

**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:

Monday, 19 May 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Independent Observer
Monday, 19 May 2008

CDF Appeal Judgement

Appeal Judgement in the CDF trial at
the Special Court is fixed for
WEDNESDAY MAY 28 and not last
Wednesday as we reported last Friday.

Premier News
Monday, 19 May 2008

Monday, March 01, 2008

I Did Not Vote For APC

...Former President Kabbah

Former President Alhaji Tejan Kabbah has expressed concern and worry over rumours that he voted for the opposition party.

By Alpha B Kamara

"I belong to one political party. In the last election I was not a candidate. I voted as a citizen. But there was rumour that I voted for the opposition and I find it difficult to swallow," he said.

The Former President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, was speaking during his testimony in the trial of former RUF Acting Leader, Issa Sesay.

He told the Special Court that Sesay proved to be credible and worked with the Government for the successful restoration of peace in Sierra Leone.

The former President, dressed in blue-black suit with black leather shoes while being lead in evidence by Wayne Jordash, the leading defence counsel for Issa Sesay, disclosed that he was born in Pendembu in 1932.

He told the Special Court, where he was giving evidence on behalf of the defendant that he met him in 2001 during the burning of weapons at the Lungi International airport.

"Issa agreed to do something with the Government and he fulfilled his promise," he said, adding, that he looked a harmless young man and that he saw the tendency of someone obedient in Issa.

On Issa's role as leader of the RUF, Kabbah said he was chosen by commanders of the RUF to represent Foday Sankoh and that when President Obansajo and Konari went to meet Sankoh to give him the letter to sign to confer the leadership of the RUF to Issa, he started to cry and said he had given up and pleaded for him to be taken to Mali or Nigeria to live the rest of his life.

"They handed the letter I had drafted for him to

sign, but he said if he signed it his people will say he did not write it. And that he will write it in the language they could understand," he said.

He also said that there was a time when violence was high in the north of Bombali and Tonkolili districts and that Issa Sesay was then the commander in that area, and that there was massive movement of people from those places to Mile 91.

"It was so bad; there was this huge movement of displaced people. I decided to fly over the Atlantic to Mile 91, as the whole of Bombali and Tonkolili were cut off. Although we tried to fly over the sea, as we turned towards land there was fire on the helicopter. We had to land on a farm and the engineer put the fire off," he said.

Cont. P4



Former President Kabbah



Late RUF Leader, Foday Saybana Sanhoh

I Did Not Vote For APC

From P2

When questioned as to the nature of the fire, the former President was quick to note that it was a mechanical problem and not fire from an enemy gun.

He said the Paramount Chief of Tonkolili, Bai Koblo and another Chief from Port Loko met him and said they knew Issa Sesay and his family, and that on a Friday, he invited the family of Sesay and spoke to them about the need for peace and asked them to convey his message to Issa.

"As a result, when it came to disarmament, Issa was very cooperative," he said.

The former President also disclosed that during the problem in Bombali and Tonkolili, the West Side Boys were between Waterloo, Lunsar, Makeni and Magburaka.

He also disclosed that in July 1999, he attended the Lome Peace Talks to discuss peace with the Revolutionary United Front and that the occasion was attended by Heads of states of the sub-region, members of the organization of West African states and friendly governments who were concerned about the peace process in Sierra Leone.

He said as agreed at the Lome Peace Accord, Foday Saybana Sankoh was appointed Chairman, Strategic Mineral Commission and four ministerial positions to be given to members of his movement.

Among those given ministerial positions, former President Kabbah disclosed, was Mike Lamin who was Minister of Trade.

He said after the Lome Peace Agreement, they returned home but that Sankoh was reluctant to come with them and later did so after some time.

He said that one Saturday, Sankoh, together with two of his people met him at his office and asked to know details of his position as Chairman of the Strategic Mineral Commission.

"I told him he was obliged to report to a minister.

He was shocked. He thought he had overall powers and should have the position of

Vice President," he said, further stating, that he noticed Sankoh was stalling and not fully-committed to the peace process.

Alhaji Ahmed Kabbah said from intelligence reports, he gathered that Sankoh was regarded by his people as a demi-god. He stated that Sankoh and his people who came to Freetown, made threatening remarks against the people and the Government of Sierra Leone and that Gibril Massaquoi, who was Sankoh's spokesman, was not totally committed to the peace process.

He also disclosed that Mike Lamin started like any other RUF but volunteered at one time to travel with them to Lunsar and Makeni where the AFRC was brutalizing the people.

He said Lamin was maltreated and that he had to help him seek medical attention but he still remained a rebel.

"He was doing his things, not following the rules and was plotting. He was not totally committed to the peace process," he said.

When asked whether he knew of Sankoh's arrest in 2000, Kabbah said he was aware.

"There was some problem. Sankoh and his followers had created a scene at Juba area," he said, disclosing that initially Sankoh was taken to Pademba Road Prisons after his arrest, but for security reasons, he was moved to an uncompleted location at Aberdeen and provided with security.

He also disclosed that in January 6, 1999, when Freetown was invaded he was in bed at about 2:30 a.m. when an ECOWAS General woke him and told him they will take him somewhere that was safer.

"I asked them about Sankoh but they told me they are not sure of his sincerity," he said, further disclosing that they took him to a Nigerian war ship.

He said he picked up his

children and the former Vice President, Albert Joe Demby and that with the escort of security personnel they went to the Government Wharf, but that the boat they met, did not have fuel and that they had to refuel it.

"We would have been dead. As we finished fueling and took off, the rebels reached the area and started killing people they met," he said.

He said he was taken onboard the warship with the help of a rope and that when Sankoh saw him he said, "Please, Please forgive me." And then whispered to him and asked, "Are my boys in town?"

He said he told Sankoh that they need to talk on the way forward to peace and that they should talk to the people.

He said the captain of the warship then gave them a tape recorder and that he (Kabbah) wrote the content and that it was later broadcasted in Freetown after Sankoh had appealed to his people to ensure peace.

He said in Freetown, the Ivorian and Togolese foreign ministers met him and said they would like him to let Sankoh be taken to Guinea, so that he could be prevailed upon to keep the peace agreement.

"I agreed. But as soon as he reached Conakry, he contacted Sam Bockarie and said I had put him under pressure," he disclosed.

The former President however lamented the practice of journalists in the country.

"I am the brainchild of this institution. I suggested that the court be reinforced. But I should also say that some kind of journalism in this country can lead to chaos," he said.

He said few weeks ago, the BBC reported that a local newspaper had reported that he ran away from the court's subpoena and that from text messages on the radio, people were saying he wanted to evade court proceedings.

Independent Observer

Monday, 19 May 2008

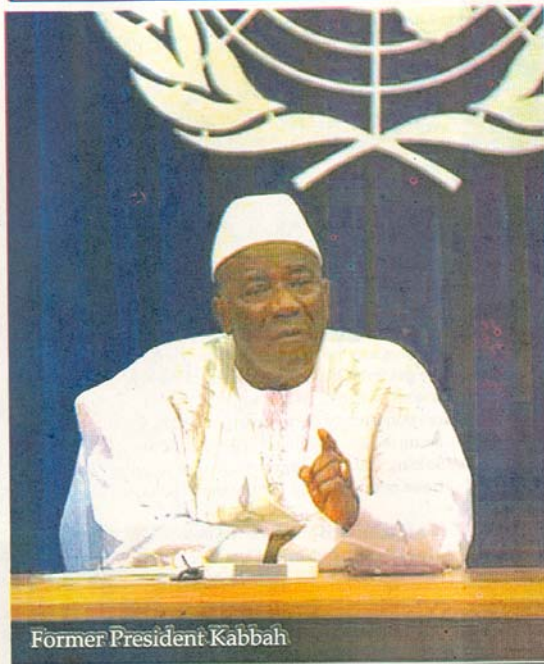
Kabbah makes Special Court appearance 2day

High expectation of former President Tejan Kabbah appearing at the Special Court yesterday were dashed as he did not even bother to show up on grounds of technicality which the court dealt with throughout yesterday. Wayne Jordash, Issa Sesay's lawyer who had earlier asked the court for Kabbah to be subpoenaed as witness for the defence, yesterday made a dramatic about face turn and asked that Kabbah's testimony be done in closed session or rather 'protective measures', as described by the court .

