

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



Rolling hoops in Makeni

**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:**

Friday, 20 July 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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Awoko  
Friday, 20 July 2007

## Junta leaders get life from Special Court

By Kelvin Lewis & Betty Milton

**D**ressed smartly in their European suits with Brima Bazy Kamara sporting a light pink shirt with matching flowery coloured tie, the three convicted former leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military junta tried bravely to suppress any outward emotions as Ugandan born Justice Julia Sebutinde read out their sentences. "Brima, Kamara and Kanu have been found responsible for some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history" she said and went on to paint a truly unpleasant picture of their acts.

"Innocent civilians, babies, children, men and women of all ages, were murdered by being shot, hacked to death, burnt

alive, beaten to death. Women and young girls were gang raped to death some had their genitals mutilated by the insertion of foreign objects"

She went on "Sons were forced to rape mothers, brothers were forced to rape sisters, pregnant women were killed by having their stomachs split open and the foetus removed merely to settle a bet amongst the troops as to the gender of the foetus"

Justice Sebutinde pointed out how "Men were disemboweled and their intestines stretched across a road to form a barrier" and how "Human heads were placed on sticks on either side of the road to mark such barriers."

"Hacking off the limbs of innocent civilians was common place" she said, adding that "Victims were babies, young children and men and women of all ages some had one arm amputated

others lost both arms"

"For those victims who survived the amputation" she said "life was instantly and forever changed into one of dependence." Most she said "were turned into beggars unable to earn any other living and even today cannot perform even the simplest of tasks without the help of others."

"Children were, forcibly taken away" from their families, often fed on drugs and used as child soldiers who were trained to kill and to commit other brutal crimes against the civilian population" she further highlighted.

"The child soldiers who survived the war were robbed of their childhood and most of them lost a chance of an education"

Not surprisingly she said "the trial chamber cannot recall any other conflict in the history of warfare in which innocent civilians were

Contd. Page 6

## Junta leaders get life from Special Court

From Page 2

subjected to such savage and inhuman treatment."

Alex Tamba Brima (35) was sentenced to 50 years, Ibrahim Bazy Kamara (39) got 45 years while Santigie Borbor Kanu (42) got 50 years.

The three were all sentenced to "a single term of imprisonment" for all the counts on which they were convicted.

Justice Sebutinde gave one saying "credit shall be given to him for any period during which he was detained in custody pending this trial" meaning that the four years they have spent in detention will be deducted from the total jail term. "The accused will begin to serve their sentences immediately" she ordered although a lengthy appeal is likely to follow.

As the Judges left the court the three waved

bravely to their relatives, before they were whisked off by security personal to their jails.

Outside the court room Alex Tamba Brima's Father in law said "I don't feel fine".

"All I have to do now is to go home and sit with the family and three children to decide what to do."

"Now they said we should reconcile, make everything minimal, they said we should sit down and be peaceful citizens, but that sentence is not minimal if it was 15 or 10 years yes but they said everything minimal, the judges were not minimal" he lamented.

Other family members were seen in tears.

A student who refused to reveal his name argued "This is not enough for Sierra Leoneans there were thousands of AFRC but only these three were convicted this is not enough for Sierra

Leoneans."

16 year-old student Sulaiman Musa who also witnessed the proceedings in court said "I felt good because the problem that we faced during the war ... it's like they are paying for the things they did during the war so a child like me I was expecting more than that because I really felt for those who have passed away, more especially my colleagues who were used as soldiers so I was really glad for the sentence."

All three had been convicted on eleven counts with the charges of sexual slavery struck off by the Judges. They are however the first in the world to be convicted and jailed for the crime of "use of child soldiers" which falls under "other serious violations of international humanitarian law."

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Awoko Newspaper

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# You Said It

**Y**esterday the Trial Chamber II of the Special Court for Sierra Leone passed sentences on the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) indictees. It was like heavy thunder when the judge slammed 50 years on Alex Tamba Brima, 45 years on Brima Bazy Kamara and 50 on Santigie Borbor Kanu. This is the first judgment passed by the court since its inception. During the sentencing our reporter Betty J. Milton was there; she saw it all and when she came out of the courtroom she asked people what their feelings were on the judgment.

**Reginald Venn** "the sentences passed today reflected the crimes they committed. Justice has been done as they are now paying for what they did to the people of the country some years ago.

**Musa Bangura** "the sentence is in accordance with the gravity of the crimes they committed. This will serve as a deterrent to others. The sentence today is a clear lesson that people will no longer take the law into their hands as justice will prevail someday. This will serve as an example to every Sierra Leonean who is planning to do any negative to the people of the country by destroying lives and property."

**Noah Sankoh** "for me I happy about the sentence because these guys killed lots and lots of people, so if such sentences are pronounced I should be happy. The judgment



Francis Bockarie



Musa Bangura



Sia Elizabeth Saffa



Reginald Venn



Noah Sankoh

will also be a precedent for future generation. When someone kills another and the culprit is brought to book, I believe it is fair. Family members of those who died during the war will not be happy for the jail terms as they are very short."

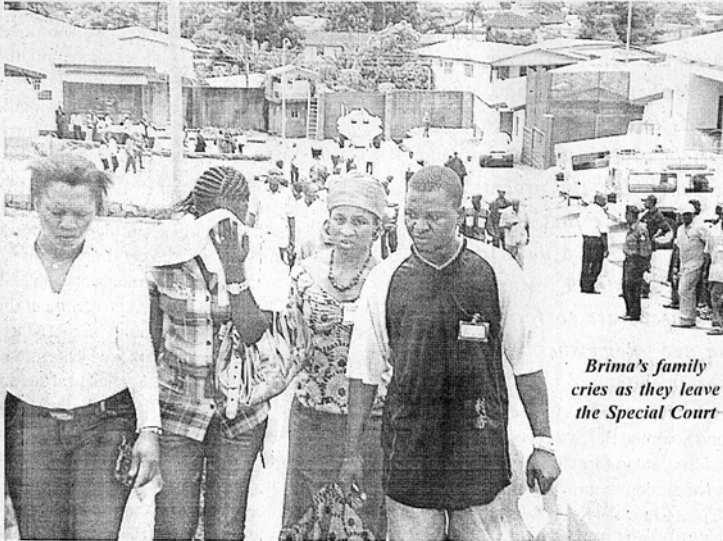
**Francis Bockarie** "the sentence is a genuine one as it will serve as a deterrent to all Sierra Leoneans. The number of years they are sentenced to is in place."

