

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Monday, 18 June 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Concord Times
Monday, 18 June 2007

Access to Justice assists 250 people access justice

**By Abdul Karim
Koroma**

Access to Justice Programme Manager, lawyer Chernor Jalloh Friday told Concord Times that his organization has assisted over 250 people in Makeni to access justice.

Access to Justice, a law firm based in Makeni, was established in 2005.

"We combine both litigation and mediation to settle cases. We have settled 50 cases out of court while 20 cases are

still pending in court," Jalloh said adding that people with cases either come to their office or interface with their paralegals in the field.

According to him, they represent their clients in civil matters or criminal cases. "Employment matters are taken on a no win no fee basis. If we win the case, the litigant pays us 10% of the amount. We offer free representation for sexual offences and domestic violence," he stated,

adding that petty traders and market women pay Le 45,000 as legal aid annually. "We won the case of retrenched workers at Makeni Town Council. The feedbacks we are receiving from the people indicate that the Makeni populace is appreciating our work." Jalloh maintained that his organization and Lawyers Centre Legal Assistance (LAWCLA) have similar objectives but do not have any memorandum of understanding.

For di People
Monday, 18 June 2007

PARLIAMENT PASS

WOMEN'S RIGHTS BILL

PARLIAMENT HAS passed into law the three gender bills entitled-Domestic Violence Act 2007, Devolution of Estate Act 2007 and the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2007.

by
ALUSINE SESAY
Presenting the bills before Parliament, Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Dr

Shirley Gbujama said that the Domestic Violence Act 2007 prohibits domestic violence and provide remedy for victims of domestic violence and for other related matters. She said post-war

Sierra Leone is characterized by high-level of violence which she said, covered domestic, physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economical abuse which occur on all marriage couples, co-

habited partners and other family members.

She told the House that a study by World Health Organization shows that 67 percent of the rights of urban women were violated in

Sierra Leone and 50 percent forced into sexual intercourse. Dr Gbujama said there are instances were violence led to death or permanent disability. She said that children who

grow up in violent homes become victims of violence and could later affect their education and social well-being.

See Page 7

Standard Times
Monday, 18 June 2007

... he is a Sierra Leonean, Not a Foreigner.

PAGE 11 STANDARD TIMES Monday June 18, 2007

SOCIETY

Melron Nicol-Wilson is not an unfamiliar name to victims of human rights abuses, especially those who are unable to seek redress in the courts of law. For those who are fortunate to undertake the burden of legal cost, but with artificial barriers on their way, Melron Nicol-Wilson is the solution to their problems. He serves as counselor and legal representative with no cost or kick-backs as professional fees to motivate him to perform his duty to humanity.