Trial Judges Benjamin Itoe from Cameroon, presiding, Bankole Thompson (Sierra Leone) and Pierre Boutet (Canada) rejected his application insisting that Tejan Kabbah testify in open court because his testimony needed to be recorded.

Last evening, we were told that Tejan Kabbah has been ordered to be at the court this morning at 9:30am to take the witness stand.

Concord Times
Monday, 19 May 2008



Former President Kabbah

How Kabbah, Issa brought peace

By Tanu Jalloh

Former President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah Friday made astonishing revelations explaining the extent to which him and the indicted rebel leader Issa Hassan Sesay collaborated to bring lasting peace, ending the decade-long civil war in 2001.

In his evidence in chief led by defense counsel Wayne Jordash before the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, the confident sounding statesman recalled how he, under huge risk,

was airborne into Mile 91 through Moyamba where he established confidence with Issa through his parents.

"After his people spoke to him, Issa proved to be credible. Former president Olusegun Obasanjo and I met him in Kono, he was very obedient. He promised to cooperate and he delivered on that," he told the court.

He further testified that Issa was a harmless young man who exhibited tendencies for peaceful settlement of the war

following his appointment as interim leader of the Revolutionary United Front.

He said former president Charles Taylor had facilitated a meeting between former presidents Alpha Oumar Konare and Obasanjo and rebel commandos during which it was decided that substantive RUF leader Foday Sankoh be replaced with Issa Sesay. The move, he explained, was to get a credible rebel representative in the person of Issa after Sankoh proved otherwise.

Contd. Page 3

How Kabbah, Issa brought peace

From page 1

Although he was the last witness for the Issa defense team, former president Kabbah was very concerned about unfair media reports that followed a subpoena ad testificandum summoning him to appear and give oral testimony in court.

"My Lord I suggest, administratively, that you reconsider the way information from the Special Court to the public is being disseminated. Some newspapers had accused me of evading the court's request which I think were political lies."

Kabbah could not show up the previous day because the defense failed in its application, first to allow him testify with

protective measures, and then to admit his written statement into evidence in lieu of oral testimony. This, according to the chamber, was a legitimate cause for Kabbah's absence on Thursday May 15.

However, while Kabbah was being cross-examined, legal arguments ensued between prosecuting counsel Harrison and Jordash. This was a result of an earlier ruling which presiding judge, Justice Benjamin Itoe, observed was premised on the fundamental principles of fairness. Such questions outside the parameters of the RUF trial were considered unfair.

It could be recalled that on June 12, 2000 Kabbah

wrote a letter to the then UN chief Kofi Annan asking the international community to try those responsible for crimes during the conflict. On 14 August 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1315 which culminated to the agreement establishing the Court on January 16, 2002.

On 7 March 2003 Issa was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for crimes against humanity and other war crimes, including terrorizing civilians, collective punishments, unlawful killings, crimes against humanity, sexual violence, physical violence, use of child soldiers, abductions and forced labor, looting and burning, and attacks on UNAMSIL personnel.

For di People
Monday, 19 May 2008

KABBAH TESTIFIES AT SPECIAL COURT

FORMER PRESIDENT, Dr Alhaj Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on Friday 16 May told the Special Court that former Ruf commander, Issa Sesay was reliable and cooperated in the disarmament process, unlike others like Augustine Gbao, Mike Lamin, Morris Kallon and late rebel leader Foday Sankoh.

by
**EDITAYO
TEMPLE**

Kabbah said those mentioned above were untrustworthy and signed the 1999 Lome peace accord to share power by promising the Ruf some positions in order to save the problem and giving Sankoh the position of chairman, Strategic Minerals Resources Commission and Mike Lamin the Trade ministry among others.

Kabbah under cross-examination by the defence team led by Wayne Jordan, said he had several consultations with Sankoh on how it should work but that Sankoh was not reliable and trustworthy

as he always breached both the Abuja and Lome accords and was not fully committed to his utterances.

The former head of state also said that the Special Court was his brainchild, that Sankoh was regarded as a demigod making scary statements during press conferences while Massaquoi was his spokesman. He mentioned an incident in Luhsar in which Lamin placed a human being in a hole and constantly urinated and physically humiliated him as well as the arrest and detention of Sankoh at Pademba prisons after the protest that led to bloodshed.

But that for security reasons since the rebels usually break into the prison anytime there is chaos, Sankoh was taken to a

half-completed building around Aberdeen village and provided with security.

About the January 6 1999 interregnum when

the SLPP was removed by the AFRC-Ruf, Kabbah said he was in bed when the Ecomog general informed him of the incident and asked

that they leave for Government Wharf where they boarded a boat with his children and vice-president Dr Joe Demby for the Nigerian warship

at the coastal border of Guinea and Sierra Leone for safety at the time. Kabbah said it was terrible and fear-

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Parliament demands Salone oil refinery

PARLIAMENT LAST week approved the compulsory acquisition of the Sierra Leone Petroleum Refinery Company now known as West Africa Refinery Company.

by
DESRIL COLE
This includes 43,9008 acres acquired for the service of the state and the motion for acquisition was tabled before parliament by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Hon Serry Kamal who said the objective was to acquire the said property from a Nigerian national under the name West Africa Refinery Company and later

owned by a Sierra Leonean in the name of Majestic Oil Exploration.

He said adequate compensation would be made to them. MP for the APC, lawyer Osho Williams said the move taken by government is timely as the country needs its own refinery company to stock its products, especially when the global trend is becoming outrageous and that it is not safe for the country to absolutely depend on other coun-

tries for oil products as it is very instrumental in economic development, adding, that the government needs to have its reserve oil base as it will help salvage the fuel crisis in the country.

Williams said the development will help government devise modalities for oil to be produced in the country and that it will also help create employment for youths countrywide.

Condemning the motion, SLPP parliamentar-

ian Elizabeth Lavalie said the company is now run by a Sierra Leonean and that government should note that it was handed over by the National Privatization Commission and that the government should be aware that the World Bank policy has asked the government to hand-off all business and that as an opposition, they need further explanation behind the rationale of

See Page 3

Kabbah Testifies At Special Court

From Front Page

ful as he had to use a rope to climb up the boat and when he got there, he saw Sankoh who burst into tears and said he was sorry and to please forgive him and asked if his boys were in Freetown. Kabbah said he went to talk to him as our people were dying and wanted one hour to talk to them which was later broadcasted and which gave cause to a foreign mission from Togo and Ivory Coast asking for Foday Sankoh to go to Guinea for talks which they facilitated.

While in Guinea, Sankoh told Sam Bokarie that he was forced to speak what was recorded which was that they had met in Lome and unanimously agreed to go ahead and implement what was in the accord and the need to give the people of Sierra Leone peace.

Sankoh who was in the communication sector in the military and was a professional, used his skills to communicate with his men but when his communication access was restricted, he was very uncomfortable and this brought about Issa Sesay whom Kabbah regarded as reliable to fast-track

the disarmament process that ushered peace.

When asked how long Foday Sankoh was kept in the unfinished building, Kabbah said even though he was informed about the day-to-day running of the government but could not remember as age and time cannot permit him. However, Omarr Konare and Obasanjo later met an 11-man delegation of African leaders including Charles Taylor as the host and they resolved at that point to appoint a temporal internal leader within the RUF hierarchy to fast-track the negotiation and disarmament process.