**Sia Elizabeth Saffa** "it is unfortunate that I did not follow the proceedings but according to all what I heard today from the Prosecution and the judgment, I believe they deserve that punishment because they committed lot of atrocities. This will also serve as an example for those planning to commit such crimes in the future."

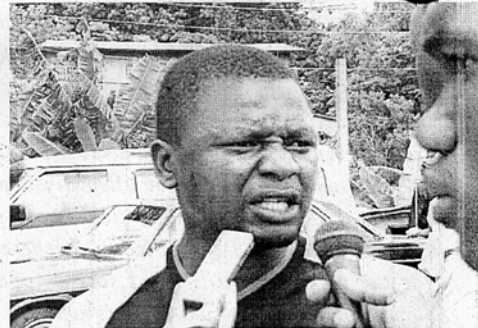
**Peter Vandy** "The Special Court is not substantial for Sierra Leoneans. The entire process was just a money eating affair in the opinion of most of us who suffered during the war. I am not against the sentences but I am not happy with the entire process as there are other people who perpetrated crimes that are supposed to be punished but they are not brought to book. It is only these three guys".

# Tears flow in courtroom

By  
Ibrahim  
Tarawallie  
and  
Danny  
Glenwright



*Brima's family cries as they leave the Special Court*



*Emmanuel Joseph Saidu outside the Special Court years for Brima and Kamara and 50 years for Kanu. The trial - which was the first in international history to obtain convictions on counts of*

*Cont. page 6*

The first sentences were handed down in the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) yesterday and will likely leave three former leaders of the Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in prison for the rest of their lives. Family members of the three convicted men wept openly as Alex Tamba Brima, Ibrahim

Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu were given 50 years, 45 years and 50 years respectively. On Monday, prosecution had asked for sentences of 60



# Tears flow in courtroom

*From page 1*

conscripting children under the age of 15 years - has been underway since March 2005.

The three former AFRC commanders were convicted on 11 counts of crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law last month. Credit for time served will be taken into account and subtracted from yesterday's sentences.

Eason Kamara, brother of the first accused, said he was hoping for lesser sentences in the range of 10 to 15 years, especially because his brother was only found guilty for committing crimes in two districts of Sierra Leone.

"Myself and the family, we decided 15 years," he shouted yesterday outside the court. "Crimes in two districts is not enough to merit 50 years."

Kamara said he wished the victims of crimes committed by Brima were asked for their

opinion, noting that he thought those who were still alive might have granted forgiveness.

"We are all victims, we all suffered... international law and victims are quite different," he said. "To me and my family, this has not been free and fair."

Brima, Kamara and Kanu were dressed in suits and appeared relaxed as Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde read the findings of her chamber. They were somber and straight-faced until their sentences were delivered, at which time Kanu cried openly.

"Brima, Kamara and Kanu were found responsible for some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history," said Sebutinde, before delivering the sentencing terms.

The family of the three men sat in the press gallery and became hysterical after the sentencing, with many

weeping and shouting as the courthouse emptied. Immanuel Joseph Saidu, a student at Fourah Bay College and a spectator yesterday, said he thought the evidence given was not substantial for the three to be sentenced for longer than 15 years.

"I am not happy about the entire process," he said, shouting. "I see it as a way of eating money rather than doing the right thing. The sentence given is more or less life imprisonment."

Saidu said he thought too much money was spent on trying three men when hundreds of others - guilty of equally horrible crimes - are still at large. He said the AFRC numbered 15,000 and many more of its former members should have been tried.

"The amount of money spent by the UN to establish the Special Court should have been given to those that suffered the most during the war," he said.

# Special Court...

# 3 AFRC

# Indictees

# Jailed



*Mission partially accomplished*



*Ibrahim Bazy  
45 years*



*Santigie Borbor  
Kanu 50 years*

Court for Sierra Leone were yesterday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2007, sentenced after being found guilty of  
[Contd. page 2](#)

*By Musa Sesay* and Santigie Borbor  
Alex Tamba Brima, aka Kanu, alias 55, all  
Gullit, Brima Bazy Kamara indictees of the Special

# 3 AFRC Indictees Jailed

*From front page*

charges related to war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious breaches of international humanitarian laws. Delivering the verdict, the Ugandan born Justice Sebutinde who presided over the Special Court Trial Chamber ruled that the three in the course of the war, failed to protect civilians nor did they punish their subordinates for the heinous crimes committed by their combatants during the war. She cited Article 6 (111) of the Geneva Convention which implicated the three for crimes committed by their subordinates in Bombali and Freetown respectively such as the mutilation of civilians at Kissy and at the Up-Gun round about, ordering the murder of Rogbalan Mosque Kissy,

abduction and use of child soldiers, sexual slavery as well as instigating the murder of civilians and the burning of houses at Fourahbay, in Freetown.

"The Court imposed single "global" sentence of 50 years for Brima, 45 years for Kamara and 50 years for Kanu. They will be given the credit for times served since their arrest in 2003," excerpt of a Special Court Press Release on the judgement dated 19 July reads. Announcing the sentence yesterday, Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde noted among others that the three were found guilty of "some of the heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history."

A number of gravitating circumstances, accord-

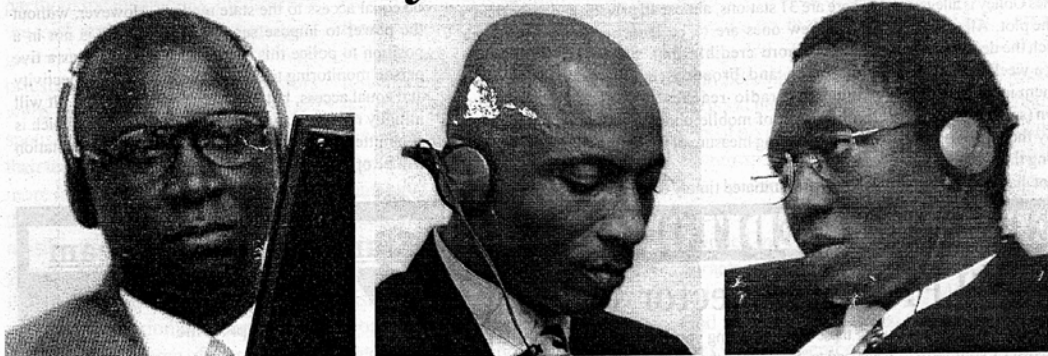
ing to the release are considered by the Trial Chamber when deliberating on the sentences. "They found that there were no mitigating circumstances which would have argued for lower sentences," the release further stated, adding that the Judges noted that none of the accused had expressed remorse for their crimes.

