

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



The peninsular highway

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:

Friday, 18 May 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News

Justice George Gelaga-King Re-Elected President of Special Court / <i>SCSL Press Release</i>	Page 3
Charles Taylor Falls Out With Kabbah!! / <i>The Spark</i>	Pages 4-5
WCOWAS Court Dele Visits Special Court / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 6
South African University Honours Salone Lawyer / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Page 7

International News

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 8-10
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 17 May 2007

Justice George Gelaga-King Re-Elected President of Special Court

Justice George Gelaga King of Sierra Leone has been unanimously re-elected Presiding Judge of the Appeals Chamber, a post which makes him President of the Special Court for a period of an additional one-year term.

Justice George Gelaga King has been President of the Sierra Leone Court of Appeal and of Court of Appeal of the Gambia. He served as Sierra Leone's Ambassador to France, Spain, Portugal and Switzerland from 1974 to 1978, and was at the same time Sierra Leone's Permanent Representative to UNESCO. Between 1978 and 1980 he served as Sierra Leone's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Justice King taught law at the Sierra Leone Law School from 1990 to 2005. He is Chairman of both the Sierra Leone Law Journal and the Gambian National Council for Law Reporting, and was a member of the Sierra Leone Council of Legal Education. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Last month he received Sierra Leone's highest honour when he was named a Grand Officer of the Republic of Sierra Leone (GORSL). He is a "Distinguished Visiting Professor" of Kingston University in Essex, U.K.

Justice King has been a Judge of the Special Court for Sierra Leone since December 2002.

The Appeals Court Judges also elected Justice Emmanuel Ayoola of Nigeria as Vice-President of the Special Court.

Justice Ayoola has served as Judge of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, President of the Seychelles Court of Appeal, and former Chief Justice of the Gambia. He has been a Vice President of the World Judge's Association, and won the UN Human Rights Fellowship award in 1996.

He is a graduate of London and Oxford Universities and has edited the Seychelles Law Digest, the Law Reports of the Gambia, and the Nigerian Monthly Law Reports.

Justice Ayoola served as President of the Special Court from 2004 to 2005.

#END



The Spark

Friday, 18 May 2007

Charles Taylor Falls Out With Kabbah!!

During the reign of the late military junta, Samuel K. Doe, dissident groups went through military training in 1988 in Libya with the sole aim of toppling his leadership. As plans were abound between the National Patriotic Front of Liberia headed by Charles Taylor who is currently undergoing charges of Human Rights Abuses and Crimes against Humanity in the Hague and the Revolutionary United Front with regards to aiding the fighting forces in Liberia before launching attacks on Sierra Leone.

Unlike the VANGUARD group made up of disgruntled students who sneaked out of the country during the oppressive regime of the late Siaka Stevens, needed a well-structured and organised movement that only limited its activities in Sierra Leone and not Liberia, the Alie Kabbah's group was biding more time to plan and execute the revolution. Unlike the Libyan trained battalions acted contrary to these expectations by calling for a joint military operation with Charles Taylor so is to expand his empire in the subregion.

Charles Taylor used the split within the ranks of the Sierra Leonean group and convinced Foday Sankoh to join forces with his own bunch of illiterate, greedy and selfish upstarts to start the operation in the once peaceful Liberian territory. Before this period, Sankoh, a one time jailed ex-army corporal was of no significance within the group of his revolutionaries but by leaning with Taylor, he quickly rose to prominence.

The first strategy was to secure a base for the attack on Liberia. Sierra Leone was selected and Taylor travelled to Freetown to chat with late Joseph Saidu Momoh, the then President of Sierra Leone, over this issue. The wise decision of late Momoh was his refusal to grant Taylor's request on the ground that it violated the Mano River Union Protocol that kicked against member states within the MRU to interfere into the affairs of another.

Another reason why he attacked Sierra Leone was that

Awoko

Friday, 18 May 2007

ECOWAS Court dele visits Special Court

By Betty Milton

The president and staff of the Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday played host to the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice.

Welcoming the 11-member delegation the Special Court president, Justice George Gelaga-King said he was happy for the steps the ECOWAS court had undertaken to take the court to the people.

He said his court had established a legacy such as its premises, which the ECOWAS Court should think about emulating.

Justice Gelaga-King said they had worked very hard to fulfill their mandate with two of the four cases (the AFRC and CDF) having finished and awaiting judgment which he said would be handed next month and the prosecution having closed in the RUF case.