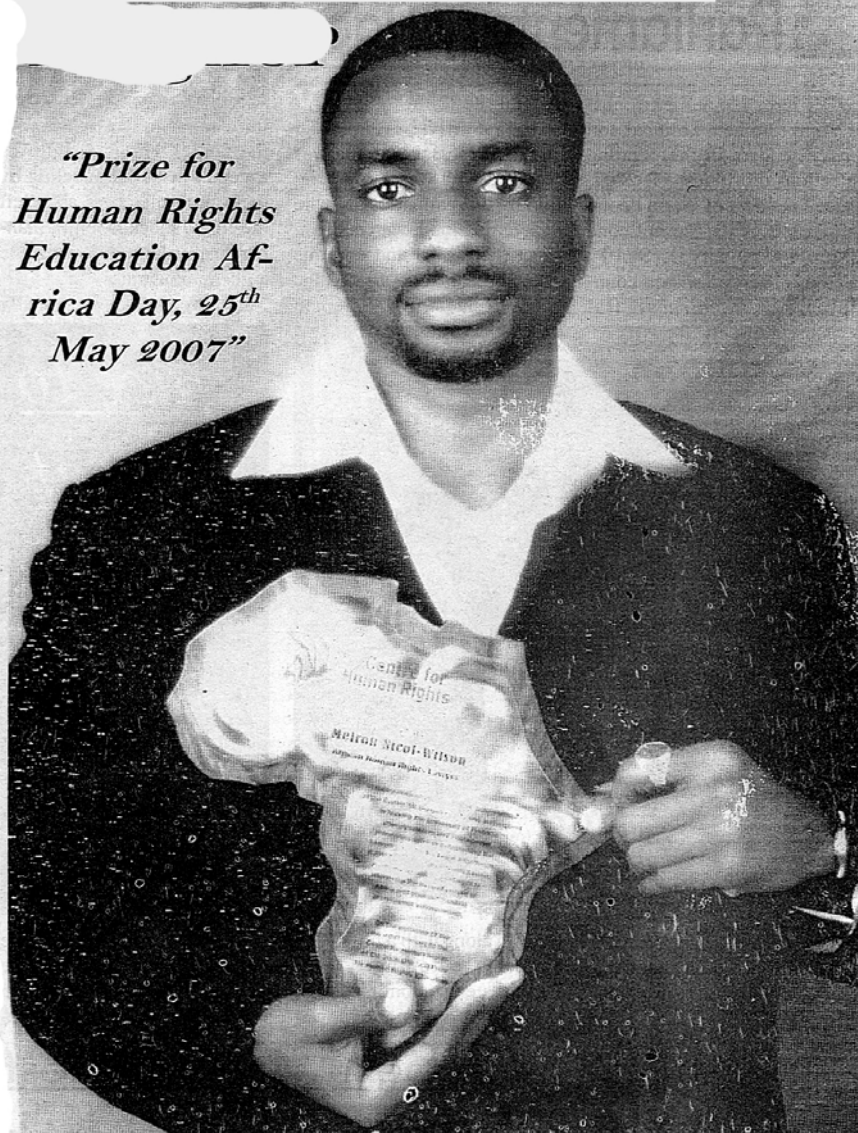
To him humanity takes precedence over material benefits and money should not be the means to an end despite its multiple functions for economic, political and social developments; humanity should always be at the top. "I have been destined to serve mankind and not money" He was quoted as saying

The establishment of the Lawyers Centre for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA) was in fulfillment of his dream which today is serving the needs of several people both in the country and outside, thus giving his dream meaning. From research, legal representations to consultancy are amongst the aims and objectives of the

centre. Many people had perceived him wrongly and to some extent thought that he is not a Sierra Leonean, but a foreigner from another part of the globe. But why should people think that way was the question this writer put to the Public Relation Officer of the centre, Mr. Abdul Kposowa "They think that way because of his generosity and the selfless sacrifice he makes to promote the course of humanity which some people cannot do in Sierra Leone" He said, and asked, tell me how many human rights lawyers give their services free without a cost"? It is not that Mr. Kposowa was missing the point, but was painfully saying the truth about his countrymen and women who without money the achievements of life cannot be possible.

Over the past years, the Lawyer Centre for Legal Assistance has provided free and countless number of assistance to Sierra Leoneans and non Sierra Leoneans for which some of them are grateful. "In recognition of his Academic Achievements at the centre for Human Rights and subsequent to your leaving the University of Pretoria, your dynamism and courageous pioneering spirit in establishing the Law-

*"Prize for
Human Rights
Education Af-
rica Day, 25th
May 2007"*



Melron Nicol-Wilson... proud winner of a Human Right Award

yers Centre for Legal Assistance(LAWCLA) in Freetown, Sierra Leone; your unwavering commitment to

Award to Melron Nicol- Wilson from Sierra Leone. In other words the presenter of the award from the Centre for

to serve mankind. "I will live to serve my people and provide them the necessary assistance that would promote their

To him humanity takes precedence over material benefits and money should not be the means to an end despite its multiple functions for economic, political and social developments; humanity should always be at the top

improving the lives of people in Africa and your outstanding professional Achievement on the occasion of the UNSECO Award's Ceremony to the centre for Human Rights of the 2006 UNESCO prize for Human Rights Education-Africa Day, 25th May,2007" These were the words of the presenter of the Human Rights

Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa was only re-echoing to the recipient that "your dreams to serve humanity has come to pass and because of that we at Pretoria do recognize that, we therefore present you this award". This is the kind of motivation that Melron Nicol -Wilson appreciates for him to continue

lives on planet earth" He said. Perhaps, if he were a seer made and created from different specie, the interpretation would have been different just the same way; because of his selfless service to mankind he was perceived as not a Sierra Leonean, truly he is a Sierra Leonean born and bred.