It could be recalled that the three AFRC indictees, now sentenced prisoners were since 2003, standing trial at the Special Court. The question now on the lips of many Sierra Leoneans is; "what is the fate of the AFRC leader, Johny Paul Koroma whose whereabouts since his indictment remains a mystery?"

# Victory for justice

## 145 year jail-term for AFRC Indictees

- Alex Tamba Brima 50 years
- Santigie Borbor Kamara 50 years
- Brima Bazzy Kamara 45 years



Tamba Brima... 50 years

**BY IBRAHIM BARRIE**

The head of the Human Right Commission, Jamestina King has described the long prison sen-

tences given to the AFRC indictees yesterday by the Special Court for Sierra Leone as victory for justice maintaining that the

Borbor Kamara... 50 years

three convicts were guilty of the crimes charged against them.

"It is a victory for justice and accountability," said the head of the

Bazzy Kamara... 45 years

Human Right Commission immediately after the Court sentence. "They aided and abetted against vulnerable victims," she justified.



Justice Sebutinde... Presiding Judge

In a similar reaction to the press, the Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs, Shirley Gbujama responded that the convicts were paid with their own coin.

"They got what is due them," remarked the Minister though in a somber mood.

Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Borbor Kanu were sentenced for 50 years imprisonment each while Brima Bazzy Kamara was sentenced for 45 years.

*CONTINUED PAGE 15*

## 145 year jail

**FROM PAGE 1**

The Prosecution Counsel on the 16th July asked for a single "global sentence" of 60 years each for Brima and Kamara and 50 years for Kanu or multiple sentences to be served consecutively (one after the other). The Trial Chamber, after hearing both submissions by the Prosecution and Defence Counsels, adjourned the trial to yesterday July 19th when it sentenced the three accused.

In announcing the sentences yesterday, the Ugandan Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde maintained that the three convicts were found guilty of some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes in human history. The Court imposed single term of imprisonment on all three convicts. They shall be given credit

for the time in detention since 2003 and their sentences start immediately and, for the time being, in Sierra Leone pending the appeal.

The three AFRC convicts were found guilty on June 20, 2007 on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Trial Chamber of three judges are the Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde from Uganda, Justice Richard Lussick from Sam and Justice Teresa Dolan from Northern Ireland. Meanwhile, a Special Court source intimated this press that Alex Tamba Brima likely change his Defence Counsel - Kojo Graham and Glenna Thompson for the appeal and re-hired the services of his former lawyers.



# **HALF A CENTURY** **IMPRISONMENT FOR** **AFRC INDICTEES**

The United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone set up in 2002 to try those Sierra Leoneans and other individuals who carried the greatest responsibilities for the eleven year rebel war in Sierra Leone handed down its

first set of sentences yesterday when the three former AFRC officers standing trial were sent to jail for periods ranging from 45 years to 50 years.

One of the three AFRC officers, Tamba Brima, was yesterday sentenced to a

jail term of fifty years and Santigie Borbor Kanu also was also sentenced to fifty years as Ibrahim Bazzi Kamara was sent to jail for forty-five years.

Relatives of the three ac-

*Contd. page 2*

# **HALF A CENTURY** **IMPRISONMENT FOR** **AFRC INDICTEES**

*From page 1*

cused persons were yesterday shocked at the 'harshness' of the prison terms handed down to the war crime indictees, but a good number of members of the public merely remained non-committal as the activities of the Special Court

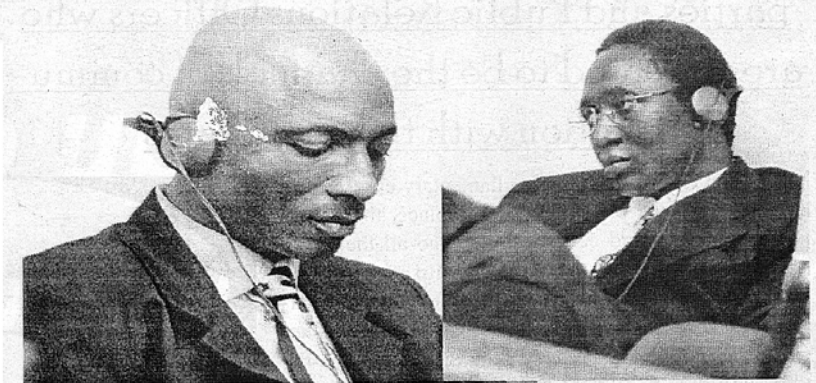
itself have lasted too long to influence the thinking of many Sierra Leoneans.

It is not known whether the three former soldiers will serve their prison terms in Sierra Leone or elsewhere but reliable sources at the Special Courts intimate that they are likely to be taken to

a European country to serve their prison terms. Meanwhile, the defense lawyers for Santigie Borbor Kamara, Tamba Brima and Ibrahim Bazzi Kamara have given notice to the Court that they would file appeals for the three imprisoned former soldiers within the next two weeks.

# No Mercy For AFRC Militia!!

By Hassan Y Koroma  
Three former members of the



Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) were on 20th July, 2007 sentenced to lengthy prison terms for their role in the 10 years brutal rebel war which left many people amputated, home-

less, lost of loved ones and properties.

Alex Tamba, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu alias 'Five five' were each convicted on eleven counts charges for war crimes against humanity.

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# No Mercy For AFRC Militia!!

## FROM FRONT PAGE

According to the Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde, the legal system in a credible country like Sierra Leone must be implemented and enforced on those who have committed crimes against humanity. The court ordered the immediate execution of the global sentence of 50 years for Alex Tamba with Santigie Kanu and 45 years for Brima Bazzy Kamara . In announcing the sentence of the Special Court Trial Chamber Eleven, the Presiding Judge, Justice Sebutinde noted that the three had been found guilty for some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history of any war. .

nous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history of any war. .

The trial chamber which consists of Justice Julia Sebutinde, Justice Richard Lussick and Justice Teresa Doherty considered a number of earth-shattering circumstances when deliberating on the sentence. The judge discovered there were no extenuating circumstances which would have argued for lower sentences.