It was then agreed by Sankoh that Sesay takes over and a letter was counter-signed by Sankoh to be endorsed by the rank and file of the RUF which Konare and Obasanjo took to Sankoh who burst into tears when he saw both of them and requested they forgive him and facilitate his extradition to Nigeria or Burkina Faso where he wanted to spend the rest of his life.

They replied that it was not the right time for such decision and that Sesay as head, was very cooperative and reliable. Kabbah said he also had a meeting with his family members who tried to convince

Sesay to cooperate fully, which he did. That Sesay also demonstrated his obedience to Obasanjo and Unamsil boss, Adeniji in destroying the weapons that brought the end of the war—"the war don don."

Kabbah said he has full respect for the Special Court but because of the accusations made by the CDF that he did not testify in the Hinga Norman Trial and now testifying in the RUF, he was concerned about the security situation and also the further accusation that he voted for the APC during the election, among other things.

He however said that the court must be very careful as to the way they disseminate their information as some journalists write things at times that ignite war like the lies in some tabloids that he wanted to dodge the court while he was in Guinea.

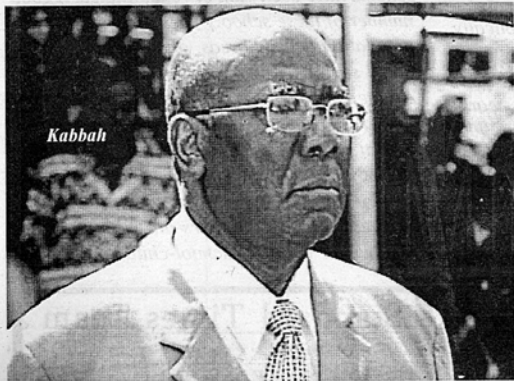
Also, the fact that we have politics of lies in our country, one must be careful as he only belongs to one political party.

Standard Times
Monday, 19 May 2008

"I belong to one Political Party"

BY
MOHAMED
KONNEH

-Kabbah tells Special Court



The former-president of Sierra Leone Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah while testifying on Friday at the Special Court for Sierra Leone said that he belongs to only one political party, and that is the Sierra Leone Peoples Party, SLPP.

The president made the remarks at the Trial Chamber No. 1 of the Special Court on Friday against rumours that he voted for the current party in power, the All Peoples Congress (APC). "How can people be so vicious, branding me with all sorts of issues" asked the aging President who said that the

voting was done in secret and therefore wondered how come that people can tell which party he voted for.

Regarding his absence in court on Thursday 15th May, Kabbah said that many things were said about him in a deliberate bid to misinform the whole world that he dodged the court sitting. The former President categorically blamed the media in the country for spreading the rumours and described the press as "bad press reporting and politics of lies". "The Special Court is my brain child and I have lots of respect for

the court. I respect the court and I am always ready and prepared to come when ever am called upon".

Alhaji Tejan Kabbah heaped praises on Special Court inditee ex-RUF Rebel Leader Issa Sesay. He said that Issa Sesay made "huge contributions" in bringing to an end in 2001 the country's civil war, with a truce brokered by the United Nations in collaboration with the British Government support.

It could be recalled that the former President was ordered by the Special Court for Sierra Leone to testify in Issa Sesay's trial. During the testimony, Kabbah said that the rebel leader was "very, very cooperative" during the dis-

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"I belong to one Political Party"

FROM PAGE 1

armament process that ended the 1991-2001 conflict. "Issa Sesay proved to be credible and made a huge contribution to the disarmament process," Kabbah told the judges. The former president, clad in a dark grey suit, was watched by a packed public gallery of some 300 people in attendance.

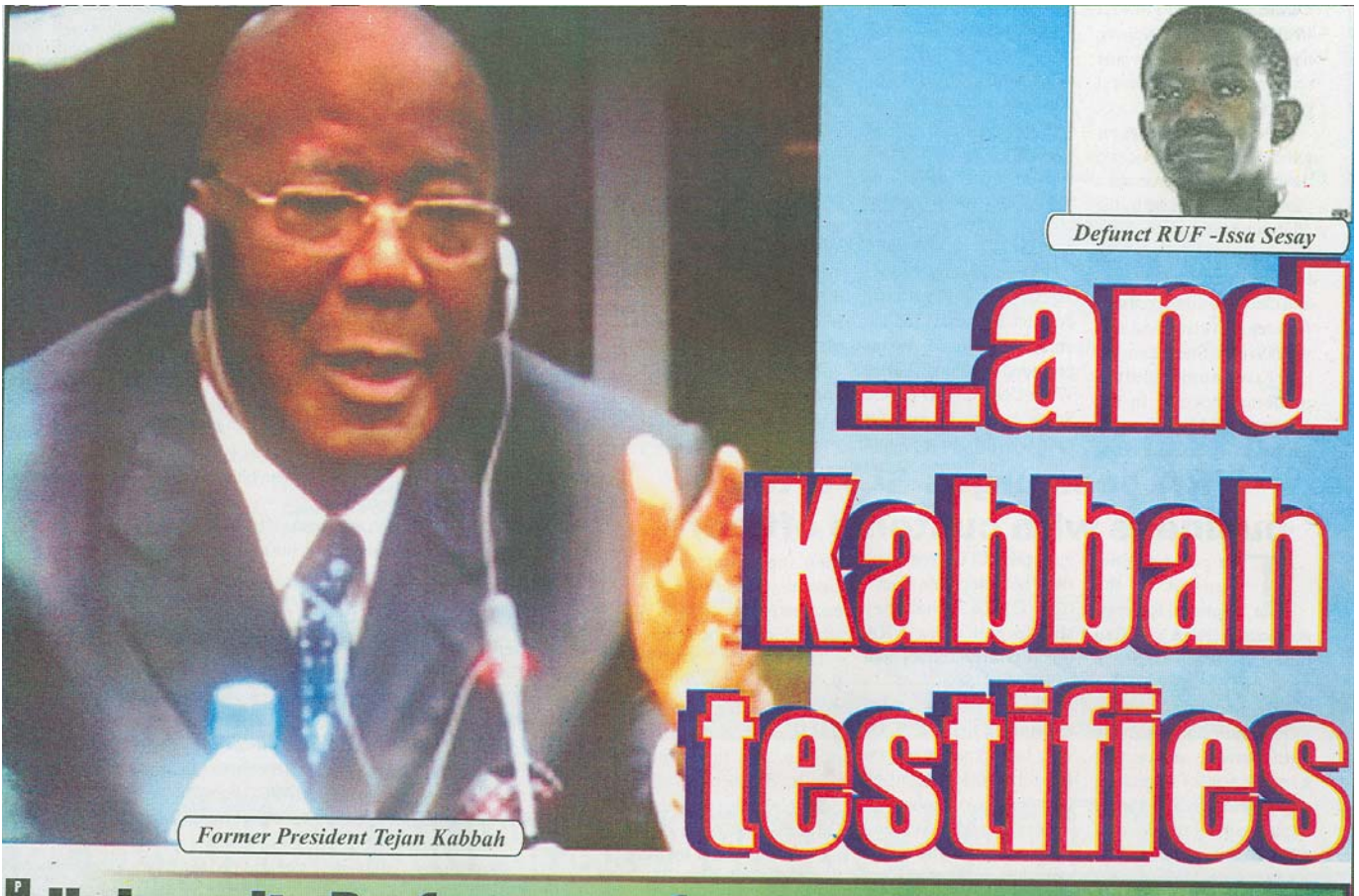
Kabbah, who was President of Sierra Leone between 1996 and 1997 and again from 1998 to 2007, assisted the UN to broker peace talks with the RUF rebels including the late RUF Leader, Foday Saybana Sankoh and Issa Sesay. As the last of the witnesses for Sesay's defence, Kabbah spoke about the various Lome Peace meetings in 1999 which led to the signing of the Lome Peace Accord, a blue print to ending the civil war. The ex-President also

explained how Foday Sankoh was replaced by Sesay, whom he described as "was obedient and looked a very harmless young man and cooperative."

