setting the stage for his allies to win. His followers, unsurprisingly, cling to his parting promise to return to Liberia.

That would be nothing short of disastrous. Taylor has undermined a string of peacekeeping interventions in the region. In Liberia, for example, he signed 13 agreements and violated them all. He kidnapped 500 troops from the regional peacekeeping force, ECOWAS. Before the hostages were released, Taylor killed six soldiers and stole their weapons and cars. The best containment strategy is to put Taylor in the custody of the Special Court that indicted him in 2003 for war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the war in Sierra Leone.

Yet Obasanjo has said that he would release Taylor only to an elected government of Liberia, and many believe that Taylor is waiting it out until his allies are in a position to let him return with no threat of prosecution.

Nigeria's role in providing a safe haven for Taylor is peculiar. Given the country's considerable efforts to mediate and quell regional conflicts, providing a haven for shielding west Africa's chief destabilizer runs counter to its national interest, and popular opposition to shielding him is growing in Nigeria. Hundreds of human rights and international justice groups from Africa and beyond have joined together in protest.

Intense American and European pressure ensured that former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and many of his allies were handed over to the UN's International War Crimes Tribunal for former Yugoslavia in the Hague. Similar pressure must be brought to bear to compel Nigeria to surrender Taylor to the Special Court in Sierra Leone. It is time for Obasanjo to make good on Nigeria's record as a leader in maintaining peace and security on the African continent.

Tiawan Saye Gongloe is a former fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Copyright: Project Syndicate

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Expert Says AFRC Was Not an Army

Concord Times (Freetown)

NEWS

October 14, 2005

Posted to the web October 14, 2005

By Michael Bockarie

Freetown

An independent military expert, with the rank of colonel, Thursday testifies before the Special Court for Sierra Leone, at the on going AFRC Trial stating that the former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) lacks the professional central command structure, and discipline, coupled with equipments that a traditional army should have.

He said his mandate, as an independent military expert, was to look into the structure of the past AFRC, RUF and the CDF. He told the court though he is now serving as a prosecution witness to the Court, the defense should not see him as an unfair witness.

According to him, his findings centered more on the period 1999 when the AFRC became real gorillas in the jungle, rather than a military origination. He described them as a separate faction with the former Army who were resistant to the de facto government of Sierra Leone. He said they lacked a lot that requires them to be a military. They used to move on foot with civilians carrying their logistics. The colonel told the court that there were not much electronic devises for intelligence information as they mostly relied on the people to give them information.

During cross examination by defense council, Fofanah, he however admitted that between May 1997 to February 1998, there used to be some element of highly professional military men amongst them, some of which were later absorbed in the RSLAF.

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Halloran's sex accuser did right thing, says colleague

By Martin Daly

October 17, 2005

A FORMER Canadian Mountie and senior United Nations war crimes investigator has defended Mandy Cordwell, the key prosecution witness in the Peter Halloran sex abuse trial, saying she was victimised because of her role in the affair.

Ms Cordwell, 37, has been accused of manipulating a 13-year-old schoolgirl and offering her inducements to say Mr Halloran, a senior Victorian police officer, had sex with her.

Mr Halloran, 57, was cleared last week by the Sierra Leone Court of Appeal of sexually assaulting the girl.

But Ralph La Pierre, who was Mr Halloran's deputy and Ms Cordwell's boss at the Special Court of Sierra Leone, said the former Tasmanian detective was being punished for doing what she was mandated to do as a police officer and by law.

Mr La Pierre, a 34-year veteran of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, shared a house in Freetown with Mr Halloran, Ms Cordwell and another Victoria Police officer, Sharon Holt.

He gave evidence for the prosecution in Mr Halloran's trial but said everyone must now accept Mr Halloran's acquittal on the charges. "I accept the court's decision," Mr La Pierre told *The Age* from Canada, where he now lives.

But Mr La Pierre said he and Ms Cordwell — now working for the Queensland police — had done the right thing by informing their superiors.

Mr Halloran, on leave from Victoria Police, initially faced three charges relating to the girl and went through a judicial system seen widely as corrupt.

He was convicted on a third charge of indecent assault and sentenced to 18 months' jail.

This conviction was overturned. The Court of Appeal ruled last week that the earlier conviction had been a miscarriage of justice.