He said both counsels of defence and prosecution would likely appeal the verdict.

In the case of the trial of the Liberian president, Charles Taylor, Mr Gelaga-King said the Trial Chamber II would sit over that case at The Hague, Netherlands.

The Special Court President said funding for his court was their greatest constrain.

“With all this difficulty, mean and lean circumstances, the judges have done excellent work. The outreach section has also done a good job. This has promoted some other sections of certain International Tribunal who have come to us for experience.”

The president of the ECOWAS Court, Justice

Aminata Malle, Sanogo said they had completed sensitisation in French-speaking countries and were now embarking on a sensitization of English-speaking member countries with Sierra Leone being the first.

Justice Sanogo said the aim of the sensitization was to raise awareness of the court and report when citizens' rights are violated.

For an application to be made to the court, she said, an application should not be anonymous and should not be pending before another international court.

She said with the supplementary protocols, the court could move to any member states to hear any matter.

The Exclusive
Friday, 18 May 2007

South African University Honours Salone Lawyer

Director of the Lawyers Centre for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA), Melron C. Nicol-Wilson will be singularly honoured by the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria in South Africa during a UNESCO Award Ceremony for the Centre for Human Rights (which won the UNESCO Award for 2006), at Pretoria in South Africa on the 25th of May 2007.

The Honor to Nicol-Wilson on Africa Day by his Former University is for "His Academic Achievements in South Africa and subsequent to leaving South Africa, his courageous and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of people in Africa; his dynamism, originality and courageous pioneering spirit and for his outstanding professional achievement which makes him epitomize the true African Human Rights Lawyer."

Nicol-Wilson holds a Masters Degree in Human Rights Law from the University of

Pretoria in South Africa; a Masters Degree in Law with specialization in International Criminal Justice and Armed Conflict from the University of Nottingham in the UK, a postgraduate Diploma in Equal Status and Human Rights of Women from the University of Lund in Sweden and a certificate in Human Rights Teaching and Research from the International Institute of Human Rights in Strassbourg, France. He did

undergraduate legal studies at Fourah Bay College and professional Law Studies at the Sierra Leone Law School.

The African Human Rights Lawyer is a former Human Rights Law Teaching fellow at Columbia Law School in New York; former legal adviser of the Anti Corruption Commission and former Human Rights Trainer of the Namibian Police. Presently in addition to running LAWCLA, he is also a Defence Counsel at the UN backed Special Court and Lecturer at

Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

It could be recalled that Nicol-Wilson co-founded the first Legal Aid Centre in Sierra

Leone in 2001 and under his Directorship, the Centre has provided free legal services to

thousands of Sierra Leoneans. The

Centre has also published a number of research

documents such as

Juvenile Justice in Sierra Leone – Law

and Practice; Death Penalty in Sierra

Leone – Time for chance; Unequal

R i g h t s : Discriminatory Laws

against Women in Sierra Leone; A

Handbook for Paralegals in Sierra

Leone and Children in the Criminal

Justice System in Sierra Leone.

In 2003, he was awarded Lawyer of

the Year by AWOL and in 2005 he was

awarded Child Friendly Lawyer of

the Year by the National Youth

Coalition and Children Forum Network.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 17 May 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

17 May 2007

250 Pakistani peacekeepers leave for Liberia

Staff Report

Daily Times, LAHORE: A batch of 250 Pakistani troops left for Liberia on Wednesday to perform peacekeeping duties under the aegis of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country. Logistic Divisional Headquarter Commander Brigadier Shahid Majeed saw the batch off at Allama Iqbal Airport, before their departure on a UN chartered aircraft.

Education Trust Fund-Raiser Nets Quarter-of-a-Million Dollars

Washington, D.C., May 17, 2007 (Liberia Government/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Tuesday led a fundraising event in Washington, DC, the United States, raising 250-thousand United States dollars. The event, graced by several prominent personalities including New York Senator, Hilary Clinton, American billionaire Robert Johnson, Jordan Queen Noor, as well as a number of US congressmen and members of the American business community and philanthropists, was organized by the Liberian Education Trust (LET), to raise funds to support education in Liberia.

Two Liberian police arrested over stolen cargo ship

MONROVIA, May 17, 2007 (AFP) - A serving Liberian policeman and a former colleague have been arrested over the weekend theft of a commercial freighter from Monrovia's main port, a cabinet minister said Thursday. Deputy Information Minister Gabriel Williams told AFP the two -- Dixon Bah and ex-policeman Alfred Tikay, would soon appear in court.