Voice of America

Monday, 18 June 2007

Taylor Court Looks to Avoid Funding Shortfall

By Howard Lesser
Washington, DC
18 June 2007

As the Special Court for Sierra Leone prepares to resume prosecuting ousted Liberian President Charles Taylor next Monday, the challenge of overcoming a funding shortfall continues to raise concerns about whether the tribunal, funded primarily with voluntary contributions from UN member states, will be able to complete the trial and three others still awaiting verdicts in Freetown. Attorney Elise Keppler with Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program, who witnessed the start of the trial, says that donors face an important hurdle to see that justice is carried out.

"The court has got to have additional funding. At this point, it does not have the resources to complete the Taylor trial, to finish its work in Freetown, and that involves three other trials, along with other post-completion activities, including witness protection," she notes.

A dramatic opening day, boycotted by Taylor on June 4 in the Netherlands, has been followed by a three-week layoff for case preparation. The proceedings will pick up again on Monday, June 25. Taylor's attorney entered pleas of innocence to 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international law on opening day of the trial. He is accused of fomenting civil war by fuelling rebel troops in a neighbouring country to enrich himself by providing arms in exchange for Sierra Leonean blood diamonds. Keppler says that the prosecution intends to portray Taylor as masterminding an effort to take over the entire country.

"They believe they have evidence that Taylor was responsible for what they described in summary as a campaign of terror against the Sierra Leonean people and that the murders, the rapes, the amputations were part of this campaign that was a foreseeable consequence of a plan, a joint criminal enterprise, of a group of individuals to take over Sierra Leone," she observed.

Relocating Taylor's trial to facilities at the International Criminal Court in The Hague last June was necessitated by concerns of stability in West Africa if the trial were held in Sierra Leone. As for Taylor's contention that he will be unable to receive a fair trial in a European country, Human Rights Watch attorney Keppler says that the court has a preponderance of African representation.

"It's very important to note that Taylor is being tried by a UN-backed tribunal composed of Sierra Leoneans and international judges and staff. This is not a European tribunal, and there is a significant African representation and also a Sierra Leonean representation on this court," she notes.

Assessing fairness, Keppler points out that officials of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have gone to great lengths to meet Taylor's legal concerns.

"In terms of the resource question, the key here is that Taylor is entitled to adequate facilities and time to prepare his defense. The judges have been addressing concerns raised by Taylor for several months now. And it's important to find that the trial had been pushed back several times in order to accommodate concerns about needing additional time to prepare. The trial was initially scheduled to start on April 2, and then was pushed back to June 4, and an additional three weeks were then scheduled to provide some further time for Taylor's defense to prepare, creating this adjournment that we're currently in," she explained.

The Monitor (Kampala)

Monday, 18 June 2007

The Special Court for Sierra Leone - Enforcing Law Or Politics?

By Jamil Mujuzi

In his article in the Sunday Monitor of June 10, Mohammed Matovu clearly demonstrated how international criminal tribunals are driven by both politics and international law. He is right; that if a judge at such a court is not careful he or she might end up delivering political judgments. This is true because of the circumstances that surround the establishment and functioning of those courts.

This is not a new phenomenon in international criminal law. Those who are familiar with international criminal law will agree with me that the Nuremburg [in Germany] and Tokyo [in Japan] Tribunals that were established after World War II were more political than legal. They enforced what international criminal law experts call "Victor's Justice" as opposed to real justice.

How will the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) (where Justice Julia Sebutinde is based) be remembered? While appearing before the SCSL in early February 2006, one of the accused, Mr Sam Hinga Norman (former deputy minister of Defence and later minister of Internal Affairs in Sierra Leone who has since died) called upon the SCSL to indict the President of Sierra Leone, Dr Ahmed T. Kabbah, for some of the atrocities that were committed during a 10-year civil war that wrecked the country.