But Mr La Pierre said while he and Ms Cordwell brought the girl to police, it was Ms Cordwell who had been accused, wrongly, of putting words into the girl's mouth. "All Mandy did was report what the girl (allegedly) said. It was up to the courts to decide if what the girl had said was true," he said.

The girl later testified that nothing had happened between her and Mr Halloran.

"None of us ever testified that any of us had seen Peter and the girl together. Mandy testified that she had seen the girl twice in his room (alone), and I testified I had seen her in the kitchen (of our house) but never in the bedroom," Mr La Pierre said.

"Mandy is a top police officer, highly professional, always doing the right thing, and morally she was very centred. She has high standards and high morals."

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Herald Sun

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Halloran wants his old job

Keith Moor

17oct05

VICTORIA Police's Supt Peter Halloran is out of Africa and looking forward to getting home.

Supt Halloran said before boarding a flight to Europe he was glad to be leaving war-torn Sierra Leone.

His sex conviction was overturned last week in a 2-1 majority verdict in the appeal court.

"I haven't been able to get a seat on a plane back to Australia but at least I am out of this place," Supt Halloran said.

"The judicial system in Sierra Leone is so corrupt it is very difficult to establish your innocence.

"It doesn't matter what the evidence is, or complete lack of evidence in my case, if certain people want you convicted then there is a good chance you will be.

"I'd feared my appeal might not be successful, as the authorities showed extreme willingness to inappropriately interfere with the legal process.

"I was extremely grateful the chairman of the three appeal judges was an international judge from the Solomon Islands, who was appointed by the British.

"He was not susceptible to interference and pressure from the Sierra Leone Government, as local judges are."

Supt Halloran said he was glad Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon had agreed to meet to discuss his future.

He said he was keen to get to work with Victoria Police.

Supt Halloran said he believed Ms Nixon had been misled by some of her staff over what support he had been getting since the sex allegations involving a teenage girl were first made against him in June last year.

"There was plenty of support for me from friends, family and colleagues, but no official support from Victoria Police," he said.

"I think Christine Nixon genuinely thought I was getting help but those she appointed to do that let me down badly, and misled her into thinking they were doing more than they were."

Supt Halloran said when he gets back to Melbourne he wants to personally thank all who stood by him and try to make accountable those he blames for contributing to his being convicted.

He claimed at least two senior Victoria Police officers and one Australian Federal Police agent blackened his name by suggesting he was corrupt and about to flee the charges.

"Though I have been cleared, I am obviously aware that once charges are laid and

allegations made some of that mud sticks," Supt Halloran said.

"There will always be people out there who think I am a pervert, or corrupt or both -- and that hurts.

"I will never overcome all the damage that has been done throughout this ordeal."

Supt Halloran took leave without pay from Victoria Police to work as commander of war crimes investigations with the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone.

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Cocorioko website

http://www.cocorioko.com/big_news_2

HALLORAN TO SUE SOME COLLEAGUES AND AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER

Monday October 17, 2005

The former Chief Investigator of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Mr. Peter Halloran , has launched defamation proceedings against THE AUSTRALIAN newspaper and is also considering suing some of his colleagues.

The Supreme Court , on a two-to-one decision , last week threw out the case in which Halloran was charged with having alleged sexual contact with a 13 year old Sierra Leone girl who worked as his maid in a house he shared with other Special Court employees. His victory at the Supreme Court saved him from going to jail for 18 months .

The jubilation that he has at last been exonerated and all his denials proved right does not seem like it will be the end of this affair, though , as Halloram is pursuing legal actions against those he felt deliberately defamed him. The same AUSTRALIAN newspaper he is suing quoted him yesterday as saying that he was surprised at some of his colleagues and he believed that it was a deliberate attempt to get him or some of them were just trying to be michievous.

All along, Halloram had denied vehemently that he had any sexual contact with the girl. A reliable source also told COCORIOKO that when the Special Court conducted their own private internal investigation, they found the story very fishy with lots of inconsistencies and they found out that Halloran could not possibly have committed the act.

The Attorney General's Office in Sierra Leone should try to do the nation's pride a favor by investigating why the Police carried out such a vigorous crusade to arrest the foreign police officer in the face of all the inconsistencies. It would also be worthwhile to investigate claims made by the Australian policeman that he was beaten up by the Sierra Leone Police.

