

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



Special Court principals and Sierra Leonean officials at the UN last week. For more photos, see 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:

Wednesday, 17 October 2012

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

Local News	
UN Women Hails Historic Work of Special Court / <i>Spectator</i>	Page 3
International News	
War Crime Convicts Jailed for Attempting to Coax Witnesses / <i>IPP Media</i>	Page 4
Court Unable to Trace Missing Taylor Funds / <i>Legalbrief</i>	Page 5
At Trial, Karadzic Claims He Tried to Prevent War / <i>Voice of America</i>	Pages 6-7
Radovan Karadzic Denies Bosnia War Crimes / <i>BBC</i>	Pages 8-9
Radovan Karadzic: Has War Crimes... 'Hague Hilton'? / <i>Huffington Post</i>	Pages 10-11
Special Court Supplement	
SCSL Principals and GOSL officials at the United Nations last week	Page 12

UN Women Hails Historic Work Of Special Court

On Wednesday last week, the leadership of the Special Court for Sierra Leone addressed the United Nations Security Council and briefed them on the progress made and the challenges that remain for ensuring justice in the country.

By N'fa Alie Koroma

The work of the Special Court represents a critical landmark for international justice in prosecuting sexual and gender-based crimes committed during conflicts.

The jurisprudence of the Court played an essential role in advancing the recognition in law for such crimes.

The Revolutionary United Front trial judgment represented, for instance, the first-ever international convictions of forced marriage as a crime against humanity.

The Special Court of Sierra Leone is currently completing the trial phase of its mandate, with operational funding secured only through the end of November.

UN Women has repeatedly called for support to international courts and tribunals to allow them to complete their mandates and consolidate the gains made in the course of their work as regards to gender justice.

UN Women highlights the importance of documenting and sharing the lessons learned on the prosecution of gender-based crimes and innovative aspects to strengthen access to justice for women, such as the important outreach work done by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

In Sierra Leone, UN Women has supported women's access to justice domestically to complement the efforts

of the Special Court.

UN Women also supported the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and programmes to support women testifying as well as a reparations programme for survivors of sexual violence.

"War harms women in multiple ways. From mass rapes to mass displacements, women are on the frontlines of conflict and they are demanding justice. This includes effective prosecutions of war crimes and adequate redress for women. The Special Court for Sierra Leone has served justice and contributed to peace consolidation and reconciliation within a country destroyed by a devastating civil war," said Executive Director UN Women, Michelle Bachelet. "It is now essential that the Court be given the means to complete its mandate and to document and share lessons learned in strengthening women's access to justice."

The women leaders at the helm of the Special Court are President of the Court Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, Prosecutor Brenda Hollis, Chief Defender Claire Carlton-Hanciles and Registrar Binta Mansaray. Their leadership furthers the mandate of the ground-breaking Security Council Resolution 1325 which calls for an increase in the number of women in all areas of post-conflict recovery, including judicial processes. The leadership of the Special Court is historic, with all of its four Principals being women—a first in the history of international tribunals.

IPP Media (Tanzania)

Wednesday, 17 October 2012

<http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=47006>

War crime convicts jailed for attempting to coax witnesses

Special Court for Sierra Leone has sentenced three senior members of the country's former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council to jail terms ranging from 18 months to two years for contempt of court.

Held last month, the trial found the military officials guilty of contempt after it was proven that they had tampered with investigations and attempted to compromise a former prosecution witness. Two of them are currently serving long prison terms for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the civil wars in the West African state since 1996.

In its judgment, passed on October 11 this year the Court ordered Santigie Borbor Kanu and Ibrahim Bazy Kamara to remain behind bars for two more years each and sentence to be served concurrently, for two counts of interfering with the administration of justice.

Kamara and Kanu are serving 45 and 50-year terms, respectively, for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

They were found responsible for offering bribes to a witness and also attempting to coax a witness into recanting a testimony he had given the Court. The Court sentenced the third convict, Hassan Papa Bangura, to two prison terms of 18-month, also to run concurrently, after being convicted on similar charges.

A fourth accused, Samuel Kargbo, pled guilty to the same charges at his initial appearance in July 2011, and subsequently testified for the prosecution. He received two 18-month suspended sentences, meaning that he will serve no jail term.

During the four-month trial, the court held proceedings at the SCSL's premises in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown and at a courtroom in the Rwandan capital Kigali. The two courts were connected by video link.