She maintained that none of them could have expressed penitence for their crimes. They all committed similar crimes. Bazzy for instance ordered the killing

of five girls in Makeni, Karina and Freetown. This act was described by the judge as premeditated. He also targeted all abductees held by his subsidiary and killed them, burnt houses, gangraped, maimed and amputated his hostages. This left many people depending on other families for sustenance. Most unfortunately, the use of children as child soldiers left a stigma to many among whom, some were young girls who were forcefully deflowered.

She added that as professional soldiers, they were trained to protect lives and properties of citizens in the state.

## Former AFRC Leaders Sentenced to Long Prison Sentences

Three former members of Sierra Leone's Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) have been sentenced to lengthy prison sentences for their part in crimes committed during Sierra Leone's decade - long civil conflict.

These are the first sentences handed down at the Special Court.

Alex Tamba Brima, aka "Gullit"; Brima Bazzy Kamara, and Santigie Borbor Kanu, alias "Five-Five" were each convicted on June 20 on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Court imposed single "global" sentences of 50 years for Brima, 45 years for Kamara, and 50 years for Kanu. They will be given credit for time served since their arrests in 2003. The Court ordered that the threemen begin serving their sentences immediately.

In announcing the sentences today, Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde noted that the three had been found guilty of "some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history".

The Trial Chamber, consisting of Justice Sebutinde, Justice Richard Lussick and Justice Teresa Doherty, considered a number of aggravating circumstances when deliberating on the sentences. They found that there were no mitigating circumstances which would have argued for lower sentences.

The Judges noted that none of the accused had expressed remorse for their crimes.

## Prosecutor Welcomes Sentences in AFRC Case

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone welcomed today's decision of Trial Chamber II to sentence the three AFRC defendants to prison terms ranging from 45 to 50 years. The sentences follow last month's verdicts convicting all three defendants of eleven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Borbor Kanu were sentenced to 50 years in prison, while Brima Bazzy Kamara was sentenced to 45 years.

"This punishment reflects the horrific crimes for which each defendant was convicted", said Stephen Rapp, the Prosecutor.

The crimes include murder and extermination; sexual violence and rape; amputation and mutilation; terror, slavery and pillage. Today's decision also includes the first sentences in history for the crime of the recruitment and use in hostilities of child soldiers. Said Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde. "Innocent men, women and children, hacked to death, burned alive, women gang-raped to death, sons forced to rape mothers, brothers forced to rape sisters, women's pregnant stomachs slit open to settle bets on the sex of the fetus, arms chopped off, heads placed on sticks."

"The Trial Chamber cannot recall any other conflict in human warfare where the civilian population was subjected to such horrific acts," Justice Sebutinde went on to say.

The defendants not only ordered, but also directly participated in, the commission of these grave crimes. One showed his men how to cut-off the hands and arms of victims. Another ordered that entire families be burned alive in their home.

"These are crimes that shock the conscience of humankind", said Prosecutor Rapp. "These sentences represent an international recognition of the horrible suffering inflicted on the people of Sierra Leone. But they also send a signal to similar leaders, wherever they may be: If you brutalise civilians to gain or hold power you too can face condemnation and punishment".

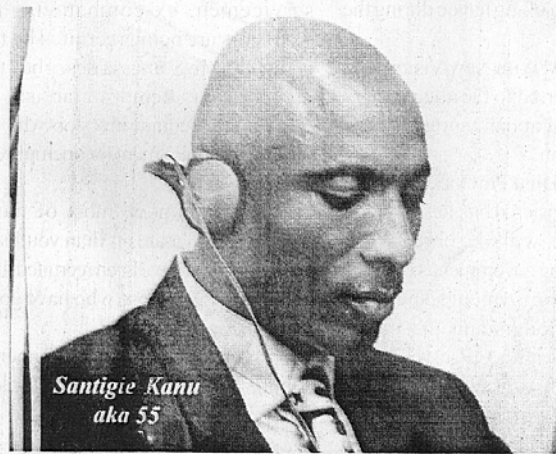


New Vision  
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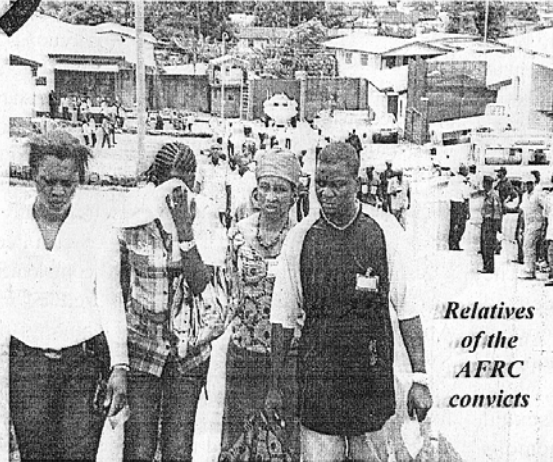
# 50 Yrs. Jail For 55, Others

*By Sheku Tanga*

Three former members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) who were indicted in 2003 by the Special Court of Sierra Leone were yesterday sentenced to forty



*Santigie Kanu  
aka 55*



*Relatives  
of the  
AFRC  
convicts*

five and fifty years imprisonment.

The three convicts, Alex Tamba Brima alias (Gullit) and Santigie Borbor Kanu alias (55), were sentenced to fifty years imprisonment, while Ibrahim Bassy Kamara was sentenced to forty five years.

The Special Court Presiding Judge, Julia Sebutinde while reading the charges said, the three had been found guilty of some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes

*Contd. Page 2*

# 50 Years Jail For 55, Others

ever recorded in human history. The crime committed by the accused ranged from killing of innocent men, women and children, some of whom were burnt alive, while women and girls suffered sexual violence and rape. Other heinous crimes included forceful raping of pregnant women and lactating mothers with some pregnant women had their wombs slit open to settle bets on the sex of the unborn baby.

"The trial chambers cannot recall any other conflict in human warfare where the civilian population was subjected to such horrific acts" Justice Sebutinde added.

The prosecutor of the Special Court, Stephen Rapp, said the punishment on the convicts reflects the horrific crimes for which each defendant was sentenced.

The trial chamber found out that there were no mitigating circumstances which would have argued for lesser sentences.

He added that they will be given credit for time served since their arrest in 2003, noting that the three men should begin serving their sentences immediately.

The Head of the Public Affairs Section of Special Court, Peter Anderson said two countries, Sweden and Austria have volunteered to provide facilities for the convicted persons.

He however maintained that the Court is requesting some other countries to provide same facilities as more inductees are going to be sentenced.

