

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



An aerial view of some parts of Western Freetown

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, 18 September 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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African Young Voices
Wednesday, 18 September 2013

Omrie Golley writes Africa Confidential:

‘I’ve never been an associate of Ibrahim Balde Bah’

From: Omrie Golley <omriegolley1@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Sep 13, 2013 at 2:00 AM

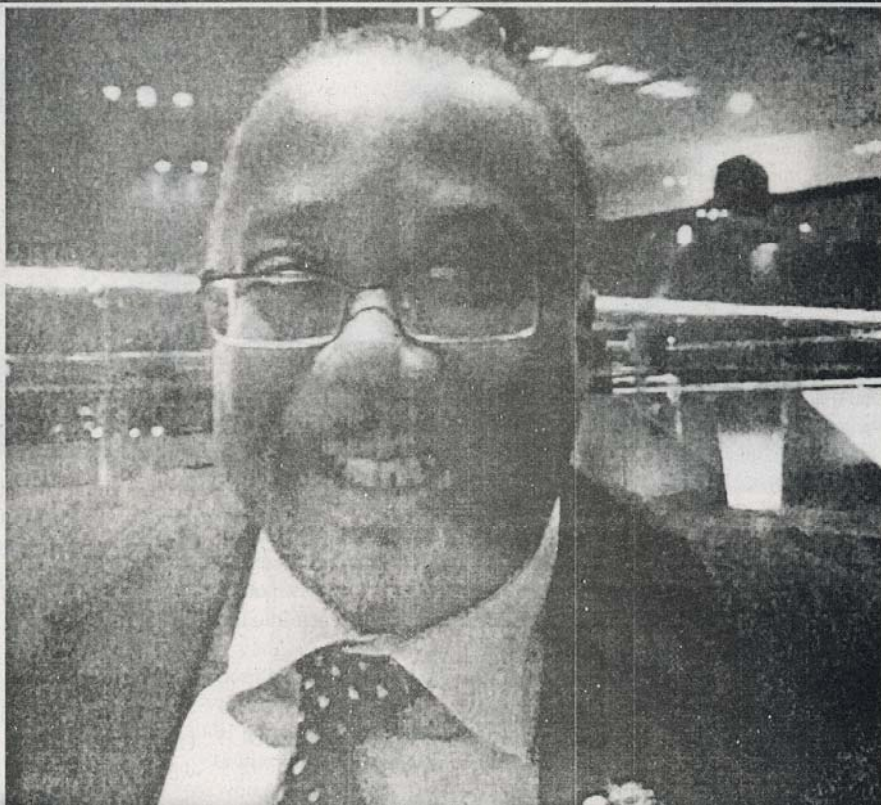
Subject: Sierra Leone - Article contained in Vol 54 no 18 dated the 6th September 2013 - Headed "Bah reveals official links"

To: andrew@africa-confidential.com

Cc: patrick@africa-confidential.com

Dear Patrick,

My attention has been drawn to an article contained in your internet based "Africa Confidential" publication with the above caption and date, which has caused me considerable distress and which contains manifest untruths and fabrications, in my view and others, clearly designed to demean my integrity and character amongst reasonable and right thinking members of the world wide internet community and public. That neither you or any other officials of your publication ever even bothered to contact me before releasing your article has heightened my above assertions. This letter is designed to bring these matters to your immediate attention in the hope that you retract them and/or place in a prominent place of your publication, my response to that article.



In the first place, you stated in your article that I am an associate of Bah's. My response is that whilst this individual is known to me, I am not, nor have I ever been an associate of Bah, and I put you to the strictest proof of this assertion of yours.

Secondly you stated or implied that I have or have had commercial dealings with Bah, quoting him. My response is that I have never had any commercial dealings with Bah himself, or with or through any third parties or foreign investors dealing with Bah.

You also made mention of the fact that I had been placed or was under a UN travel ban, without mentioning the fact that nine months after I was placed on this Liberia Ban in 2001, the UN saw fit to remove my name from that List - one of the fastest removals in the history of UN travel ban impositions and removals.