Issa Sesay is one-time Leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and has been on trial at the Special Court with two other RUF top men since July 2004. He was charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity including unlawful killings, sexual violence, abductions, use of child soldiers and attacks on UN personnel. Charges to which he has pleaded not guilty on all the counts.

Prosecutors said on Friday that the RUF fighters committed numerous atrocities. By the time the war ended in 2001, about 120,000 people had been killed and tens of thousands of others had their arms, legs mutilated and their ears or noses chopped off.

Awoko
Monday, 19 May 2008



... and Kabbah testifies

By Betty Milton

Although the defence lawyers for former President Tejan Kabbah's former Defence Minister and coordinator of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) Chief Sam Hinga Norman had tried very hard, yet it was Issa Sesay the former interim rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader whose lawyer Wayne Jordash succeeded in getting the ex-president to come to the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone and testify on the witness stand.

Hinga Norman's lawyers had wanted President Kabbah to testify on his behalf and somehow help absolve him of the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court during that period ruled against President Kabbah testifying mainly because at the time he was a sitting president

Last Thursday the defence lawyers argued for ex President Kabbah to testify under some sort of protection, which may have been behind the screen or with his voice distorted or some other measures.

The Judges said No. Then both the Prosecution and Defence counsels agreed that President Kabbah can submit a statement, but again the Judges said no, and ordered that he should come to the court and testify.

As was expected Issa Sesay's brilliant lawyer got the former president to say on oath that "When it came to the disarmament process itself Issa was very cooperative ... was very very cooperative."

President Kabbah also testified on how Issa Sesay became a leader, which was after the ECOWAS leaders had decided that Foday Sankoh was no longer a credible interlocutor and therefore he had to be replaced. President Kabbah testified that it was former Malian President Alpha Oumarr Konare and Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo who had brought Issa's letter from Liberia, and that he attempted drafting a response to Issa to say that Sankoh had endorsed him as the Interim leader, but which Foday Sankoh rejected saying that "the boys" would not think the letter is from him.

President Kabbah also spoke about how he was tied to a rope and passed between two ECOMOG ships in mid sea so that he could talk to Foday Sankoh. He did not end there. He maintained that ordering him to testify could possibly have put his life in danger. "The thing that I am worried about and what concerned me was that the you see during the war with all these atrocities committed the civil society people or rather the Civil defence forces those were the ones that really provided the only reliable type of resistance to the onslaught of the rebels now and some of them were saying on the radio yesterday that I refused to come and give evidence in their favour and I'm here to give evidence in favour of the rebels now these are people some of them decent people and everything but they may have some of them that maybe a little hot headed so I have to think of my safety and so on."

The ex president was not too happy at how journalists had reported his failure to appear on the first scheduled date, the Judges however appeased the ex-president saying that he has proved his critics wrong.

Awoko
Monday, 19 May 2008

Monday May 19, 2008

awoko newspaper

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Think Tank

Sparing the former president



By Umaru Fofana

Barring his admitted inability to recall dates, numbers and names, one does not need to be an admirer of Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to agree that his performance on Friday at the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone was sterling.

In testifying as a defence witness in the trial of the former interim leader of the rebel Revolutionary United Front, the man who had almost always sounded boring to me may be because of his long-standing years as a diplomat was substantially awake. I think he passed, with distinction, the test to his nerves. Hardly will any high-profile witness, not least a former president, take to the witness stand without being nerve-racked. He sounded measured, not sleepy was typical of him as president. Even if he digressed at times, he nevertheless remained sharp and focused.

Before I get to the crux of this piece just a word on international justice jurisprudence. Why is it that when it comes to (former) African leaders the rules are different? The International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia wanted the British and US leaders, Tony Blair and George Bush, to testify in the trial of the now late former Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, not even a cock crowed. And I bet that even if the two Serb fugitives, Radovan Karadzic and Malcolm Ladic were arrested in next February, the former British premier and the then former US president will not be obliged to testify in their trial even if they were subpoenaed. And there will be no fuss like there was here during the delays in Mr Kabbah appearing before the court.

I am happy that the former president has got this off his neck and he must be feeling relieved and proud of his performance. But I honestly feel that the court should have made him do so in video. If this is not Western double standards which Africans get caught up in as pawns (by working with and for them), I wonder what it is.

In fact, their reference to the former president in court on Friday made no difference to the way they would have referred to any other witness, including a former killer rebel. You don't need to like your former president to request that he be given the basic respect befitting his (former) status. Even though it is unthinkable, let us for a minute assume that a former American, British or French leader was in the witness stand. There would be far more courtesy accorded him than that accorded PRESIDENT Kabbah. You would bet your life they would still refer to him as if he were a sitting president or premier.

Anyway! Towards the end of the first part of his testimony, former president Kabbah took a swipe at some sections of the media. Even though, I think, his apparent frustration made him hit some undeserving target such as generalising about the media some of whom have been top notch, and the Special Court Media Unit which is not responsible for how media houses editorialise what is sent out to them, I think Mr Kabbah made some points which we as journalists, especially certain of us, should consider.

He lamented the hyper-euphoric manner in which some sections of the press had been reporting on his pending testimony in court, to the extent that in some of them, postulations and untruths beclouded reasoning. Surely if we do not revere a president that stuck to his term limit in the Africa that we know, and generally guaranteed our basic freedoms, we certainly must not denigrate him.

One of the reasons many African leaders cling on to power is the

uncertainty that their retirement behoves, both from their successors and from the public. For a president who ruled with an iron fist or like Satan's representative on earth, may be yes. But that is definitely not what Kabbah was. And this is one area I think President Ernest Bai Koroma performs with distinction, second, perhaps, only to the provision of electricity to Freetown.

President Koroma has not disguised his respect and admiration for his predecessor. He has not only said so, but has also manifested so. Attending the former president's wedding when his [Kabbah's] own anointed successor as party leader, Solomon Berewa was conspicuously absent, was a national service by the president.

It is very uncommon in Africa, not least in Sierra Leone, to see a former head of state relinquish power to the opposition. Not only that, stay in the country and be allowed to stay with dignity and respect. I am not a great admirer of his presidency because I think we had squandered opportunities because he allowed a lot of his appointees to misbehave and pillage the nation's resources without prompting action from him, and did not show leadership in addressing the apparent killing of journalist Harry Yansanneh, but I feel he generally had some democratic credentials none before him had exuded.

It is therefore unfair that we should tear him apart by discussing issues that are too personal and unsubstantiated, and do not bother on state interest by a miniscule. For example, listing, in a newspaper, the names of women alleged to have been his girlfriends is most unfair to a former head of state.

To watch all of this happen is a fertile disincentive to the current president or even future ones, who will be spending more time thinking of how their exclusively private life with no bearing whatsoever on their presidency will come to hound them in the future. I am not saying that if such relationships compromised the (former) president's office they should be swept under the carpet.

No! In that case, it borders on public interest. But bringing them out merely to embarrass them is grossly unfair.

The way we deal with former president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah will set the stage for a play in which the personae will be former heads of state. Let us leave them to perform a comedy and not a tragedy. So that more and more will look forward to taking to the stage. Let us prove Malcolm Forbes wrong when he said, "Retirement kills more people than hard work ever did".

But with this I leave you:

"Oh Winter! Ruler of the inverted year, ...

I crown thee king of intimate delights,

Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,

And all the comfort that the lowly roof Of undisturb'd Retirement,

and the hours Of long uninterrupted evening, know.

William Cowper (1731 1800).

Good luck Manchester United as Wednesday approaches. Never mind the Arsenal fans who have suddenly become pro-Chelsea. See you on Friday.

<uofana@aol.com> is my email address.

IMPORTANT!

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Awoko

Monday, 19 May 2008

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AWOKO NEWS

Witness: Gadhafi helped Taylor take over Liberia

Moammar Gadhafi's Libyan government ran a training camp in the 1980s that prepared Charles Taylor's troops to seize power in the West African nation of Liberia, a key witness at Taylor's war crimes trial testified Wednesday.

