

## **SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**

### **PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Opening Ceremony of the Residual Issues Expert Group Meeting, launched today by H.E. President Ernest Bai Koroma. See today's 'Special Court Supplement' for photos.

## **PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office**

**as at:**

**Wednesday, 20 February 2008**

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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Awoko

Wednesday, 20 February 2008

## International confab starts today at Special Court

President Ernest Koroma will today open the international conference at the Special Court, geared towards the need to consider residual issues that needed to be addressed after the court ends its judicial activities next year.

At the conference, questions such as identifying a specific mechanism to prosecute indictee Johnny Paul Koroma should he surface after the lifespan of the court will be discussed.

Also to be discussed are issues arising from the enforcement of sentences, how requests for a review of a judgment would be handled, and how witnesses who testified before the Special Court will be protected after the court closes and also matters relating to Special Court archives will be discussed.

This is the first time such a conference has been convened by an international court to find solutions to these problems, said Special Court Registrar Herman von Hebel.

"And it is taking place here because the Special Court is closer to completing its mandate than are the other tribunals. The issues we deal with here will eventually confront every international court as it ends its work, his conference therefore marks a significant milestone in international justice," he noted. He stated that among the experts attending this week's conference will see officials

from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Hon. Justice George Gelaga King, who is the president of the Special Court, will chair the meeting while it will be co-chaired by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

Concord Times  
Wednesday, 20 February 2008

# Koroma admits huge lapses in justice system

By PEL Koroma

**P**resident Ernest Bai Koroma yesterday admitted huge lapses in Sierra Leone's justice system, disclosing that

"70% of Sierra Leoneans have no access to legal justice."

He was addressing the launching of country's justice sector reform strategy and investment plan 2008-2010 at the Miatta conference hall in

Freetown.

With this situation, the President postulated that there is need to ensure that alternative systems for

delivering justice, including through chiefdoms, are functioning properly and fairly.

"The justice sector  
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## Koroma admits huge lapses in justice system

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reform strategy and investment plan which was approved by cabinet, will be used to guide activities to respond to the need for a more coherent and rational approach to policy making, planning and resource allocation within the sector," he said.

Koroma said the justice sector coordination office within the ministry of justice will work on driving forward the day-to-day implementation of the strategy in close partnership with the six cross institutional target task forces.

By 2010, the strategy is expected to have reduced crime and fear of crime; to have improved

satisfaction levels with local courts, Paramount Chiefs and local chiefs; to have speeded up the disposal of criminal cases; to have reduced the proportion of juveniles who have been handled inappropriately in the formal justice; and to have speeded up the disposal of civil cases; to improve confidence in human rights and accountability.

The reform strategy recognized that at the end of the war, Sierra Leone's justice system was in ruins.

"Since then much has been done to re-build it. The justice sector reform strategy and investment plan builds on that

foundation and aims to take forward a step change in the justice provision to the people of Sierra Leone through a number of bold reforms.

Programme manager of JSDP, Mrs. Lyn Keogh said the strategy and investment plan provides a coherent and rational approach to policy making planning and resources allocation with the justice sector.

Keogh noted: "Justice for all is not a slogan. It is essential for the development of an efficient, effective, impartial and accountable justice sector that meets the needs of all communities in Sierra Leone."

## BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 19 February 2008

By Abdul Rashid, at The Hague

RASHID: On February 20 and 21, Special Court officials and members of the Special Court Management Committee will be joined in Freetown by UN Security Council representatives, Sierra Leone government officials, diplomats, legal experts, human rights workers, and members of civil society from Sierra Leone and around the world. The conference will be opened by President Ernest Bai Koroma.

According to a release from the Court's Outreach (sic.) office, delegates will be welcomed by Justice George Gelaga-King, the President of the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court. It will be co-chaired by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

The release further said the Government of Canada is funding this week's international conference of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Questions the conference will consider include identifying a specific mechanism to prosecute indictee Johnny Paul Koroma should he surface after the lifespan of the Court.

The conference is also expected to consider issues arising from the enforcement of sentences, how requests for a review of a judgment would be handled, and how witnesses who testified before the Special Court will be protected after the Court closes. Delegates will also discuss matters relating to Special Court archives.

The Registrar of the Special Court, Herman Von Hebel, said this is the first time such a conference has been convened by an international court to find solutions to these problems. It is taking place in Sierra Leone because the Special Court is closer to completing its mandate than are the other tribunals.

Mr. Von Hebel said among the experts attending this week's conference are officials from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Special Court release also quoted Mr. Von Hebel as saying this conference marks a significant milestone in international justice because the issues to be dealt with here will eventually confront every international court as it ends its work.