Your publication made light of the fact that I had been imprisoned for 22 months in January 2006, without mentioning the fact that in November 2007, the Sierra Leone Government in an announcement to the world stated that they had investigated the evidence relating to the charges of treason brought against me, and

that they had found this evidence wanting, and had released me from 22 months in detention - which any responsible government would do. You also did not make mention, when trivialising my 22 months in detention in fear of my life and in poor health, that, for example, the then Government of Kabbah made 64 applications for adjournments in a case it brought against me for treason carrying the death penalty. This as you very well know is clearly documented.

You did not make mention of the statement of UN through the then Special Representative of the erstwhile Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan, Oluwemi Adeniji praising me for the role that I had played in the peace process at the conclusion of the Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration meetings and exercises in January 2002, which were even echoed by the then SLPP Government in their statements - all well documented.

What you appeared to be interested in doing to

my name and character was to attempt to equate me with an individual on whom evidence had been adduced at the recent Special Court trials for his role in our country's conflict. What did the Courts or any other tribunal state about my role?

I fervently believe in the freedom of speech, and a free and unfettered press, but I also believe in responsible and fair journalism. It is in this vein that I am now demanding that you have another look at your publication in so far as it affects what you stated about me and, in the least, register my complaint/rebuttal.

I would finally like to state that I reserve the right to obtain further legal advice and issue proceedings against your publication, should I so wish, if I am not satisfied with your response to this letter. I do trust that this will not become necessary and that you will do the decent thing.

**Yours truly,
Omrie Golley**

Awoko

Wednesday, 18 September 2013

Kenya's William Ruto trial: First ICC witness testifies



The first prosecution witness is giving evidence at Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto's trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Mr Ruto has been charged with crimes against humanity, following allegations that he orchestrated violence after disputed elections in 2007.

Mr Ruto, the first serving official to appear at the ICC, denies the charge

The court ruled the

witness's identity, an alleged survivor of a church arson attack, should not be revealed.

This was for her own safety and she will be known by the number 536.

Chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda has previously said that witnesses have been intimidated in an attempt to prevent them from giving evidence.

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta is due to stand trial in November. He also denies charges of fuelling

violence after the 2007 election.

Some 1,200 people were killed and 600,000 forced from their homes in weeks of violence after the election.

More than 40,000 people are estimated to be still living in camps, which Mr Kenyatta has promised to close by 20 September.

He and Mr Ruto were on opposite sides during the 2007 election, but formed an alliance to win elections in March this year.

Analysts believe the ICC charges bolstered their campaign, as many Kenyans accused the court of interfering in Kenya's domestic affairs.

'Church attack'

Prosecutor Anton Steynberg told the court that "22 victims and witnesses, common Kenyan people, who will describe the attacks" would be called to testify in Mr Ruto's trial, Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper reports.

Mr Ruto is being charged

alongside journalist Joshua arap Sang.

He is the head of a Kalenjin-language radio station and is accused of whipping up ethnic hatred - a charge he denies.

The first witness was a victim of an arson attack in January 2008 on the Kiambaa Church in Kenya's Rift Valley, one of the areas worst-affected by the violence.

A mob set ablaze the church where people were taking refuge, burning 36 people beyond recognition.

The violence erupted after the opposition claimed that it had been robbed of victory.

It then took ethnic overtones, with Kenya's main groups - especially Kikuyus and Kalenjins - involved in attacks and reprisal attacks.

When Mr Ruto appeared in court last week, Ms Bensouda accused him of forming an "army" of Kalenjin youth to fight for power.

Mr Ruto's defence lawyer, Karim Khan, accused the prosecution of building its case on "a conspiracy of lies".

The New Republic (Liberia)

Wednesday, 18 September 2013

Liberia: Taylor Counts Days to Final Judgment

War crimes and crimes against humanity convict, former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor, is, about this time counting the days he has before him to still in his current abode or be sent to Great Britain where a cell is prepared for him.