Moses Blah, who served as vice president under Taylor after he rose to power in Liberia, is the highest-ranking witness to testify against his former boss since the trial began early this year in the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Blah's testimony was the strongest link yet in the prosecution's case against Taylor that Gadhafi had a hand in his rise to power and also linked the Libyan leader to other bloody African insurgencies.

Taylor has pleaded not guilty to charges that include murder, rape, torture and enlisting child soldiers during the 10-year civil war in neighboring Sierra Leone that ended in 2002. Prosecutors allege he orchestrated the atrocities from his presidential power base in Liberia's capital, Monrovia.

Blah said he was among about 180 rebels recruited by Taylor and flown to Libya in the late 1980s to undergo months of military training. The fighters learned to use AK-47 assault rifles and surface-to-air missiles at a military camp near Tripoli, he said.

Rebels from countries including Gambia, the Philippines and Sierra Leone were also at the camp, Blah said. Among them was Sam Bockarie, one of the Sierra Leone rebels who Taylor is accused of supporting.

"Bockarie called him 'chief,'" Blah said.

Taylor's forces entered Liberia late in 1989, triggering a civil war that lasted years and left thousands dead.

After Taylor grabbed power in Liberia, Gadhafi sent Taylor's regime a shipment of crude oil to sell so the proceeds could be used to buy "military hardware," Blah said.

Blah had originally been slated to give evidence anonymously, but he later decided to speak in open court despite a death threat e-mailed to his family. His testimony was expected to continue several days.

In an example of the brutality of the conflict in Liberia — and foreshadowing later atrocities in Sierra Leone — Blah said that one rebel commander "had a habit of eating fellow human beings" and that fighters only joined his unit if they were prepared to take part in cannibalism.

Blah said he once visited the commander, Nelxon Gaye, at a camp in a rubber plantation and found him roasting human hands. "He did it over a fire and he ate it with boiled cassava."

The 61-year-old Blah briefly served as Liberian president in 2003, assuming power after Taylor was forced into exile. Neither man looked at the other as Blah, walking with the help of a cane, entered the trial chamber.

Blah's testimony, which will continue Thursday, is expected to detail how Taylor allegedly controlled rebels in Sierra Leone from Liberia. Such evidence is critical to prosecutors seeking to link Taylor to the savage conflict in that country.

Taylor's trial is being held in a courtroom rented from the International Criminal Court because of fears that prosecuting him in Sierra Leone could spark new violence.

Standard Times
Monday, 19 May 2008

Moses Blah exposes Charles Taylor

...Foday Sankoh named

Liberian rebels cooked and ate human innards while serving under warlord-turned-president Charles Taylor, his former deputy testified Wednesday, May 14th at the exiled leader's war crimes trial.

A member of Taylor's presidential guard, Nelson Gaye, "had the habit of eating fellow human be-

ings," the former vice-president Moses Blah told the Special Court for Sierra Leone, a war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

"I saw one incident with my own eyes. I visited a camp...he roasted the hands of a human being, then ate them with-boiled cassava,"

CONTINUED PAGE 15



Moses Blah exposes Charles Taylor

FROM PAGE 1

Blah said, in a testimony that also detailed a key link between Taylor and rebels in Sierra Leone's civil war.

He said Gaye and his men also cooked human intestines and ate them with cassava. "You could not enter the unit without doing that." Gaye was the head of the marine unit of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, a movement founded in the 1980s with the aim of invading the West African country to drive out its then leader.

Blah said he himself had been in charge of supplying arms to Taylor's fighters for their coup at-

tempt in 1989.

Blah, 61, was the 27th witness in the trial of Taylor, the first head of an African state to be tried by an international court. Blah briefly led the country in 2003 after Taylor was forced into exile in Nigeria.

The court hoped his testimony would shed light on Taylor's alleged support for the former rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which ravaged neighbouring Sierra Leone in a 1991-2001 civil war, leaving 120,000 dead.

Blah testified that Taylor met the future head of the RUF, Foday Sankoh, in the camp, where they

were received by Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi.

Kadhafi gave Taylor half a million dollars after the Liberian was elected president in 1997, said Blah, who was ambassador to Tripoli at the time.

Taylor faces 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and recruiting child soldiers in connection with the rebellion. He pleads not guilty to all the charges, and sat taking notes during the testimony. Blah said that child soldiers, some younger than 13, were widely used in the ranks of the FNPL, in so-called "small boys units."

Some joined voluntarily while others were kidnapped, he said.

Taylor allegedly funded and armed the RUF in exchange for diamonds and other resources, while rebels terrorized civilians by cutting off arms, legs, ears and noses, leaving thousands mutilated.

Taylor's trial before the UN-backed special court was moved from Freetown to The Hague for fear that his presence in Sierra Leone would destabilize the region.

Agence France-Presse

Friday, 16 May 2008

Ex-Sierra Leone president praises former rebel leader at trial

FREETOWN (AFP) — Sierra Leone's ex-president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, on Friday praised ex-rebel leader Issa Sesay for his "huge contribution" to ending a civil war when he took the stand during Sesay's war crimes trial.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone ordered Kabbah to testify in Sesay's case. Kabbah said the rebel leader was "very, very cooperative" during the disarmament process that ended the 1991-2001 conflict.

"He (Sesay) proved to be credible and made a huge contribution to the disarmament process," Kabbah told the judges.

The former president, clad in a dark grey suit, was watched by a packed public gallery of some 300 people.

Kabbah, who was president of Sierra Leone between 1996 and 1997 and again from 1998 to 2007, assisted in UN-brokered peace talks with RUF rebels including the late RUF leader Foday Sankoh and Sesay.

As the last of the witnesses for Sesay's defence Kabbah spoke of the various Lome Peace meetings in 1999 which led to signing of the Lome Peace Accord to end the civil war.

He explained how Sankoh was replaced by Sesay, who he said "was obedient and looked a very harmless young man and cooperative."

Sesay, a one-time leader of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), has been on trial with two other RUF leaders since July 2004.

Charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity including unlawful killings, sexual violence, abductions, use of child soldiers and attacks on UN personnel, he has pleaded not guilty to all counts.

Prosecutors say RUF fighters committed numerous atrocities. By the time the war ended in 2001, about 120,000 people had been killed and tens of thousands of others had been mutilated, their arms, legs, ears or noses chopped off.

The former president was originally due to testify as a defence witness Thursday but had tried to avoid giving evidence in public. His efforts were rejected by judges at the Sierra Leone tribunal.

Finally on the stand one day later, the former president insisted that he was proud of the court and "prepared to come any time" as he was called to testify.

In the public gallery there were mixed feelings about Kabbah's court appearance.

"This is history which I did not want to pass by," octogenarian Simon Moriba told AFP.

Saio Turay, who said he had his leg chopped off by rebels in an attack in 2000, said he came to see with his own eyes if the former president would take the stand.

"I wanted to see whether it was true that Kabbah has been summoned by the court and whether he would come," he told AFP.

"The court has given us hope that there is justice."

A former pro-government fighter was bitter that Kabbah had testified for the former rebel leader while he previously refused to take the stand to support Sam Hinga Norman, the former leader of the pro-government Civil Defence Forces (CDF).

Norman is still considered a national hero by many for having fought the RUF rebels, He died in February 2007 of natural causes in a Dakar military hospital while he was awaiting the outcome of his own war crimes trial before the Sierra Leone tribunal.

"Remember he declined to testify for Norman," said the man, who asked not to be identified.

"Now things have gone full circle. I wished he had done the same for Norman as he did today," he said.

BBC

Saturday, 17 May 2008

Kabbah ends honeymoon for trial

Sierra Leone's former President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah has cut short his honeymoon to testify at the trial of former rebel leader Issa Sesay.

He said the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader made a huge contribution to ending the 10-year civil war.