Meanwhile the special court trying Charles Taylor at The Hague has returned to open session.

Abdul Rashid for Search for Common Ground and BBC World Service Trust, at The Hague.

## UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 19 February 2008

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

### **Newspaper Summary**

#### **Executive Mansion and TRC Embroiled in Controversy**

(The Inquirer, The Informer, Heritage, New Democrat, National Chronicle, The News)

- The Executive Mansion and the TRC are in a row over claims by the latter that a highly placed individual at the Executive Mansion was spearheading a campaign to discredit the Commission. But Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf fully supports the TRC and has no reason to protect anyone appearing before it. The TRC had accused an official of the Executive Mansion of interfering in the work of the Commission by fronting for popular musician Michael Davis alias Sundaygar Dearboy. At the same time, The Informer reports that the nationwide public hearings of the TRC resumed on Monday in Barclayville, Grand Kru County, with more testimonies on war-time atrocities.

#### **Court Dismisses Defense Request in Coup Plot Case**

(Heritage, Plain Truth, National Chronicle, The News, New Democrat)

- Criminal Court 'A' has dismissed a defense request to quash the testimony of a state witness from the records of the treason trial. The News reports that Defense lawyers led by Cllr. Dempster Brown wanted Colonel Nelson Jallah's testimony quashed from the record because it was based on hearsay. The Defense team claimed the first state witness testimony was not strong enough to form part of the records.
- Colonel Jallah who was discharged Monday spent two days on the witness stand. During cross examination, the NSA chief investigator said co-defendant Andrew Dorbor was taken to a Magisterial Court in the Ivory Coast. Col. Jallah said Dorbor was charged with subversive activities to unseat the Liberian Government by force of arms.
- According to Col. Jallah, the Liberian Embassy in Abidjan was represented at the court proceedings in the Ivory Coast. Meanwhile, there are reports that the government is now working out diplomatic formalities to bring in Ivorian security personnel in its quest to prove the case against Dorbor and Julu. The reports say the Ivorian Chief of Staff, Inspector General and a regional commander called Wright Delafos would be part of the delegation.

#### **Liberians Enthusiastic about U.S. President's Visit**

(The Inquirer, Heritage, New Democrat, The News, The Informer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says she is satisfied with the high level of enthusiasm Liberians are exhibiting towards the visit of US President George Bush on Thursday. "Many of our citizens have called to say how proud they are that the United States President could choose Liberia as one of five African countries he included on his tour."
- Addressing reporters on Monday, Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio further stated that during a meeting between the two leaders following President Bush's arrival, President Johnson Sirleaf will use the occasion to showcase the progress government has made since the inception of her administration; buttressed by the strong support President Bush and his administration have demonstrated towards her government.
- "Despite the progress government has made, the Liberian President will inform President Bush of the many challenges her government is still grappling with, in the areas of road rehabilitation, electrification, and unemployment, and the need to speed up the delivery of promises the US has made towards government's development programmes."

## **Liberia Receives US\$1.5 Million for Food Security & Safety**

(Daily Observer, The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The Inquirer)

- Liberia has received US\$1.5 million from the Global Trust Fund for Food Security and Food Safety and was made through a special contribution from the Italian Governments Directorate General for Italian Development Cooperation.
- According to Agriculture Minister, Dr. Chris Toe, the three year "Food Security through Commercialization of Agriculture" project is part of a sub-regional initiative to support modern, competitive and commercially vibrant agricultural sectors. Dr. Toe also said the project will place emphasis on capacity building within farmer-based organization to increase production and value addition and improve marketing. The Inquirer reports that the project will be implemented in Nimba, Maryland and Grand Kru Counties and will target smallholder farmers and processors.

## **Radio Summary**

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

### **Executive Mansion Rejects TRC's Claims of Interference**

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

### **President Sirleaf Impressed with Citizens' Enthusiasm over visit of US President**

(Also reported on Star Radio, Truth F.M. and ELBC)

## **Liberia Gets US\$1.5 Million for Food Security & Safety**

**ELBC** (News culled from website today at 09:00 am)

### **China Pledges 10,000 Units of Malaria Drugs**

- A seven-man Chinese delegation, headed by China's Vice-Minister of Health, Mr. Chen Xiaohong, has pledged 10,000 units of anti-malaria drugs to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.
- Speaking during a tour of the John F. Kennedy Medical Centre, the largest referral hospital in the country, Minister Chen said his government was committed to improving the Liberian Health Sector.

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**Special Court Supplement**  
**Opening Ceremony, Residual Issues Expert Group Meeting**  
**20 February 2008, in Courtroom II**



