

**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 Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Thursday, 19 August 2004

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.

If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact

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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS STATEMENT

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 18 August 2004

The following is a statement by Registrar Robin Vincent

The Sierra Leonean authorities have today charged Mr Peter Halloran, an employee of the Special Court, in connection with an allegation of sexual involvement with a minor.

The allegation against Mr Halloran first came to my attention in June. At that time, I immediately suspended Mr Halloran and ordered the formation of a high-level Board of Inquiry to investigate the matter. The inquiry board was composed of senior staff members who were independent of his section.

On the same day, I voluntarily notified the Inspector-General of the Sierra Leone Police of the allegation. He was content with my proposed action.

Based on the information and the statements presented to the Board of Inquiry, it was concluded that there was insufficient evidence to support the allegation against Mr Halloran.

On July 26, Mr Halloran was interviewed and subsequently arrested by members of the Sierra Leone Police. He was not taken into custody at that time, and he has remained in Freetown voluntarily pending the disposition of his case.

Let me stress that the Special Court has cooperated with the Sierra Leonean authorities since the beginning of the investigation, as has Mr Halloran. The Special Court provided a copy of its internal report, together with all supporting documents and statements, in order to facilitate the polices' own investigation. I personally made a full statement to the police in respect of our internal inquiry.

The Inspector-General of Police and the Attorney-General have been kept fully informed at all stages, and they have acknowledged the extent of the cooperation they have received from the Court without the need even to ask for it.

Let me also stress that the Special Court does not condone any form of misconduct by members of its staff, and that we take such matters very seriously. At the same time, Mr Halloran has maintained his innocence throughout this matter and is entitled to the presumption of innocence whilst the charge against him is subjected to the judicial process.

#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against

humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

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Produced by the
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Liberian rebels in tension-easing talks in Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, Aug 18 (AFP) - Liberia's main rebel group was in talks Wednesday with Sierra Leone officials aiming to resolve friction over border areas in the crisis-torn west African neighbors, as Liberian leader Gyude Bryant was expected in Freetown.

"The meeting is to maintain peace and mutual understanding between the two sides," Sierra Leone Deputy Police Commissioner Chris Charley told reporters in the capital.

"We don't intend to have any hostile relations with (Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy) so we have initiated dialogue to ensure trust."

LURD rebels held some two-thirds of Liberia until a peace pact was signed in August last year to end 14 years of ruinous conflict that reverberated throughout the troubled region.

Though guns have fallen silent, parts of the country, particularly in the border areas, remain volatile, amid continued reports of human rights violations including harassment, looting and intimidation, according to rights watchdog Amnesty International.

Problems in LURD territory -- which stretches north from the capital Monrovia to the Guinean border -- have been compounded by an internal leadership struggle waged by a powerful dissident military faction seeking to overthrow chairman Sekou Conneh.

LURD and government officials met late last month in the Ghanaian capital Accra in a bid to resolve differences that have hamstrung the transitional government led by chairman Gyude Bryant and delayed the implementation of the peace accords signed in Accra on August 18, 2003.

Sierra Leone President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, whose country has only recently emerged from a decade of civil war considered among the most brutal in modern history, has taken a leading role in engaging all sides of the Liberian dispute.

He was to welcome Bryant, whose term will end in January 2006 once an elected government is installed, later Wednesday on his third visit to Freetown in recent weeks.

Among topics to be discussed in the closed-door meeting is the rehabilitation and reintegration of the disarmament campaign considered crucial to any lasting peace in Liberia, Sierra Leone foreign ministry officials told AFP.