The court was jam packed with some members of the public, including local and international journalists and people invited from the provinces by the Special Court outreach team.

This is the first sentence the UN backed court has handed down since its establishment in 2003.

Meanwhile family members of the convicted persons broke into tears and expressed the view that the the court verdict was harsh.

Others expressed opposing views that the punishment was in fact not proportionate to the crimes committed by the convicts.



## BBC Focus on Africa

Thursday, 19 July 2007

LEAD-IN: To Sierra Leone first, and as you heard in the news, the first people to be found guilty of war crimes have been given stiff jail sentences by the UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone. The three men sentenced today were former members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, which ruled the country between 1997 and 98. They had earlier been convicted on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, and the recruitment of children as soldiers. Our reporter Umaru Fofana was in court, and sent this report.

JUSTICE SEBUTINDE: The Trial Chamber unanimously sentences Alex Tamba Brima to a single term of imprisonment of 50 years for all the counts on which he has been found guilty. Credit shall... (fade)

FOFANA: With these words, Trial Chamber Judge, Justice Julia Sebutinde sealed the fate of the three men convicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Borbor Kanu, alias "Five-Five", sat quietly as they were each sentenced to 50 years on all counts. Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, alias "Gullit" (sic.) got 45 years. They all served in the AFRC military junta which overthrew President Tejan Kabbah in 1997. Their regime was characterized by murder, rape and other forms of inhuman treatment. The Trial Chamber unanimously agreed bore some of the greatest responsibilities for these crimes. Despite this, the family members present in the packed courtroom reacted with shock.

(Sounds of crying) Mama, Mama, eh Mama...

FOFANA: One of the counts against the [indistinct] was the recruitment of child soldiers during their reign. In court today was Minister of Children's Affairs Shirley Gbujama.

GBUJAMA: I have no reaction except to say that they've got what is due to them. [Sierra Leone] don't think people should go free for things like that that they did, no matter what happens.

FOFANA: But what does the sentencing mean for justice in the country? Janesina King is Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission.

KING: Well I think it's a victory for justice and accountability, even though the Court had the limited mandate to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for the crimes committed in this country, somehow it will go towards promoting reconciliation, healing the wounds of victims and those who are alive, and even those who are dead, their families would at least know that somebody was made to account for the many crimes that were committed against them.

FOFANA: Do you think the sentences were lenient or harsh?

KING: Wow, that's a difficult one. I wouldn't say they were lenient; neither would I say they were harsh, given the fact that I am in Sierra Leone and I know what operates within our Sierra Leone law.

FOFANA: Her views were re-echoed by ordinary people on the streets of Freetown.

WOMAN'S VOICE: I was very much, I would not say I'm happy, but it's better for a justice to prevail, that we have a, that people cannot commit atrocity and scotch (sic.) free about it. For me as a whole it's a lesson that we have to learn. And we have learned this lesson today...

FOFANA: Meanwhile, the Defence counsel say they will appeal the sentences within the next two weeks. The Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up to try those who bear the greatest responsibilities in the civil war in the country in which an estimated 50,000 people were killed. However, one of the big indictees, Johnny Paul Koroma, who led the AFRC regime, is still missing, presumed dead.

Lansana Fofana (sic.) reporting from Freetown.

*[Transcribed by the Office of Press and Public Affairs]*



## BBC News Hour

Thursday, 19 July 2007

**BBC WORLD NEWS:** The United Nations-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone has sentenced three rebel leaders to lengthy prison terms. The three men were found guilty of murder, rape and mutilation. They're the first sentences handed out by the Court following the end of Sierra Leone's civil war five years ago. Will Ross reports.

**ROSS:** Justice Julia Sebutinde said the three former rebel commanders were guilty of some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes in human history. She then listed some of those crimes, which included innocent men, women and children being shot, burned or hacked to death; women's pregnant stomachs being slit open to settle bets on the sex of the foetus; and arms being chopped off. The three former rebels had also been found guilty of the abduction and use of child soldiers, the first such convictions in an international court.

**LEAD-IN:** Three rebel leaders in Sierra Leone have been sentenced for crimes that the trial judge described as some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious ever recorded, which included murder, rape, mutilation, and using children as soldiers. The sentences are the first to be handed down by the UN-backed war crimes court in Freetown following the end of Sierra Leone's civil war five years ago. In the dock were three leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council which, along with another rebel group, the RUF, terrorized the country in the course of the civil war. The three were convicted last month and today Justice Julia Sebutinde announced their prison terms.

**JUSTICE SEBUTINDE:** The Trial Chamber unanimously sentences Alex Tamba Brima to a single term of imprisonment of 50 years for all the counts on which he has been found guilty... The Trial Chamber sentences Ibrahim Bazy Kamara to a single term of imprisonment of 45 years for all the counts on which he has been found guilty... The Trial Chamber sentences Santigie Borbor Kanu to a single term of imprisonment of 50 years for all the counts on which he has been found guilty.

And there was an emotional reaction from many of the victims and their families who gathered in the Court to hear the sentence

(Sounds of crying)

An estimated 50,000 people were killed in the course of the war, but thousands more who survived still bear the scars of mutilation and amputation by the rebels. Jabaty Mambu had his arm chopped off by a child soldier from the AFRC. I got his reaction to today's sentences.

**JABATY MAMBU:** We are looking at it in a justice perspective. I think, it's right the Court has done their own part, but to us victims, we think that the term of imprisonment is too small compared to the kind of physical assault we [indistinct], and if I can remember the sentence hearing, Justice Sebutinde said that some of the crimes, like amputation that was done on us, will ever remain with us to the end time of our life. So I'm just wondering if you can put someone in prison for, you know, 45, 50 years and let him go. What about us? What will happen to us? You know, I'm still wondering.

What happened to you? I mean, how did you lose your limb?

**MAMBU:** It was January 1999 at 7:45 p.m. The guys calling themselves the AFRC guys – they pronounced that "AFRC", I heard that. And they surrounded our house and asked everybody to come out. Well people were still in, including myself. They forcefully went into the house and dragged me outside. I was right under the bed. They dragged me outside and they said I should place my hand on the bare floor. I asked them why. They said, no, I should not ask. The only thing I should put my hand on the floor because we are supporters of the current government and my hand should be amputated for that. I removed my student ID card and showed it to them and they said no, we are not interested

in that. We know that we have to chop off your hand. The commander by then called a little boy about 12 years old, and the boy came with a machete, where they forcefully grabbed me and placed my hand on the floor and chopped it off.