What Mr Hinga was saying was that if indeed the SCSL is in place to bring about justice in Sierra Leone, the prosecutor should have indicted Mr Kabbah. Else, the court would be seen as an instrument used by those in power, in collaboration with the United Nations, against those who are not in power.

The SCSL was established by an agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations with the "power to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violation of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law -- committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since November 30, 1996, including those leaders who, in committing such crimes, have threatened the establishment of and implementation of the peace process in Sierra Leone."

The internationally well-known former Liberian president Charles Taylor is one of the accused. Dr Kabbah, the current President of Sierra Leone, is not one of those who were indicted by the SCSL yet his role in the civil war is well documented. And this explains why his former deputy Defence minister [Mr Hinga] called upon the court to indict him.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission that was put in place to make findings in relation to the causes, nature and extent of violations and abuses during the armed conflict in Sierra Leone recommended that Dr Kabbah be held responsible for the acts of his agents on the ground (paragraph 278).

The Commission also found that (paragraph 283) the government (headed by Dr Kabbah) was kept informed through its Security Committee briefings and through reports received from ECOMOG; that the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) were committing unspeakable human rights violations, but failed to take steps to stop them.

The Commission concluded that the government was responsible for the violations and abuses of human rights committed by the CDF. There is no reason why the SCSL should use different standards to prosecute people for the same offences. In cases of the former rebels (RUF and AFRC), the SCSL indicted the top brass and in cases where this was not possible, for example where the leaders died (Foddy Sankoh and Bockarie) or their whereabouts are not known (Koroma), the SCSL indicted those who deputised the leaders.

However, this was not done in the case of those in power. The SCSL indicted Mr Hinga who was the deputy Defence minister but ignored Dr Kabbah, who was the actual Defence minister! And yet Mr Hinga implemented orders that were given by Dr Kabbah!

The latter's conduct during the war automatically qualifies him to "bear the greatest responsibility" for the atrocities that were committed during that war; he should therefore have stood trial. Otherwise the SCSL will go on record as having furthered political interests but not delivered justice to the victims of Dr Kabbah's actions and omissions.

The author is a Doctoral Intern, Civil Society Prison Reform Initiative, Community Law Centre, at the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.

UNMIL Public Information Office
Press Clips 15 June 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

President Sirleaf Arrives in Abuja

Jun 15, 2007 (Liberia Government/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has arrived in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, ahead of the 32nd Ordinary Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Governments. The President and delegation arrived Thursday afternoon, aboard a private Presidential jet, made available by the President of Equatorial Guinea, following a two-day State visit to that country.

In an interview with reporters before departure, the President said she was impressed over the level of development in Equatorial Guinea, and spoke highly of the involvement of citizens of that country in the development process. The President, who visited among other development sites, a Turbo Gas Plant, said she was impressed that the vision of their President to put into use natural gases for energy supply is being realized.

Meanwhile, the President has met with Liberians residing in Equatorial Guinea. The President said efforts will be made with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Authorities of that Central African country to help ease some of the difficulties they continue to experience. The Liberians complained of difficult living conditions due to the lack of resident permits to enable them find jobs. They appeal to the President to help use her influence to addressing their plight. They attributed some of the difficulties to the lack of a diplomatic representation in that country and urged Government to consider opening one to help address some of their problems.

The President informed the citizens that due to efforts underway to streamline Liberian Missions abroad, government could not open additional missions. The spokesperson of the group, Mr. Fernando Togba Dougan, has been asked by the President to serve as a contact between Foreign Ministry officials and the citizens as government works out plans to address some of their concerns. She appealed to them to remain law-abiding.