International Clips on West Africa

UN urges Ivorian parties to keep peace process on track

UNITED NATIONS, May 16, 2007 (AFP) - UN chief Ban Ki-moon is urging rival Ivorian parties to keep their peace process on track and thinks it is premature to consider a drawdown of UN forces in the cocoa-rich West African country. In his latest report released here Wednesday, the secretary general also recommended that the mandate of the 8,000-strong UN mission in Ivory Coast -- known as ONUCI -- be extended until the end of the year.

IVORY COAST: LINGERING QUARRELS DELAY PEACE PROCESS

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, May 14, 2007 (IPS/GIN) -- A peace accord signed by government and rebel leaders put an end to conflicts in the Ivory Coast in March, but implementing the stipulations of the accord has proved difficult.

Local Media – Newspaper

UNMIL Human Rights Report Highlights Awful Conditions at Prison

(The Liberian Express, The Analyst, New Democrat, The News, Heritage, National Chronicle, New Democrat, The Inquirer)

- In a quarterly Human Rights report released on Wednesday, the United Nations Mission in Liberia among other things spoke to the failure of the Government to uphold minimum detention conditions at several prison centers across the Country.
- Even though the report, according to the *New Democrat* newspaper, repeated its indictment that bribery continued to undermine public faith in the Judiciary, it however acknowledged that the Judiciary was “gradually graduating towards independence”.
- Despite its critical assessment of the human rights situation in Liberia, critics, according to *The Analyst* newspaper, viewed the report as a “scheme to cover up the poor performance of the Government and apparently avoid inciting the public against the Government because the public could use the report to judge the ability of the Government to correct mistakes of the past”.

Fundraisers Net Quarter of a Million to Support Education in Liberia

(The Analyst, New Democrat, National Chronicle, New Democrat and The Inquirer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on Tuesday led a fundraising event in Washington DC which generated a quarter of a million dollars to support education in Liberia. The event was organized by the Liberian Education Trust (LET) in order to address the educational needs of Liberians, particularly girls and women.

Infant Mortality on the Rise in Liberia

(The Inquirer)

- [sic:] Health authorities in the country say infant mortality and maternal are on the increase in the country, with 66 new born babies dying out of every 1,000 delivery by mothers, while 580 mothers die out of 1000,000 new births.
- The Family Health Division at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in a paper released to accelerate the reduction of maternal and new born mortality in the country, said 11% of all maternal deaths occur in adolescents, citing several causes responsible for maternal death in the country.

UNMIL Unable to Intercept Stolen Vessel Heads East

(The News)

- [sic:] UNMIL Chief Spokesman Ben Dotsei Malor has disclosed that the Mission lacked the marine capability to successfully arrest or intercept the St. Vincent Grenadines registered vessel, MV Tahoma Reefer that was stolen offshore near the Freeport of Monrovia by some unknown persons.

Security Expert Recommends Periodic Drug Test for Police Officers

(Heritage)

- A prominent security expert, Cecil Griffiths, has recommended a periodic drug test for officers of the Liberian National Police in order to determine whether or not the officers are involved in the trafficking and consumption of narcotic and other dangerous substances in the country.

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

President Raises Thousands of Dollars for Girl-Child Education in Liberia

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

President Declares Today as World Telecom and Information Society Day

- An Executive Mansion release said that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf declared today, Thursday May 17 - World Telecommunications and Information Society Day - as a working holiday throughout Liberia. The President's proclamation was contained in her speech sent to the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Senator Cleared of Wrongdoing in Passports Scandal

- Based on the recommendation of a Special Presidential Committee, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has written to Grand Cape Mount County Senator Abel Massaley declaring that he was free from the saga surrounding the appointment of a Honorary Consul for Liberia.
- The Senator had been accused of secretly appointing Michael Karmel as Liberia's Honorary Consul to the Swiss Federation and the Republic of Germany and subsequently signing a diplomatic passport allegedly issued to Mr. Karmel.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Liberia's Truth Commission Commences Statement-Taking in Ghana

- According to a release, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission said that it has begun taking statements from Liberian refugees in Ghana on abuses committed during the civil war in Liberia.
- Speaking at the launching of the pilot project which started on May 14, in partnership with US-based Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner Massa Washington encouraged Liberians at the Buduburam Refugee Camp to take advantage of the exercise in order to have a say in Liberia's future.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.