So there are many, many more who suffered in the same way that you did.

MAMBU: Exactly. There's thousands more. Even there are people who are amputated that did not have chance to come to the city and they died in the bush. Some of them after their amputation, they just think everything is finished with them.

That was Jabaty Mambu who had his arm chopped off by a child soldier during Sierra Leone's civil war. With me now our World Affairs Correspondent Mark Doyle, who reported from Sierra Leone during the civil war and has been a frequent visitor to the country. And Mark, the AFRC – not as well-known outside Sierra Leone as the more notorious RUF.

DOYLE: No that's right, and I think of course these are dreadful stories and entirely credible stories from the gentleman who was just on. I remember myself in January 1999 when the rebels invaded Freetown seeing lorry loads of people with their hands chopped off trying to seek some sort of hospitalisation which simply didn't exist. But I think we need to understand the history of this situation a little bit in order to understand why it happened. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council have been described quite rightly in shorthand as "rebels", but at one point they were the government of Sierra Leone; they were, in fact, the army of Sierra Leone which went thoroughly rotten and became rebels and actually invited the rebels that they had been fighting for several years into the government in Freetown. So you had an absolutely anarchic situation or apparently anarchic. But again, to understand the situation I think is important to explain that the seeking of economic [indistinct], or the seeking of diamonds, were the main motivation of all of these groups and the chaos which they created, including the awful stories you've heard about people having their hands chopped off and so on, were part of the chaos which they benefited from as they dug up the diamonds.

And the work of the UN-backed court in Sierra Leone is going on in tandem with another court, another international court.

DOYLE: That's right, this Court has now tried some members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council who as I say at one point were the government and then became the rebels. They've also got a group of actual more specifically defined rebels, the Revolutionary United Front, allegedly backed by Liberia, neighbouring Liberia, and they'll be sentenced soon as well. They don't have the leaders of the Revolutionary United Front – that's Foday Sankoh and his henchman Sam Bockarie known as "Mosquito" because allegedly of his bite and his ability to escape. They do however have the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, who is alleged to have backed many of these rebels, and he's being tried in The Hague at the premises of the International Criminal Court but by the same lawyers who are working for the Sierra Leone court, and that will start on August 20.

World Affairs Correspondent Mark Doyle, many thanks.

*[Transcribed by the Office of Press and Public Affairs]*

# The Patriotic Vanguard

Friday, 20 July 2007

## AFRC Leaders Sentenced

Three former members of Sierra Leone's Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) have been sentenced to lengthy prison sentences for their part in crimes committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil conflict.

These are the first sentences to be handed down at the Special Court.

Alex Tamba Brima, aka "Gullit"; Brima Bazzy Kamara, and Santigie Borbor Kanu, alias "Five-Five" were each convicted on June 20 on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Court imposed single "global" sentences of 50 years for Brima, 45 years for Kamara, and 50 years for Kanu. They will be given credit for time served since their arrests in 2003.



The Court ordered that the three men begin serving their sentences immediately. In announcing the sentences today, Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde (photo) noted that the three had been found guilty of "some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history".

The Trial Chamber, consisting of Justice Sebutinde, Justice Richard Lussick and Justice Teresa Doherty, considered a number of aggravating circumstances when deliberating on the sentences. They found that there were no mitigating circumstances which would have argued for lower sentences.

The Judges noted that none of the accused had expressed remorse for their crimes.

Agence France Presse

Friday, 20 July 2007

### Sierra Leone court slaps lengthy terms on rebel chiefs

The UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone on Thursday sentenced three rebel commanders to lengthy jail terms of between 45 and 50 years.



Players of the Sierra Leone civil war amputees football team train in Freetown in 2006. The UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone has sentenced three rebel commanders to lengthy jail terms of between 45 and 50 years.[AFP]

The court ordered that Alex Tamba Brima, 35, and Santigie Borbor Kanu, 42, be jailed for 50 years each while Brima Bazy Kamara, 39, was sentenced to 45 years.

Prosecutors had earlier this week asked for between 50 and 60 year sentences for the three who last month were found guilty of 11 of the 14 charges against them which included murder, rape and enlisting child soldiers.

Their sentences were the first ever handed down by the court, which is trying the main perpetrators of the war crimes committed during the west African country's 1991-2001 conflict.

"The three men were found guilty of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes in human history," said judge Julia Sebutinde, who spent an hour and a half reading out the verdict.

"Brothers were allowed to rape sisters, men were disemboweled and their parts displayed at check points. Cutting of limbs of unarmed civilians were common."

"Children were forcibly taken way from families, fed with drugs and turned into child soldiers," she said.



The three, who all pleaded not guilty, had received backing from former Liberian president Charles Taylor in exchange for Sierra Leone diamonds.

Taylor is currently standing trial in the UN-backed court in The Hague for war crimes committed during the conflict. He is the first African head of state to face such charges in an international court.

Thursday's landmark judgement was the first by an international court to convict and sentence individuals accused of conscripting children into combat.

The judge said the trio would begin serving their sentences immediately and that they would be given credit for the time they had served since their arrest in 2003.

The men will serve their sentences in Sweden and Austria, according to court officials.

The three belonged to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), a rebel faction led by Johnny Paul Koroma which toppled an elected government in 1997 and joined forces with the notorious main rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

After deposing President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in May 1997, the AFRC set up one of the most vicious juntas Africa has ever known.

While in office the junta unleashed a nine-month terror campaign that included burning children to death, mutilating, looting and cold-blooded killings across Sierra Leone.

By the time the country's decade-long civil war ended in 2001, some 120,000 people had died and thousands of others had been mutilated, with their arms, legs, ears or noses chopped off.

Created in January 2002, the Sierra Leone court is a hybrid of international and local law under a deal between the country's government and the United Nations.

Liberia's Taylor is the most high-profile defendant to appear before the court, although his trial venue was switched to The Hague amid official concerns of unrest if it was held in Freetown. His trial began on June 4.

## Associated Press

Thursday, 19 July 2007

### Sierra Leone War Court Sentences 3

By CLARENCE ROY-MACAULAY

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP) - A U.N.-backed court sentenced three former rebel leaders to prison Thursday, the first punishments handed down by the war crimes tribunal since it was set up five years ago after Sierra Leone's decade-long conflict ended.

Judge Julia Sebutinde said the men committed "heinous, brutal, atrocious, crimes never recorded in the history of mankind."