Meanwhile, a Meeting of the Committee of Experts in charge of political affairs, peace and security, has ended in Abuja, with an acknowledgement of the progress being made by the Liberian government under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The Council made particular reference to the promotion and consolidation of peace, through respect for human rights and the judicious management of resources, inspite of the daunting challenges of post-war reconstruction and development. The Council also acknowledged the progress made in the areas of economic enterprise and peace building, and urged the international community to keep its promise of aid to Liberia in its efforts to support the reconstruction and reintegration as well as deepen instituted reinforcement and reconstruction.

Liberia was represented at the Committee's meeting by Foreign Minister, Ambassador George Wallace. The two-day summit of the ECOWAS Heads of State will review political issues as well as peace and security in the sub-region.

Liberia gets assistance for community empowerment project

Press Release No:2007/452/AFR

WASHINGTON, June 14, 2007 – The World Bank Board of Directors today approved an International Development Association (IDA) grant of US\$5 million to support the basic

emergency needs of the population and help stabilize the social and political situation in Liberia.

The Second Community Empowerment project (CEP II) aims to improve poor rural communities' access to basic services and economic opportunities through a Community Driven Development approach by investing in community sub-projects and in capacity building at the community and local government levels. It will address the emergency situation in social services, in health and education in particular, and open new economic opportunities.

"The CEP II envisages a strong involvement of local authorities in key sub-project phases by providing them with capacity building and involving them in the selection and supervision of sub-projects," said Giuseppe Zampaglione, the World Bank Task Team Leader of the project.

It is estimated that the project will benefit about 125,000 people and train some 860 people. Also, approximately 250,000 person-days of employment would be created by the end of the CEP II. A total of 260 sub-projects in poor communities, mostly located in rural and remote areas of the country will be funded with emphasis on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including women, children, orphans, female-headed households, ex-combatants and unemployed youth, persons living with HIV/AIDS, disabled amputees, internally displaced persons and war-affected victims.

The Second Community Empowerment project will focus on the following components:

- Community Driven Program which will provide support to local communities to select, design, implement and maintain small-scale sub-projects that will help in restoring social and economic infrastructure.
- Capacity Building Program which will fund the community facilitators, engineering consultants, and training programs for communities, local authorities and other key stakeholders to enable them to play a leading role in identification, design and implementation of community-based activities.

The European Commission will also contribute Euro 8.5 million to the funding of this project.

The Second Community Empowerment project falls under the World Bank's new rapid response procedures for emergency projects.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast seeks up to 340 million euros extra to clear up pollution

ABIDJAN, June 15, 2007 (AFP) - Ivory Coast is seeking up to 340 million euros (450 million dollars) from Dutch-based multinational Trafigura to clear up pollution in Abidjan that killed 15 people, in a draft settlement proposal seen by AFP.

This would be in addition to the 152 million euros (198 million dollars) already agreed by Trafigura in February in an out-of-court settlement in the wake of the August 2006 incident which affected thousands of Abidjan residents.

Trafigura had chartered a ship, which unloaded nearly 600 tonnes of caustic soda and petroleum residues which were then dumped by a local firm at 16 open air public waste sites across the economic capital of the west African country.

As the stench from the waste spread across the city, more than 100,000 people sought medical attention, 15 died and 69 residents were hospitalised.

In the February settlement Trafigura also agreed to cover the identification and additional cleaning up of any sites still containing waste.

The settlement proposal drawn up by the Ivorian authorities estimated the cost at between 61 million euros over five years and 340 million over 10 years, if underground water supplies were found to have been contaminated.

Four months after the initial agreement by Trafigura, the victims and their dependents have yet to receive their share of compensation and are threatening to take to the streets if it is not paid out.

President Laurent Gbagbo Thursday called for calm, saying he wanted "to carry out the operation of compensation with all the necessary rigour and transparency."

The French company Tredi was hired to clear up the waste and began work in September. But it stopped work in March, saying it lacked government authorisation to remove the last 2,500 to 3,000 tonnes.

Tredi spokesman Henri Petitgrand said Friday the company was still waiting for permission.

I'm the boss" says Guinea's ailing leader

CONAKRY, June 15, 2007 (AFP) - The ailing president of **Guinea**, Lansana Conte who came under intense pressure to step down early this year, insists he is still "the boss" of the country.