About three weeks ago, the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone announced that the appeal judgment in his case would be announced on September 26, 2013, which is next Thursday.

The announcement of the Appeal Judgment from The Hague at 11:00 am will mark the conclusion of the trial, which began in June 2007.

94 witnesses testified for the prosecution while 21 testified for the defense, including Charles Taylor himself, over its duration.

It may be recalled that Mr. Taylor who resigned the presidency on August 11, 2003 and arrested in January of 2006 based on the request of the Liberian government was convicted on 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious violations of international humanitarian law in connection to his role the Sierra Leonean civil war.

The judges also convicted the former Liberian president of planning, with former RUF leader Sam Bockarie, attacks on Kono, Makeni, and Freetown, which took place in late 1998 and early 1999. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison in May 2012.

But on July 19, 2012, both the prosecution and defense teams filed notices of appeal against the findings of the Trial Chamber on Mr. Taylor's conviction and his sentence.

The prosecution appealed the Trial Chamber conviction on four grounds, including the Chamber's failure to find Mr. Taylor liable for ordering and instigating the commission of crimes, the failure to find him liable for crimes committed in certain location in five districts on the ground that they fell outside the scope of the indictment, as well as the decision to sentence him to a single term of 50 years.

The prosecution originally asked that Mr. Taylor serve an 80 year jail term.

The defense has raised 42 grounds of appeal. The defense disagrees with the findings of the Trial Chamber that Taylor was involved in planning attacks on Kono, Makeni, and Freetown in 1998 and 1999 and that he assisted the commission of crimes by providing medical assistance to rebel forces in Sierra Leone.

The defense also argued that the 50 year jail sentence is "manifestly unreasonable," and that the judges "erred" in their failure to consider Taylor's expression of sympathy as grounds of mitigation.

Concerns were also raised over irregularities in the proceedings based on the statement made by the Alternate Judge El-Hadj Malick Sow that there had been no deliberations among the judges and that Justice Julia Sebutinde's participation in the proceedings after she had already become a judge of the International Court of Justice was improper.

DW

Tuesday, 17 September 2013

Robertson: ICC trial of Kenyan leaders is a tribute to international justice

As the trial of Kenya's political leaders resumed in the Hague, the first witness has now testified. The woman's identity is protected and her face and voice were disguised as she addressed the court.



The first witness to testify at the International Criminal Court trial of Kenya's deputy president William Ruto described how a mob of youths torched a church where 2,000 people had sought refuge from the 2007 post-election violence. The woman's identity was kept secret, her face and voice distorted, under an order of the presiding judge Chile Eboe-Osuji.

For an insight into what effect witness protection can have on the trial and how significant the trial is for international justice, DW spoke to barrister Geoffrey Robertson.

DW: How easy is it to keep the identity of the witnesses secret in this era of advanced technology?

Geoffrey Robertson: Techniques for keeping witnesses anonymous where it's really essential to do so, are quite well advanced.



Geoffrey Robertson QC is a renowned human rights lawyer and author of several books

The problem always is, when you're cross-examining an anonymous witness, you can't tell what biases he or she may have. And what other commitments they may have that might tend to make them give false evidence. So it is not a very satisfactory system.

And I would have to say that the climate of intimidation of witnesses in this trial, particularly the Kenyan witnesses, has been unprecedented and is very concerning. Of course it happens in national courts as well as international courts. But in a case of this importance, it has been most regrettable.

Based on this first testimony, how hard will it be for the prosecution to get the evidence it needs for the judges to rule in its favor, especially since other witnesses have withdrawn from the case?

I think that's a matter for the court. It is a significant achievement, I think, for the court and prosecution to put in the dock the people who are exercising power in the country. In Kenya we have got the vice president being tried now and in a couple of months we will have the president. I think that is a great tribute to international justice, which is only recent. It happened in Nuremberg and then it went to sleep for about 50 years and then it started again for the Balkans and went on to Rwanda and my court in Sierra Leone.