"When it came to the disarmament process itself, Issa was very very co-operative," he told the UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone.



Mr Kabbah was married five days ago

Prosecutors say the rebels committed numerous atrocities in the war.

Some 50,000 people were killed and many more maimed and raped during the war which officially ended in 2002, when Mr Kabbah and Mr Sesay took part in the ceremonial burning of arms.

No shows

Mr Kabbah, 76, who stood down as president eight months ago, appeared as a witness for the defence.

The BBC's Umaru Fofana in the capital, Freetown, says the defence wants to show that Mr Sesay is a man of peace who helped with implementation of the Lome peace agreement which ended the war.

Mr Kabbah, who got married to Isata Jabbie - about 40 years his junior - five days ago, had been expected in court for several weeks, but he had not shown up, our reporter says.

The defence had asked for more private sessions or for the former president to answer questions by statement, both rejected by the judges.

But when he did come to give evidence, Mr Kabbah was relaxed and smiled in court, our correspondent says.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, set up in 2002, originally indicted a total of 13 people, but RUF rebel leader Foday Sankoh and his deputy commander Sam Bockarie died before they could be tried.

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who the prosecution alleges backed the rebels, is being conducted in The Hague because of fears that trying him in West Africa could jeopardise the new-found peace of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

All Headline News

Friday, 16 May 2008

Sierra Leone's Former President Leaves Honeymoon To Testify For Rebel Warlord

Linda Young - AHN Editor

Freetown, Sierra Leone (AHN) - Sierra Leone's former President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah returned early from his honeymoon to testify at a war crimes tribunal Friday where he described former warlord leader Issa Sesay as cooperating to end the nation's 10-year civil war.

Kabbah reportedly told the United Nation's-backed war crimes court that Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Sesay was very cooperative in the disarmament process. The war officially ended in 2002 and Kabbah and Sesay held a ceremony burning of arms to celebrate peace.

The war left 50,000 dead and more than that were maimed and raped. Prosecutors argue that rebels committed many war atrocities

Kabbah, who was married five days ago, cut his honeymoon short to come back and testify on behalf of Sesay, described the former warlord rebel now on trial as being "very, very cooperative" during the nation's disarmament process, according to BBC news reports.

The special court originally indicted 13 people in 2002 and 2003, but RUF rebel leader Foday Sankoh and his deputy commander Sam Bockarie died before they reached trial. Former Liberian President Charles Taylor is being tried separately in The Hague on charges that he backed the rebels.

Cocorioko website

Friday, 16 May 2008

Ex-President Kabbah tells Special Court Issa Sesay's contribution to peace process was crucial

Written by Moses A. Kargbo

Speaking from the witness stand in a jam-packed courtroom, Sierra Leone's former president, Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah told the UN-backed Special Court how RUF indictee Issa Sesay demonstrated honesty and commitment in ensuring an end to the country's 10-year civil war. To buttress his claim, Mr. Kabbah displayed a photograph which shows the ex-rebel commander shaking hands with him and Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, former head of the UN mission in the country during the symbolic burning of arms at Lungi in January 2001

"Sesay proved to be credible when he agreed to do something. His contribution to the peace process was very important as is demonstrated in this," Kabbah told the court, gesturing at the photograph. He described the former RUF strongman as 'very cooperative' during the entire disarmament process.

Kabbah said he first met Sesay in 2001 when as president of Sierra Leone to burn weapons in a public display marking the end of the war, and that since then, the accused demonstrated real commitment to ensuring the final cessation of hostilities.

37-year-old Sesay was indicted in 2003 on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, being head of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) following Foday Sankoh's arrest and incarceration in Nigeria. He is believed by the court to bear greatest responsibility for atrocities committed by the RUF rebels during the war.

His defence has brought in the former head of state to testify in their client's case as they believe his testimony might absolve Sesay of charges that he ordered the arrest of UN peacekeepers during the height of the civil war.

The defence team, led by lawyer Wayne Jordash argues that, although Sesay was the field commander of the rebel forces, he was nonetheless instrumental in ending the decade-long civil war. The trial continues.

Reuters

Sunday, 18 May 2008

Taylor trial unique but sends key signal on impunity

By Alexandra Hudson

AMSTERDAM, May 18 (Reuters) - Charles Taylor's war crimes trial has recovered from a shaky start to become a model for bringing a former ruler before an international court and has helped send a message that the days of impunity are over.

The relatively smooth running of the former Liberian president's trial, on charges of inciting murder, rape and terror, has been in marked contrast to the delays and theatrics at trials for former Yugoslav and Iraqi leaders.

Although the mandate of the court trying Taylor, who has pleaded not guilty, is limited to crimes committed in Sierra Leone, the U.N.-backed Special Court serves as an example to other tribunals that might try former rulers such as the International Criminal Court.

"There is substantial progress in this crucially important trial ... both from a structural assessment and an impact assessment," said Elise Keppler of Human Rights Watch.

The ex-Liberian president is the first former African head of state to stand trial in front of any court.

"Taylor is notorious in West Africa and without trying Taylor the feeling was this court would have failed," she said.

"The fact he is sitting there, that there is real momentum, and that invaluable information is being put forward coupled with disturbing detail of the atrocities, is already a huge contribution to international justice," she said.

The U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up to try those with the greatest responsibility for war crimes in the country. More than 250,000 people died in intertwined wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, characterised by brutal attacks on civilians, drug-crazed child soldiers and amputations of limbs.

"It would be unrealistic to expect that we could create ad-hoc tribunals to investigate every situation," said Andre de Hoogh, an international law specialist at Groningen University.

It was also unlikely long-seated African leaders could find themselves suddenly on trial for past rights abuses, he added.

However, several African countries had ratified the statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), set up in 2002 in The Hague as the world's first permanent court to try individuals for war crimes.

"Its jurisdiction does not work retroactively, but for conflicts from 2003 onwards we could see the possibility of it calling leaders to account."

The court has had mixed success. It is preparing the trials of three Congolese rebel leaders, but arrest warrants for two Sudanese suspects -- including a former minister accused over war crimes in Darfur -- have been ignored. So have those for Ugandan rebel leaders.

COURT MOMENTUM

Since Taylor's trial began in earnest five months ago, all parties including him, have sought to keep disputes to a minimum, unlike in other major war crimes trials.

The trial of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic dragged on for four years, with frequent grandstanding by Milosevic, who the judge accused of "wasting time". Milosevic died before a verdict was reached.

Although proceedings began dramatically when Taylor failed to show up and demanded more money to fund his defence, prompting a six-month delay, the court has now heard 27 of some 72 prosecution witnesses and is making steady progress.

Taylor, who pleaded not guilty to all charges, is almost always in attendance in court, listens keenly and makes notes.

"Taylor has been much more cooperative than others," said Michael Scharf, an international law professor who helped train judges of the Iraqi Special Tribunal.

"Someone like Milosevic or Saddam Hussein would be bombastic in the court room and a real disruption, forcing the court to have them removed which makes the trial look unfair."

Granting the long delay, allowing Taylor enough funds to hire a top notch defence lawyer and allowing the defence to make their points in court has cut out boycotts and prevented the hurling of insults at witnesses, he added.

"This is the first major war crimes trial of a leader where we haven't seen that," Scharf said.

SMOKING GUN?

As trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have shown, prosecutors face huge difficulties in convicting leaders and high-ranking officials for command responsibility for crimes.

"The job is not to show that there is a smoking gun, that Charles Taylor ordered each and every crime, but that rather he was the head of this."

"Some of the things the prosecution thought they were proving have been undermined by the defence but at the end of the day they are getting the job done," Scharf said.

Taylor's defence counsel, Courtney Griffiths, disagrees and says prosecution witnesses' evidence is not standing up to scrutiny.

While an acquittal for Taylor or only a minor conviction would cause huge disappointment to victims in Sierra Leone it need not be a loss for justice, experts said.