"I am the boss, others are my subordinates," he said in a late Thursday night interview.

Powerful trade unions with the backing of opposition parties, had staged a series of bloody strikes against Conte, arguing he was no longer fit to run the west African nations.

In power since 1984, Conte, 73, is a chain smoker who suffers from chronic diabetes and was at one time diagnosed with leukemia.

Asked in an interview with AFP and the French television channel TV5, if a transition was to be expected soon, Conte, whose tenure ends in 2010 and is rarely seen in public, gave a curt response.

"There is no question of transition," he said.

He bowed to strikers' demands to appoint a new prime minister with broad powers, but not before 137 people were killed, most of them civilians at the hands of security forces in a bloody crackdown of the January and February protests.

"Mistakes were made but we are correcting them. Everyone makes mistakes, there is no shame in recognising and fixing them," Conte said.

The crisis that hit the world's top bauxite exporter only ended after Conte appointed a respected international diplomat Lansana Kouyate, as prime minister of consensus.

He downplayed the crippling strikes that hit Guinea early in the year, asking: "Which country has not experienced such events, painful events?"

"We are not the only ones to face such events," he said.

"It happens to everyone to have moments of difficulties, misunderstandings between the people and rulers," he said.

He denied that his appointment of Kouyate was induced by pressure from the unions and the international community.

"I named a prime minister far from any pressure. I was not obliged but it was necessary".

Conte's first choice for prime minister, his close associate Eugene Camara, had only served to fuel the protests.

He said Kouyate's nomination was a personal choice and he was pleased with his performance.

"I am satisfied with him. I invited him to help me, he is doing it well. The day he will not make the country happy, he will go," said Conte, who came to power on the back of a military coup.

Conte's spoke ahead of a planned meeting between Kouyate and France's new President Nicolas Sarkozy, on Friday in Paris.

UNMIL Daily Radio Summary **Friday, 15 June 2007**

Following are excerpts of select Liberian radio stations' news programs. Parts of the transcripts have been paraphrased and edited to conform to UNMIL style. The radio summary does not necessarily reflect the views of UNMIL.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

Liberia-Equatorial Guinea sign Communiqué on Economic Cooperation

- A dispatch from Equatorial Guinea says President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and President Obiang Mbasogo have agreed to improve economic, social and cultural bilateral ties.
- In a communiqué, the two Presidents encouraged investment in the private sectors of both countries and pledged their support to the African cause of reform in the United Nations.
- President Mbasogo then promised to contribute to the recovery of Liberia, especially in the energy sector.
- In an address to a Special Session of the People's Representatives Parliament, President Sirleaf urged Africa to transform from conflict to growth to confront economic issues such as debts and trade barriers.
- Meanwhile, Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf is already in the Nigerian capital, Abuja to attend an ECOWAS Summit.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Opposition Liberty Party Wants Justice Minister Name Coup Plotters or Resign

- Speaking to journalists yesterday, the Chairman of the opposition Liberty Party, Israel Akinsanya called on Justice Minister Frances Johnson Morris to make public the names of those she claims are plotting to overthrow the government or resign.
- Mr. Akinsanya said if proof is not provided, then the statement is not only intended to implicate opposition politicians but also reduce them to public ridicule.
- Meanwhile, the Party has called on the National Legislature not to pass the draft Telecommunication Law of Liberia alleging that the bill is intended to create a Police State in Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Government Presents Oil Agreement to Nigerian Company

- The Liberian Government has formally presented the ratified oil agreement to the Nigeria Oil company, Oranto, one of two companies whose contract has been ratified by the National Legislature and signed into law.
- The other company, Broadway Consolidated will be presented the oil agreement next month.
- Under the agreement, the two companies have been granted exclusive exploration authorization for a period of eight years. Liberia is said to have 70 percent chance of discovering oil.

World Bank Official Wants Public Infrastructure Maintained

- In an interview with reporters, the World Bank Representative in Liberia, Paul Chris urged residents of Monrovia to maintain public infrastructures rehabilitated by government in partnership with foreign donors.