I think the Kenyan proceedings are significant for that reason. But we now have to look closely and see whether the fact that these people in the dock are wielding power has significantly deterred witnesses from coming forward.

There have been claims of money exchanging hands on both sides, either to encourage witnesses to testify or to persuade them not to appear in court . What do you make of this?

They are very serious allegations and it will be up to the council on either side to expose that. If it has happened, there is a right to cross-examine and if there is any evidence of witness bribery, then hopefully it will be brought out.

How could the decision by Kenya's parliament to withdraw membership of the ICC affect the outcome of this case?

Not at all. I think the decision by Kenya's parliament was a stupid and rushed and obviously biased decision. Over a thousand innocent people were hacked to death. In Kenya you can't try this - because you can just imagine if there is witness intimidation in The Hague, there would have been massive witness intimidation and judge and jury intimidation in Kenya itself.

There was widespread agreement that the International Criminal Court should take it over and now suddenly these wretched politicians, some of whom are implicated in the violence, are getting cold feet and threatening to withdraw from this great international court. I think people will see that for what it is - a very self-interested action which is not in the interest of Kenya or its people.

Geoffrey Robertson sat as an appeal judge at the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone from 2002 to 2007 and is currently defending Wikileaks' founder Julian Assange in extradition proceedings in the United Kingdom.

Interview: Isaac Mugabi

Associated Press

Tuesday, 17 September 2013

African Union to debate ICC exit amid Kenya trial

KAMPALA, Uganda — An upcoming summit of the African Union will debate the possible exit of some African countries from the International Criminal Court, Uganda's deputy foreign minister said Tuesday as the trial of Kenya's deputy president proceeded at The Hague.

Okello Oryem said that Uganda, whose president has questioned the ICC's credibility, would be compelled to quit the Rome Statute that created the court if a "summit-level" recommendation is made in solidarity with the leaders of Kenya who face criminal charges at The Hague over their alleged roles in post-election violence that killed more than 1,000 people in 2007-08. They face charges of crimes against humanity, which they deny having committed.

The ICC has come under strong criticism from some African leaders who say it disproportionately targets Africans. The international court has indicted only Africans so far.

Oryem cited concerns about the credibility of the witnesses in the trials of Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto. He said Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni "is doing everything possible" to stop the criminal trials in Europe of Kenya's leaders. An African Union summit next month in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, "will decide this matter" of a possible mass exit from the ICC, he said.

At Kenyatta's inauguration earlier this year, Museveni gave a speech in which he accused the ICC of being biased against Africans. His criticism of the ICC surprised many in Uganda, where Museveni once was seen as a strong supporter of the international court after he backed its charges against the fugitive warlord Joseph Kony and his top commanders.

But Museveni has accused the ICC of what he calls "arrogance" in its handling of Kenya's post-election violence case.

"I was one of those that supported the ICC because I abhor impunity," he said in April in Nairobi, Kenya's capital. "However, the usual opinionated and arrogant actors using their careless analysis have distorted the purpose of that institution. They are now using it to install leaders of their choice in Africa and eliminate the ones they do not like."

Kenyatta and Ruto have both pledged to continue cooperating with the ICC, even though Kenya's parliament recently voted to withdraw from the ICC. Ruto's trial is under way and Kenyatta's is scheduled to start in November.

Thirty-four African countries, including Nigeria and South Africa, have signed the Rome Statute.

When an African Union summit in May urged the United Nations to transfer trials of Kenya's leaders to Kenya, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn said the ICC prosecutions "have degenerated into some kind of race hunt" of Africans. "We object to that," he said.

Amnesty International said recently that Kenya's exit from the ICC would "set a dangerous precedent for the future of justice in Africa."

A mass exit of African countries from the ICC "would weaken its political and practical ability to seek justice for victims of atrocity," said David Crane, a law professor at Syracuse University in the U.S.

Odula reported from Nairobi, Kenya.