There was no reason for him to have been assaulted, if it was true. An accused is considered innocent in any legal proceeding until he is found guilty. Assaulting an accused gives the impression that he has been deemed guilty already until he can prove himself innocent--a travesty of Criminal Procedure and The Rule of Law.

Unless this matter is thoroughly investigated and the truth known, Sierra Leone's image will continue to suffer a serious dent from this Halloran affair. The Attorney General's office must investigate how this whole matter came about and if it was just witch-hunting .The nation deserves to know too how its Police Force conducted itself in the whole case.

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A FORMER police officer has won an appeal against child sex charges in the West African nation of Sierra Leone...

A FORMER police officer has won an appeal against child sex charges in the West African nation of Sierra Leone. Australian Peter Halloran should now be free to return to Australia after two of three Court of Appeal judges supported his appeal, Australian media outlets reported today. The former head of the Victorian homicide squad was on secondment to the United Nations Special Court in Sierra Leone when he was accused of having sex with a 13-year-old girl employed as a domestic worker in the house where Mr Halloran was staying.

The 57-year-old was charged in 2004 and convicted of indecent assault in February. He was sentenced to 18 months in jail.


However, the victim and her family have accused police of intimidating them into making the allegations.

Read more at Daily Telegraph

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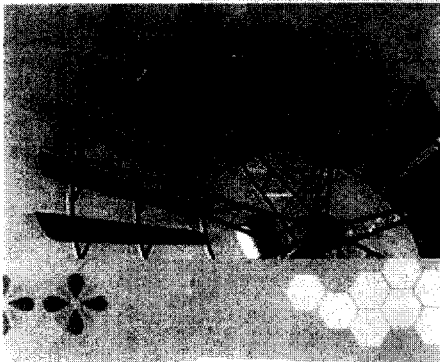
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[News](#) → → **Former Aust police officer to return home after court acquittal**



Last Updated 13/10/2005, 19:03:01 Select text size: [T](#) [T](#) [T](#)

A former Australian policeman acquitted of indecent assault charges in Sierra Leone says he is enormously relieved and will soon return to his home state of Victoria.

Peter Halloran was the former head of the Victorian Homicide Squad.

Mr Halloran was on secondment to the UN special court in the west African nation when he was charged with rape and indecent assault of a 13-year-old black domestic worker.

Half way through the case the girl accused police of intimidating her into making the allegations.

In February, Mr Halloran was still convicted of indecent assault.

The full bench of the court of appeal has now found that the girl's earlier contradictory evidence should not have been considered.

Meanwhile, Mr Halloran has accused police of undermining him during his trial.

He says the actions of Australian state and federal police placed him in jeopardy during the trial.

"I was certainly undermined, it certainly affected me in this highly unusual environment," he said.

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UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 16 Oct 2005

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International Clips on Liberia

16/10/2005 14:48:43

Liberia presidential run-off certain, 84 per cent votes counted

Monrovia (dpa) - With results from about 84 per cent of **Liberia's** polling stations tallied so far, it is now certain that a run-off is inevitable in the country as no candidate has attained even 35 per cent of the vote.

In the latest results, soccer icon George Manneh Weah has maintained his comfortable lead, but with 251,489 votes equivalent to 30 percent of votes counted so far. His closest rival, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of the Unity party polled 164,507 votes representing 19.6 per cent of the votes, while the second runner-up, Charles Brumskine of the Liberty party has 101,000 votes representing 12.7 per cent of total votes counted and tallied so far.

In her briefing Sunday, National Election Commission Chairwoman Frances Johnson-Morris said 870,025 votes from 2,576 of the 3,070 polling stations have now been tallied. Out of the number of 870,000 votes counted and tallied, 32,000 are invalid, according to the NEC Chairwoman.

The run-off will be held two weeks after announcement of the final results, with the two highest candidates contesting. The run-off is expected to divide the electorate between the largely illiterate masses and the more educated population.

16/10/2005 14:47:04

Soccer great Weah ahead in Liberia, run-off looms

By Katharine Houreld

MONROVIA, Oct 16 (Reuters) - Liberia's presidential elections appeared headed for a second round as the latest tally on Sunday from last week's vote showed soccer great George Weah's lead was still too narrow to win outright.