Alex Tamba Brima, 35, and Santigie Borbor Kanu, 42, were each given 50-year jail terms, while Brima Bazy Kamara, 39, received 45 years. The three men were leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, a junta that overthrew an elected government in 1997 and was ousted by a Nigerian-led peacekeeping force the following year.

Indicted in 2003, their joint trial began in Freetown two years later. Last month, they were convicted of 11 of 14 war crimes charges, including terrorism, enslavement, rape and murder.

The ruling marked the first time an international court issued a conviction on the conscription of child soldiers, who in Sierra Leone were often drugged and forced into battle.

All three men have the right to appeal. If they lose, they will serve their sentences outside of Sierra Leone - most likely in Europe - because of security concerns, said Peter Andersen, a spokesman for the court. Austria and Sweden have volunteered to take them as inmates and pay their expenses.

The special tribunal was set up following the end of the diamond-rich country's 10-year conflict in 2002 to prosecute war crimes. About a half-million people died in the fighting, victims of systematic mutilation in which rebels raped, pillaged and cut off the limbs of thousands of civilians.

During Thursday's judgment, Sebutinde singled out the rebels' treatment of pregnant women as "savage and inhuman, as they had their stomachs slit open while the renegade soldiers gambled whether the fetus was a girl or a boy."

Calling them "zealous" participants in killings and mutilations, Sebutinde said Kanu "even gave a demonstration of amputations in Freetown" in the 1990s.

Announcing the unanimous verdict of the three judges, Sebutinde said none of the defendants had expressed genuine remorse.

All three convicted men stood up as the sentences were read out, then bowed their heads. Some relatives and friends wept as they left the jammed public gallery, which was protected by police and a tiny contingent of armed U.N. peacekeepers - Mongolian soldiers who comprise the last remnant of a once-giant U.N. force that helped end the nation's war.

Many in war-ravaged Freetown welcomed the verdicts.

“Justice has been done,” said James Kamara, a retired civil servant. “What happened (during the war) in my estimation was as a result of greed, thirst for personal power, selfishness and extreme wickedness.”

“We are relieved,” said Pios Foray, a restaurant manager in Freetown, saying the cycle of destructive conflict had come to an end with the judgment.

Human rights experts hoped the long sentences would discourage future atrocities.

“The AFRC committed unspeakable horrors against civilians,” said Corinne Dufka, a senior researcher based in Senegal for Human Rights Watch. “Today, the victims of these crimes have seen justice served; tomorrow, future perpetrators have been put on notice that wars have rules, and they must be respected.”

Some critics, however, say the Special Court is working too slowly. It has only indicted 12 people, including former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is charged with backing Sierra Leonean rebels and is on trial in The Hague, Netherlands.

Three of those charged have died since their indictments - including rebel chief Foday Sankoh who died of natural causes in 2003 while in prison awaiting trial. Five others are awaiting verdicts in Freetown.

Taylor's trial was being held outside of Freetown because of fears the case could trigger fresh violence, although it remains under the auspices of the Sierra Leone court. Taylor is also linked to brutality in his own country, but Liberians have opted for a Truth and Reconciliation commission rather than a court.

## Voice of America

Thursday, 19 July 2007

### Sierra Leone Court Sentences Rebel Leaders for War Crimes

By VOA News

A Sierra Leone court has sentenced three former rebel leaders to decades in prison for war crimes committed during the country's civil war.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone Thursday gave jail terms of 50 years each to Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Barbor Kanu. Another rebel leader, Brima Bazzy Kamara, received a 45-year sentence. These are the first sentences handed out by the court.

The U.N.-backed tribunal last month convicted the three men on charges that included murder, rape, enslavement, and using child soldiers.

Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde said the men committed some of the most "heinous, brutal, and atrocious crimes in human history."

The men led the Armed Forces Revolution Council, a rebel faction that toppled Sierra Leone's elected government in 1997 and set up a junta with another rebel group.

The court was created to try those most responsible for the atrocities committed during the 11-year civil war, which ended in 2002.

The court also is trying former Liberian President Charles Taylor for allegedly backing Sierra Leone rebels.

# Radio Netherlands

Thursday, 19 July 2007

## Sierra Leone court issues first sentences

by Sebastiaan Gottlieb\*

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has imposed long prison sentences on three former militia leaders for their part in the country's civil war. The jail terms are the first to be handed down by this special tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and Sierra Leone.

Two of the three rebel leaders are to be jailed for 50 years; the other received a 45-year sentence. The court found the three guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity in June this year.

The presiding judge, Julia Sebutinde, described them as jointly responsible for *"some of the most heinous, brutal and atrocious crimes ever recorded in human history"*.

She added that the three men had been involved in the mutilation, rape and killing of civilians, the burning of homes and the forced recruitment of child soldiers.

The civil war, which lasted from 1991 to 2002, claimed the lives of at least 50,000 people, with many tens of thousands more left disabled as a result of the atrocities inflicted on the civilian population by the warring militias.

### Appeal

Dutch lawyer Geert-Jan Knoops, who is representing one of the convicted men, pointed out after judgment was passed that his client has been cleared of 80 percent of the individual charges brought against him. Mr Knoops also said he intends to appeal on behalf of his client.

The court is now expected to issue its verdict in the trial of six other accused - from the two other warring parties involved in the civil war - later this year.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is located in the capital, Freetown. However, the former president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, who is also accused in connection with the conflict in Sierra Leone, is being tried in The Hague in connection with security considerations.



**The court - seen here while still under construction**



## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 19 July 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

**AFP Jul 19, 2007**

#### **Liberian ex-army chief arrested**

MONROVIA - Liberia has arrested a former army chief of staff on suspicion of plotting a coup against the government, the information ministry said yesterday.

It said Charles Julu, who was army chief of staff in the regime of ex president Samuel Doe, was arrested with five others on Tuesday for "subversive activities".

"From my understanding he was trying to make a coup against the government," deputy information minister Gabriel Williams told AFP.

### **International Clips on West Africa**

**BBC** Last Updated: Thursday, 19 July 2007, 14:44 GMT 15:44 UK

#### **First S Leone war crime sentences**

Sierra Leone's UN-backed war crimes court has sentenced three leaders of a militia for war crimes including murder, rape and mutilating civilians.

Alex Tamba Brima and Santigie Borbor Kanu were jailed for 50 years each and Brima Kamara for 45 years. All three were senior members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council that toppled the government in 1997.