"For international justice in the big sense it is a good thing if the judges can be so impartial and fair as to acquit him partially or wholly if that is where the evidence leads," Scharf said.

"The victims will be outraged, and the historic narrative will be muddied but it doesn't mean that there weren't atrocities in Sierra Leone," said Scharf.

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
16 May 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

In Day Two of Testimony, Blah outlines 'Extra-judicial killings' by Taylor's Forces

(New Democrat, The Analyst, The News, Parrot, Public Agenda)

- Former President Moses Blah continues for the second day his testimony against his former boss, Charles Taylor standing trial in The Hague.
- Mr. Blah spoke of extra-judicial killings in the now defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia and some Liberians affiliated with the rebel movement.
- He identified the prominent Liberians as Chief Cyril Allen, Grace Minor and Benoni Urey.
- Mr. Blah however, made it clear that he has no knowledge about how those Liberians assisted Mr. Taylor as regards the war in Sierra Leone.

World Bank Approves US\$11 Million for Liberia

(Daily Observer)

- The World Bank has approved a US\$11 million International Development Association (IDA) grant to the government of Liberia to improve the efficiency and transparency in its financial and human resource management.

MRU Leaders End Summit with Formula for Stability

(New Democrat, The Analyst, The News, Parrot, Public Agenda)

- a one-day Summit of Heads of States and Government of the Mano River Union (MRU) ended successfully in Monrovia with President Johnson Sirleaf advancing a formula for stability in the MRU basin.
- The MRU, which groups Liberia, Sierra Leone Guinea and now Ivory Coast, ended the summit with a commitment to ensure peace and stability and address the global food crisis.
- A communiqué signed by the MRU leaders mandated the secretariat of the Union to include in its programme projects to address issues of peace and security.
- The issues include the control of small arms and light weapons in the region and other peace building measures and authorized the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security to meet in a month's time and formulate concrete proposals and action plans.

U.S. Government Advisor Targets Liberian Businesses

(The News)

- [sic] A seminar on "How to Build a Business Plan" for small and medium enterprises in Liberia gets underway on Monday at the American Library, a U.S. Embassy release said on Thursday. Dr. Sharon T. Freeman, a U.S. government advisor on commerce and trade will conduct the seminar from Monday to Wednesday. According to the release, Dr. Freeman has "extensive experience in Africa helping businesses develop the plans they need to succeed". Dr. Freeman is also a specialist in developing strategies to promote the growth and export development potential of small, minority and women-owned firms in different regions of the world. In addition to meeting with Liberian business stakeholders and conducting seminar, Dr. Freeman is expected to give two public lectures on maximizing business at the Ricks Institute in Virginia on Tuesday and at the American Library on Thursday.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

MRU Leaders Signed Joint Communiqué on Peace and Stability

(Also reported on ELBC, Truth FM)

Former Transitional Chairman Now Expected in Court Today

- Former Transitional Chairman Gyude Bryant is expected in court today in Monrovia and is to appear with former Speaker Edwin Snowe, Senator Richard Divine, Mr. Shieka Sheriff and Andy Quamie for economic crime.
- The media yesterday reported that the former officials were due in court.
- Last Friday, government jointly indicted the men last for allegedly embezzling nearly US\$1million from the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company during the transitional period and charged them with theft and economic sabotage.
- The men were released to Episcopal Bishop, Jonathan Hart until they got their bail bond which was expected to be done yesterday.
- This is the second indictment facing Mr. Bryant. He was earlier indicted for embezzling US\$1 million while serving as transitional chairman.
- Meanwhile, the trial of former Finance Minister Lusene Kamara, Tugbeh Doe, and Pyne Wollo indicted for economic crimes is expected to begin next Monday.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Former President Blah Continues Testimony Against Former Boss

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

The News (Liberia)

Friday, 16 May 2008

Blah Digs Into Taylor's Bloody Past

Monrovia

On the second day of his testimony, ex-Liberian President Moses Blah has told the war crimes court in The Hague that former President Charles Taylor rejected complaints from Sierra Leone rebels about atrocities committed by his fighters.

Mr. Blah said RUF rebel leader Foday Sankoh personally complained to Mr. Taylor about the rape, looting and killings committed allegedly by Liberians helping the RUF in Sierra Leone.

According to Mr. Blah, "he [Taylor] said this kind of thing must happen when you're fighting war."

The RUF had a reputation for brutality, such as chopping off the arms and legs of civilians, as well as killing and raping. The RUF rebels were also notorious for mutilating civilians.

Mr. Blah told the war crimes court Thursday that his former boss responded by threatening to withdraw his troops from neighboring Sierra Leone if complaints about atrocities were not halted. Mr. Blah, who briefly succeeded Mr. Taylor as President, is the most senior figure to testify in The Hague.

Mr. Taylor faces 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. He is accused of helping Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in their brutal conflict with the government.

Mr. Blah informed the court that Mr. Taylor mediated in arguments between the rebels. He said on one occasion a rebel commander disagreed with the Liberian President's judgment, but said he had to accept "the chief's decision".

Mr. Blah said RUF fighters tried to help Mr. Taylor's forces against Liberia's LURD rebels, who eventually forced him from power in 2003.

Mr. Taylor sat in court taking notes during his former deputy's testimony.

Earlier Mr. Blah disclosed that the commander of one of Mr. Taylor's units in Liberia "had a habit of eating fellow human beings".

Blah said he saw Nelson Gaye roasted a human hand on a fire, ate it with boiled cassava and noted that Gaye's Marine unit was one of Taylor's forces which, he was told, should not be pursued if they committed atrocities.

As Mr. Blah took the witness stand on Monday, he was careful not to look at the man he served for nearly 20 years.

He gave the court a detailed account of Mr. Taylor's bloody rise to power and acknowledged the use of child soldiers.

Mr. Blah became Vice President of Liberia in 2000, and President after Taylor was forced into exile in 2003. However, he was only president for two months, until October 2003, when a United Nations-backed transitional government was sworn in.

Moses Blah continues with his testimony.

The prosecutor Stephen Rapp ("PO") continues the direct examination of former Liberian vice-president Moses Blah ("WW").

PO: I would like to go back to yesterday: you mentioned your flight from Burkina Faso to Liberia. Why did you obtain the sheep?

WW: We did not have that type of sheep in Liberia.

PO: Why did you need the sheep?

WW: We had a farm.

PO: Did you still have farm when you were ambassador?

WW: Yes.

PO: What is current status of this farm?

WW: I still have the farm and work there myself.

PO: What was the reason for your trip to Burkinabe president Blaise Compaore?

WW: I had to deliver a message and bring back the response to Taylor.

PO: Was this an oral message?

WW: Yes, orally.

PO: What was the message?

WW: I had to say that Mr. Taylor still saw Compaore as his friend. Although he had difficulties, he should still remember him to be a friend.

PO: What was the response of Compaore?

WW: Compaore was not happy with the way that the friendship had been going. He was no longer happy with the relationship. He said he had risked his life for Mr. Taylor.

PO: What do you think he meant with risking his life?

WW: He had been helping Mr. Taylor, for instance with shipping consignments.

PO: What did these consignments consist of?

WW: Arms and ammunition.

PO: In Burkina Faso you met Mr. Cisse and Grace Minor, did you know that they would be there?

WW: No.

PO: Did they inform you of their mission.

WW: No, Mr. Cisse told me in a joke that Mr. Taylor was running a Russian government. They all laughed over it.

PO: What did you think about the joke?

WW: I think too many people were sent there. They did not know what the others, who were on different missions, were after.

PO: What was Mr. Taylor after?

WW: I did not know.

PO: Can you tell us what happened with the cargo?

WW: The cargo was offloaded on Roberts International airport. There were several trucks in a long row.

PO: What kinds of trucks were present?

WW: It was long trucks, used for transportation in Liberia.

PO: Who did the offload?