While Bangura and Kargbo attended the court proceedings held in Freetown, Kamara and Kanu attended the hearings in Kigali.

Based in Freetown, the SCSL was jointly set up by the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations in 2002 to try those most responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Sierra Leone since November 1996

Legalbrief

Tuesday, 16 October 2012

Court unable to trace missing Taylor funds



The US ambassador for war crimes, Stephen Rapp, said a lack of resources impedes the tracing of millions of dollars allegedly stolen by former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who was recently sentenced to 50 years for war crimes in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

A report on the News24 site notes that Rapp said the Special Court does not have the funds to trace Taylor's assets, but some investigations will be done by the UN sanctions committee. Taylor was convicted of exchanging guns for diamonds with Sierra Leone's RUF rebels. The Daily Observer reports that he said that any decision to establish a war crimes court in Liberia should be made by Liberians. Rapp is quoted in the report as saying: 'This is not a decision for the US; it is a decision for the people of Liberia, a sovereign state with which we are partners.' Regarding the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, he said the initiative came from Sierra Leone. 'The President of Sierra Leone received strong public support from his people, prompting him to request the UN to jointly establish the Special Court.'

Voice of America

Tuesday, 16 October 2012

At Trial, Karadzic Claims He Tried to Prevent War



Suspected war criminal and former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic smiles as he takes his seat on the defense bench in a courtroom to start his defense at the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, October 16, 2012.

Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has told the United Nations war crimes tribunal that he should be rewarded for promoting peace rather than charged with genocide for his role in the Bosnian civil war of the 1990s.

Looking relaxed and sometimes smiling, Karadzic was speaking Tuesday as he opened his own defense at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. Reading from a prepared text, he told the courtroom that he did "everything in human power to avoid war" and claimed to have "succeeded in reducing the suffering of all civilians."

His comments drew jeers from Bosnian Muslim genocide survivors and victims' families in the public gallery. Prosecutors accuse the 67-year-old former political leader of masterminding Serb atrocities against Muslims in the 1992-to-1995 Bosnian conflict that killed about 100,000 people. He faces a life sentence if convicted.

In his remarks Tuesday, Karadzic described himself as a "mild" and "tolerant" man whose hairdresser before the war was a Muslim. He also accused Muslims of "orchestrating" two deadly shelling attacks on a Sarajevo market in 1994 and 1995 and said his first witness, Russian Colonel Andrey Demurenko, conducted an investigation that supports his claim.

A previous trial at the U.N. tribunal concluded that Bosnian Serb forces were responsible for shelling the Sarajevo market.

Karadzic spent 13 years on the run after being indicted by the tribunal until he was found and arrested in Serbia in 2008.

In a separate proceeding Tuesday, the tribunal opened a trial of Croatian Serb rebel leader Goran Hadzic, who is charged with the killings and forced deportations of ethnic Croats after Croatia broke away from Yugoslavia in 1991.

BBC

Tuesday, 16 October 2012

Radovan Karadzic denies Bosnia war crimes

Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has said he should be rewarded for "reducing suffering", not accused of carrying out war crimes.

Beginning his defence at his trial in The Hague, he said he was a "tolerant man" who had sought peace in Bosnia.

Mr Karadzic was arrested in Belgrade in 2008 after almost 13 years on the run.

He faces 10 charges of genocide and crimes against humanity during the war in the 1990s, including the Srebrenica massacre and the siege of Sarajevo.

More than 7,000 Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys were killed at Srebrenica in the worst single atrocity in Europe since the end of World War II.

During the 44-month siege of Sarajevo more than 12,000 civilians died.

Mr Karadzic, 67, went on trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in October 2009.

'Truth will grow stronger'

He began his lengthy personal statement by saying he had done "everything within human power to avoid the war and to reduce the human suffering".

Speaking calmly, Mr Karadzic said he was a "mild man, a tolerant man with great capacity to understand others".

He had stopped the Bosnian Serb army many times when it had been close to victory, he said, had sought peace agreements, applied humanitarian measures and honoured international law.

He insisted that there had been no history of conflict between ethnic groups until Serbs came to feel increasingly threatened by growing power amongst Muslims in Serbia.

"Neither I, nor anyone else that I know, thought that there would be a genocide against those who were not Serbs," he said.

He criticised media coverage of the war as biased and disputed the official number of victims of the war, saying the true figure was three to four times less. More than 100,000 people were killed, according to official figures.

