

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH 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:

Wednesday, 2 March 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Law Reform launches 2011-2013 strategic plan

The Law Reform Commission last Friday launched its strategic plan for the years 2011 to 2013 at the Taia Resort Hotel, Lumley Beach Road, western Freetown.

In her remarks, chairman of the Commission, Justice Salamatu Koroma said the institution was positioned to play a pivotal role in the reform initiative and its vision. She said in recognition of the role of a law reform commission in a modern state, the first commission was established by government in 1975 with the enactment of the Commission Act of 1975.

Justice Koroma said the functions of the commission as stated in Section 3 of the Amended Act were "to keep under review all laws both statu-

tory and otherwise, from time to time in Sierra Leone for the purpose of their reform, development, consolidation and codification".

She said this was not the first work plan being launched by the commission, noting that it will not achieve modernized goals without the law.

Chairman of the Legislative Committee in Parliament, Hon. Manley-Spaine - who was representing the Speaker of Parliament - expressed his support and parliament's fullest cooperation to the actualization of the plan. He commended the decision taken to embark on such a project.

"It will not be easy," he pointed out and urged that parliament should be involved in the pro-

cess as early as possible.

Hon. Manley-Spaine urged the commission to consider the outdated Divorced Laws of the land.

Mrs. Randall, who spoke on behalf of the Justice Sector Coordinating Office, expressed the need for the plan to be discussed, especially as they were working on concluding the Justice Sector Strategic Plan that will take them to 2013.

Legal luminary and consultant, Dr. Ade Renner-Thomas, said he had read through the document and congratulated the commission for taking such an initiative. He said each reform issue will be treated as project, research, consultation and outreach.

"Law reform is a fun-

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Law Reform launches 2011-2013 strategic plan

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damental issue in enacting our laws," he said.

Deputy Minister of Justice, John A. Bockarie launched the plan, which

he described as highly commendable.

He said the Law Reform Commission was in charge of reviewing the country's laws and as-

sured the commission that the Attorney-General's office stands committed to the activities of the commission.

Standard Times
Wednesday, 2 March 2011

Law Reform Commission launches Strategic Plan

BY ABU BAKARR KARGBO

The Law Reform Commission is an independent body set up by the statute to examine the existing laws as well as propose new laws to bring them in line with current trends in society. The Commission launched its Strategic Plan running from 2011 to 2013 at the Taia Resort Hotel on Friday 25th February 2011. The Strategic Plan sets out the Commission's mission, vision and, most importantly its priorities for the next three years.

It examines the legislation and justice, politics and governance, business and the economy and society and culture, all important facets of life in Sierra Leone. The Plan also forecasts the future and identifies its priorities for the next half-decade, the changes or outcomes it intends to achieve and the outputs it will generate.

Addressing the gathering, Hon. Manley-Spaine who represented the Speaker of Parliament described the launching as being very close to his heart, and commended the decision of the Commission in undertaking such a project. He pledged the support of Parlia-

ment for the success of the project. "Please involve us as early as possible whenever we are needed," he said.

Dr. Ade Renner Thomas in his statement described the Commission of being part of a process that brings development. He observed that the plan omitted the issue of accessing our laws which is of concern to the judiciary, police and other stakeholders, especially those that are undertaking research programs in the country. He suggested that a compilation of laws and decrees should be published, and this will follow the reviewing of laws in the country. Such a review, he said is urgently needed.

Launching the Strategic Plan, the Deputy Minister of Justice, John A. Bockarie recalled when the Government launched the Agenda for Change it realized that law reforms are very important for development. He noted that the Plan is very important in improving legislation, supporting economic growth and the justice system. He assured of the firm commitment of his office in making sure that the Commission achieve its goals.

The event was chaired by Justice Salimatu Koroma, Chairperson of the Commission.



Human Rights Commission launches Newsletter

BY SANGITIE KAMARA

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone on Friday 25th February launched its newsletter at their headquarters in Freetown.

In his address, the Chairman of the occasion Commissioner Joseph Stanley spoke about the purpose of the programme, the launching of their Newsletter, whilst Commissioner Yasmin Juse-Sherriff dilated extensively on their programmes and some of their achievements.

The Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Mr. Edward Sam said it is another milestone in the history of the Commission.

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone is an independent National Human Rights institution es-

tablished by an Act of Parliament in 2007 (Act No.9) to protect and promote human rights in the country.

Mr. Edward Sam maintained that since it started operations in 2007, the Commission has come a long way in fulfilling its functions. "It has produced the Annual State of Human Rights Report as required by law for the last three years." He pointed out that they have regionalized their work by establishing regional offices in the four regions of the country; forged strategic partnerships with stakeholders, human rights institutions and they have fostered a human rights based approach on governance and development.

"Information is a critical test: it's an instrument of empowerment" he said and pointing out that information must be provided in main formats

that is why they have endeavoured to do so by producing the Newsletter.

Dilating on the work of the commission, Mr. Edward Sam said the commission does education, sensitization and awareness raising in a bid to promote and protect human rights enquiries into human rights breaches, annual state of human rights reports in which they highlight pressing human rights issues.

The Newsletter entails the handing over of their 2009 Annual State of Human Rights Report to President/Parliament, engaging stakeholders on National Human Rights Action Plan, Training of MDAS on reporting obligation to African Commission, Health, and the Universal periodic Review seminar which ends in Grenada, Disability Bill and Photo News.

Awoko

Tuesday, 1 March 2011

5th IMC Annual National Media Awards (Photo)





The trial of Charles Taylor in The Hague
Photograph BBC World Service

Quote of the month
"In journalism, there has always been a tension between getting it first and getting it right"- Ellen Goodman

Communicating justice: The Hague to West Africa

In February 2011, the BBC World Service Trust was offered the opportunity to resume our Communicating Justice project which started in 2007. We cover the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone for a Sierra Leonean and Liberian audience.

As the prosecution and defense lawyers made their final arguments of February 8, 9 and 11, our team in Freetown and Monrovia produced a series of live and pre recorded programs to make sense of the hearings. These were broadcast

around the country through Radio Mount Auroel and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation.

The Communicating Justice project was supported by the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London until October 2010. A recent grant from their Freetown office made this coverage of the summary hearings possible. Special thanks to the BBC World Service's Hassan Arouni for sharing his reports from The Hague.

Download an episode
<http://tinyurl.com/47ufy6l>

(Audio is a mix of English and Krio)

Radio Netherlands

Tuesday, 1 March 2011

Charles Taylor 's lawyers cause confusion in court

The disciplinary hearing for Charles Taylor's lawyer was adjourned last Friday after six minutes, as judge Julia Sebutinde refused to take part in the proceedings. Courtenay Griffiths was to be subject to a disciplinary hearing for walking out of the courtroom on February 8th before closing arguments in the war crimes case against his client at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The judges had demanded an apology from Griffiths, but instead his team requested a disciplinary hearing. When the court convened last Friday, Sebutinde was absent from court because she "dissented from the directive to lead" Griffiths. "I will not in principle attend Friday's hearing," a statement from the Ugandan Judge read.

There was however a new face in court. Griffiths brought Peter Robinson to Leidschendam to represent him. The legal advisor to Radovan Karadzic at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia said he was privileged to also appear before the SCSL and that is was "a real honour to represent Courtenay Griffiths."

Robinson requested that the alternate judge, Justice Sow, be invited "to participate so the bench is constituted of three regularly constituted judges."

Public, and serious, disagreement among the judges followed. Sow made it very clear that he was prevented by his colleagues from participating in the proceedings: "this Bench is regularly composed with three judges sitting, as it shows. Two judges cannot sign decisions. When the Bench is sitting, it's sitting with three judges, not two judges, and I don't know what. I'm not here for decoration. I am a judge. [...] I don't know where in this world you will see two judges sitting. It's not possible. [...]"

Amidst the confusion, presiding Judge Teresa Doherty, however, ended the session quite abruptly, saying the trial chamber was "not properly constituted" and considered there was "no alternative but to adjourn this hearing."