National Elections Commission chief Frances Johnson-Morris, announcing the figures at a news conference, declined to comment on whether a second round was now inevitable. An official announcement is due by Tuesday.

With Liberia's infrastructure in tatters following a brutal 14-year civil war which killed almost a quarter of a million people, many voters will face long journeys if they have to cast their ballots again.

15/10/2005 13:12:01

Taylor's hopes of return may be dashed in Liberia election

by Zoom Dosso

MONROVIA, Oct 15 (AFP) - Hopes that former president Charles Taylor's party would perform well on his behalf have been dashed by early results from last week's vote, which could undermine his vow to return to Liberia instead of facing war crimes charges.

With two-thirds of the votes tallied, only six candidates from his former National Patriotic Party -- four in the Senate, two in the House -- stand a chance of joining the post-war elected legislature.

BBC_Last Updated: Saturday, 15 October 2005, 14:33 GMT 15:33 UK

Taylor trial may be out of Africa

By Joseph Winter
BBC News website

Liberia's warlord-turned-president-turned-asylum-seeker Charles Taylor looms large over the future stability of much of west Africa and yet he hardly figured in the recent election in his home country.

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International Clips on Liberia

BBC Friday, 14 October 2005, 16:51 GMT 17:51 UK
By Mark Doyle, Monrovia

Early Liberia poll lead for Weah

Official results are slowly trickling in from Liberia's historic elections on Tuesday following the 14-year civil war which ended in 2003. With votes counted from over a quarter of the 3,000 polling stations, one of the favourites for president, ex-footballer George Weah, is ahead. He has 26.4% of the 378,008 votes counted. Another fancied contender, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, has 15.2%.

VOA 14 October 2005

Runoff Presidential Elections Likely in Liberia

By Nico Colombant, Monrovia

As results from Tuesday's presidential elections in Liberia begin to trickle in, it appears increasingly likely that none of the candidates received more than 50 percent of the vote and there will be a runoff election between the top two contenders, former soccer star George Weah and former finance minister Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. If so, the runoffs will offer Liberian voters a choice of contenders with vastly different backgrounds.

14/10/2005 12:46:14

EU: Liberian elections important step in returning country to normalcy

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) _ The EU said Friday it was pleased this week's presidential elections in Liberia were peaceful and well run, calling them an important step forward in returning the country to normalcy. The EU said its election observer mission will remain in Liberia for a second round of voting, if required, between former soccer star George Weah and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the country's most popular female politician.

International Clips on West Africa**COTE D IVOIRE: Killings, torture and rape go unpunished on both sides of the front line**

ABIDJAN, 13 Oct 2005 (IRIN) - More human rights violations including summary executions, politically motivated arrests, torture and rape are taking place across war-torn Cote d'Ivoire according to a UN report released on Thursday. The report came as the UN Security Council opened a special meeting on Cote d'Ivoire in New York. Spanning a three month period from June

2005, the report found that the human rights situation in the one time bastion of stability and economic success, continue to raise alarm.

UN council backs African Union's Ivory Coast plan

By Irwin Arieff

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 14 (Reuters) - The U.N. Security Council endorsed on Friday an African Union plan to extend the Ivory Coast peace process for another year so the West African nation can have more time to hold long-delayed elections. The council's unanimous decision clears the way for a visit to Ivory Coast this weekend by Nigerian President and AU Chairman Olusegun Obasanjo, and South African President and AU mediator Thabo Mbeki, where they hope to get the government and rebels to sign on to the AU plan. Some international diplomats had expressed fears the council would withhold its endorsement due to AU appeal for a big increase in the size of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the former French colony, a proposal questioned by several council members.

Local Media – Newspapers

Elections Overseer Releases Updates on Inconclusive Poll Results

(The News, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, Heritage, New Democrat, The Analyst, The Independent, National Chronicle, The Vanguard and The Liberian Diaspora)

- During a press briefing at 8pm yesterday, National Elections Commission Chairman (NEC), Frances Johnson-Morris released partial election results.
- She said out of 222,015 valid ballots tallied, Amb. George Weah of the Congress for Democratic Change netted 26.5 percent (58,827), Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of the Unity Party 14.2 percent (31,599) and Liberty Party's Charles Brumskine 11.5 percent (25,599).

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