WW: Soldiers of NPFL group, I did not know who. They did it very fast.

PO: Was there any international presence?

WW: Not at that moment.

PO: Were the persons you met in Burkina Faso (three), who were on different missions, also on the plane?

WW: No, only Mr. Cisse was on the plane. Ms. Minor stayed in Burkina Faso because she was afraid.

PO: Did she tell you why she was afraid?

WW: No, I do not know.

PO: In what year did the shipment occur?

WW: I can not record the date.

PO: It was at the time you were in Liberia, right? When were you in Liberia normally?

WW: I was in Liberia during June, July and August. That is because of the terrible raining months in Libya. After the raining months, I returned to Libya. I was always in Libya the other months. I was always home when it was cold.

PO: Did you know where the weapons went?

WW: They were offloaded. I know as a member of the NPFL where they went. They were usually brought to the back office of Mr. Taylor's house, White Flower.

PO: Is this the same as the Executive Mansion?

WW: No, that is different. There was only one White Flower; the residence of Mr. Taylor. Even if he changed houses.

PO: Was there ever more than one White Flower?

WW: Yes, at the time he built his new house at Tubman Boulevard. The old house, he still lived in and the new house were both White Flower.

PO: Which location did you refer to regarding the weapons?

WW: That was this new house. Underground there was a secret place where the weapons were put.

PO: Was Taylor at the time of the shipment in his new mansion?

WW: Yes, he was there.

PO: Where did the weapons go after White Flower?

WW: No idea. The weapons were normally distributed to the different units.

PO: Have you any knowledge of any shipment of arms from Liberia to Sierra Leone?

WW: No.

PO: What was the security situation in Liberia?

WW: There were rumors of war. It was a very tense situation. The war had however not reached Monrovia.

PO: Were there any other forces active in Liberia?

WW: Ulimo-J and Ulimo-K.

PO: So, there were no other forces than those?

QWW: No other forces. NPFL was of course also active.

PO: Which groups were threatening the government of Mr. Taylor?

WW: Ulimo-K and -J.

PO: How where the shipments paid for?

WW: No idea.

PO: Were you during vice president / ambassador aware of any other shipments?

WW: Yes, in particular one shipment during my vice presidency. Mr. Taylor was not there, people thought he disappeared. Suddenly Mr. Taylor appeared. There were rumors of a large plane with weapons.

PO: When did this occur?

WW: At the end of my vice presidency.

PO: And during your early time as vice president?

WW: I was at my office of vice president and did not know of any shipments of weapons.

PO: Did you investigate the weapons' shipments?

WW: No, but I remember that at Roberts international airport a plane crashed.

PO: Did you go there?

WW: Yes, I went there. There were a lot of explosions. It was dangerous to go there so I waited. Afterwards I drove to the main airport. I saw two white men carried into ambulances. They had Ukranian passports. One died and one got wounded.

PO: So you are aware of three shipments to Roberts International Airport. Was any other airport used?

WW: No, I would not know which one.

PO: Let's go back for a moment. Before your vice presidency. Did any shipments come in by air?

WW: No, not that I know of.

PO: I now would like to discuss the individuals in the Taylor government. Mussa Cisse, what was his role?

WW: He was chief of protocol in the executive mansion.

PO: What were his responsibilities?

WW: He had to receive guests and to inform the president of who was going in and out. Sometimes he was sent on missions.

PO: Did he have an informal role also?

WW: Mussa Cisse was a friend of the president. The first time I met him he was a friend of Taylor, who met him in Ouagadougou. He is a Mandingo (tribe).

PO: What was the position Mandingos in Liberia?

WW: The Mandingos were against Taylor, except Cisse.

PO: What was the role of Grace Minor?

WW: She was a friend of the president. Later she became senior senator, of Montserrado County, where Monrovia is located.

PO: What kind of assignments did Taylor give her?

WW: There were two senators of each country. She was closed to the president. What ever the president wanted she was prepared to do. She was always present at the president's request.

PO: Did you ever meet her informally?

WW: Yes. Grace gave me 300.000 USD for transportation to Liberia, when I stopped in Abidjan. I was on my way to Libya.

PO: Did any other women handle such financial affairs?

WW: There was Kiddiatua Finley.

PO: Any other women?

WW: No.

PO: Are you familiar with Martina Johnson?

WW: Yes, she was at the military side during the war.

PO: And after the war?

WW: After the war she got a job at the Roberts international airport.

PO: Who did Taylor rely on in finance?

WW: When I was president, I relied on the minister who was in charge of finance. Taylor did rely on the minister also.

PO: Who was the first Finance Minister?

WW: I do not recollect his name. All money you obtained from the Finance Minister had to be signed for. He only gave money at signing. Nathaniel Barnes was Minister of Finance at the time. When Mr. Taylor requested money, he said he had to sign for it too. Subsequently he was fired.

PO: Who succeeded him?

WW: I think it was Charles Bright.

PO: How was he appointed?

WW: All cabinet ministers were appointed by the president.

PO: You mentioned the LPRC yesterday, who headed that?

WW: First Cyril Allen, secondly Bell, subsequently Dumba.

PO: What was the role of Taylor in the LPRC?

WW: I do not know.

PO: Liberia is known for its flags on vessels. Who handled the flags for shipping?

WW: The Maritime Bureau.

PO: Who headed this?

WW: Mr. Benonina Urey. This bureau had its headquarters in London.

PO: Where did the money go?

WW: When I became president I investigated this on the basis of receipts. There was nothing there. It had been paid in advance to the President Taylor, according to the Finance Minister.

PO: Who appointed the head of this office?

WW: The president.

PO: Do you know if there were officers that were bringing in funds for Liberian government?

WW: No.

PO: Do you know Talal Al Nadi?

WW: Yes, he is a friend of the president.

PO: What was his business?

WW: He was a big boss. He was involved in building materials, fishing companies, a lot of business.

PO: Let's go back to yesterday; to your meeting with Gaddafi. Gaddafi asked about men trained in Liberia. You said you lied, how?

WW: I said that I was only an Ambassador. Targa Wunti was Ambassador in Guinea. Not all people I mentioned however were working for the government.

PO: Did you keep track of the men that were trained with you?

WW: Yes. We belonged to the same ethnic group. They were around when there were difficulties.

PO: Have you made a list of these men?

WW: Yes, we made a list. Sometimes there were also forces from Libya. We had to know who was NPFL and who was involved. So we would know who was lying.

PO: [presents list to WW] Do you recognize this list?

WW: Yes.

PO: Who created this list?

WW: This list was drawn from training to know who was in the group of the NPFL.

PO: Can this list be marked for identification?

Court: Yes, this can be marked for identification, 5 pages with names.

PO: The first name on the list is Charles Taylor. Further names are sometimes marked with X's. What is the reason for that?

WW: These people are killed during time of war.

PO: Who placed X's?

WW: I, Moses Blah.

PO: Copper Miller, number 2, has been X-ed.

WW: He left and tried to establish his own organization. Taylor set up an investigation and he was arrested. He was taken to Burkina Faso, together with Augustus Wright (number 3).

PO: Do you know what happened to them?

WW: They were taken there so they could not return to Liberia. In a clash between our troops and Prince Johnson, Miller was killed. He was killed in a fight. The order to move into the base of Prince Johnson was of Taylor. Augustus was executed because he had a weapon on him when he was in the presence of Taylor.

PO: Who authorized this execution?

WW: Taylor authorized all executions in NPFL. Wright was arrested because of carrying a weapon. Probably Taylor ordered his execution.

PO: Where was this?

WW: LAMCO (Liberian American Mining Company) Jecepa. Where the iron ore mines are. He was executed there.

PO: And number 58, Dogoleh, the former vice-president (before Blah). How did he die?

WW: He was sick. Taylor sent him to France for medication. He was taken to Abidjan. Afterwards, there were rumors that Mr. Taylor beat him and that he died because of that. I do not know where these rumors came from.