"As time passes this truth will be stronger and stronger, and the accusations and the propaganda, the lies and hatred, will get weaker and weaker," he said.

Charges against Karadzic

- Ordered or planned genocide of Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) and Bosnian Croats to permanently remove them from territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina

- Persecuted Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats and responsible for "acts of extermination and murder"
- Masterminded the massacre of more than 7,000 Bosniak men and boys at Srebrenica in 1995
- Responsible for siege of Sarajevo in 1992-95, in which 12,000 civilians died
- Took UN peacekeepers and military observers hostage

One of the accusations faced by the former Bosnian Serb leader is that he adopted a military strategy of using snipers and shell attacks on the civilian population of Sarajevo.

Mr Karadzic said that every shell that had fallen on Sarajevo "hurt me personally", but he complained that an attack on a street market in February 1994 had been a "shameless orchestration".

While some people had clearly been killed, the former Bosnian Serb leader said "we also saw android mannequins being thrown onto trucks, creating this show for the world".

The blast left 68 people dead and eyewitnesses described seeing people being torn apart by the explosion.

Mr Karadzic said an investigation - conducted by Col Andrey Demurenko, the Russian chief of staff of the UN peacekeeping force - into a second attack on the same market in 1995 had concluded that Serbs "would not have fired the shells in that incident".

Having called the colonel as his first witness, Mr Karadzic said the findings of his report had been "rejected as a source of information" as they went "in an unwanted direction".

The 28 August attack left 34 people dead and many more wounded and Col Demurenko suggested that it was almost impossible that a mortar round could have been used to target a small market, particularly a market that had already been hit.

"The chance that a mortar shell would hit such a small single street... is one in a million. It's virtually impossible," Col Demurenko told the court, insisting that no such mortar fire had happened.

The two market attacks in 1994 and 1995 were among the bloodiest episodes of the Sarajevo siege. An earlier Hague war crimes trial found that the second incident was caused by a 120mm mortar.

The session was adjourned after Col Demurenko's testimony.

The BBC's Anna Holligan, at The Hague, says many survivors and relatives of the war's victims have travelled from Bosnia to see the trial of the man they hold most responsible for their suffering deliver his statement.

Each of Mr Karadzic's statements were met with cries of dismay, disgust and disbelief from the public gallery, says our correspondent.

In June, Mr Karadzic had one charge of genocide - related to the forcible expulsion of hundreds of thousands of non-Serbs from towns and villages in Bosnia - dismissed. But he failed in his attempt to have the other charges against him dropped.

Former Bosnian Serb army commander Ratko Mladic is also on trial at The Hague.

Huffington Post

Tuesday, 16 October 2012

Radovan Karadzic: Has War Crimes Suspect Taken Advantage Of The 'Hague Hilton'?

With his generous double chin and wide smile, Radovan Karadzic looked more like a portly Dickensian schoolmaster as he sat at his defence hearing, than a military leader accused of masterminding the killings of more than 20,000 people.

Since his capture in 2008, Karadzic has been piling on the pounds in his cell in The Hague's detention unit, dubbed the "Hague Hilton" by critics.

His bloated appearance was a far cry from his look after his arrest on a bus in 2008, where he was photographed in thick glasses and a full white beard. Karadzic's early court appearances saw him clean-shaven, but gaunt and tired.



Radovan Karadzic appears to have gained weight during his time at The Hague's detention unit.

But since having one genocide charge dropped against him in June this year, Karadzic seems to have regained his appetite, looking closer to the leader with the swollen waistline seen strolling around with his army in photographs of the bloody era.

According to the Daily Telegraph, the special war crimes unit at The Hague's detention unit not only clearly has irresistibly delicious food, but "has a full daily schedule providing for fresh air, exercise, medical care, occupational therapy, spiritual guidance, conditions suitable for the preparation of defence, IT facilities and training, visiting and recreational and sport activities".

Not good enough for Charles Taylor, the war crimes suspect and former president of Liberia, who complained in court of "draconian" conditions and unappetising "rather Eurocentric" food.

He boycotted his trial for a day after having to sit handcuffed in a vehicle outside the court for several minutes, which he considered to be "disrespectful" to him.

The New York Times described a jovial atmosphere among suspect war criminals, who mill around the communal kitchen "where some former enemies trade recipes and dine on cevapi, or Balkan meatballs."

Special Court Supplement

SCSL Principals and GOSL officials at the United Nations last week