### **Head of State Sends Messages to African Counterparts**

Luanda, Jul 19, 2007 (Angola Press Agency/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- President sends cooperation reinforcement messages to counterparts of Cote D'ivoire and Burkina Faso. A messages from Angolan head of State, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, to his counterpart of Cote D'ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo, will be delivered by Foreign minister, Joao Miranda, who left Luanda Wednesday afternoon for Abidjan.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **Lower House Finally Approves Controversial Budget**

*(Daily Observer, The Monitor, The News, Nation Times, New Democrat, Liberian Express The Analyst and The Informer)*

- The House of Representatives yesterday passed the controversial draft fiscal 2007/08 national budget estimated at L\$11.6 billion (US\$199.8 million) and has submitted it to the Liberian Senate for concurrence.
- The passage of the budget which followed weeks of debate by the government's financial experts is now US\$16.8 million more than the projected US\$182.9 million budget submitted to the National Legislature by the Executive in May.

#### **National Security Releases Video Clipping of Alleged Coup Plotters**

*(Daily Observer, New Vision, New Democrat, Liberian Express and The Analyst)*

- The National Security Agency (NSA) on Tuesday released a video clipping showing images of Liberians purporting to depose the current administration.

- According to the Daily Observer newspaper, four persons, including Retired General Charles Julu now held for his complexity in subversive activities, were seen discussing plans to execute the alleged plot.
- Some of the suspected detained coup plotters have supposedly admitted to the act. The suspects, The Analyst newspaper says have not been charged but are being investigated.

### **UNMIL Institutes New Security Measures**

*(New Vision, Liberian Express, Heritage and Nation Times)*

- The UN Mission in Liberia says it has begun repositioning the posture of its forces to what it called "Over Watch" Strategy and would entail changing the emphasis of the force from fix to a more fluid and flexible posture.
- UNMIL Deputy Force Commander, Mohammed Tahir said the change is a vote of confidence in Liberia and the present security improvement.

### **Taylor Gets New Defense Team**

*(Liberian Express and New Democrat)*

- The United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has assigned a new defense team for former Liberian President Charles Taylor.
- The new team of lawyers is led by Cockney Griffiths of the Bar of England and Wales and is to represent Mr. Taylor under a general term of legal service to be finalized before the trial resumes.

### **Opposition Party to Boycott Run-off Election**

*(Heritage, The News, The Monitor and Analyst)*

- The Opposition Liberty Party has threatened to withdraw from the run-off in Grand Bassa County legislative by-election if the National Elections Commission does not address "major problems" arising from the first round.
- Addressing a news conference yesterday, Liberty Party National Chairman Israel Akinsayah said that the party will ensure that its members boycott the voting process should the NEC fail to provide electoral materials including tally sheets prior to polling date on Tuesday, 24 June 2007.
- Meanwhile, The Chairman of the National Elections Commission (NEC) said that the Commission would institute punitive measures against the Liberty Party and the Congress for Democratic Change Standard Bearer George Weah if they continue their "smear" campaign against the Commission. NEC said the Liberty Party's press statement which accused the Commission of planning to rig the by-election in Bassa is baseless and intended to discredit the Commission.

### **Government to Recruit Personnel for Correction Centers**

*(The News, The Monitor and The Informer)*

- Speaking to journalists in Monrovia Wednesday, Assistant Justice Minister for Rehabilitation and Corrections, Fatoumata Sheriff hinted that the Ministry of Justice would launch a nationwide recruitment for 70 correction officers with 27 going to Montserrado County, nine to Grand Gedeh County, six to Sinoe County, four each for Bomi and Grand Bassa Counties and three each for the remaining Counties.

**Local Media – Radio Veritas** *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

### **State Security Forces Question former Presidential Guard Chief**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Special Court Names New Defence Counsels for Taylor**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Lawmakers Pass Fiscal Budget**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

## **Government to Recruit Personnel for Correction Centers**

### **UNMIL Puts in Place Security Strategy**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Major State Hospital Workers End "Go-Slow" Action**

- In an interview yesterday, the President of the State-owned John F. Kennedy Medical Hospital Workers Association, Amelia Harvey announced that the workers ended their action and have resumed work after some officials of Government intervened. She added that a committee has been set up to address the workers grievances after the National Independence Day celebration.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Elections Commission Threatens Party with Punitive Action**

- The Chairman of the National Elections Commission (NEC) said that the Commission would institute punitive measures against the Liberty Party and Ambassador George Weah if they continue their smear campaign against it.
- The NEC Chairman, James Fromoyan told a news conference that the Liberty Party issued a press statement in which it accused the Commission of planning to rig the by-election in Bassa. He described allegations as baseless and intended to discredit the Commission.
- Also, Mr. Fromoyan said that Ambassador Weah was engaged in making pronouncements that he out rightly won the 2005 election, but clarified that George Weah did not win any election in Liberia and should desist from making such baseless statements.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

## BBC Online

Thursday, 19 July 2007

### Chad child soldiers scrutinised

The UN Security Council is due to meet in New York to discuss the issue of child soldiers in Chad.

Thousands of boys are thought to be fighting in the national army, as well as rebel and paramilitary groups.

The meeting comes just days after Human Rights Watch criticised Chad's government for breaking promises to release child soldiers from the army.

Under a deal, just 400 child soldiers have been released and they arrived in a rehabilitation centre in 10 days ago.



Rehabilitation is likely to take several months

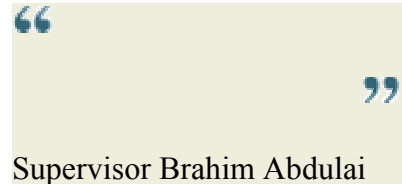
### Centre

The BBC's Stephanie Hancock says many of the children in the centre of the capital, N'Djamena, appear to be between 13 and 16 years old, but some are clearly much younger.

Sixteen-year-old "Saeed", who says he was with the rebels for two years, says they have been welcomed very warmly.

"Before, I didn't know life could be like this. Here we have everything - there is water and food, and to see trees around us is wonderful."

"Juma" says he is 13 years old, but aid workers suspect he is no more than eight or nine.



Supervisor Brahim Abdulai

"There, we didn't play games, all we did was fight. I haven't made war in the whole time I have been here at the centre.

"We were always worried about security, but now we play games like football and I have clothes to play sports in."

### Routines

Since they arrived at the rehabilitation centre set up by the government and the UN children's fund, Unicef, the former boy soldiers follow a strict routine of prayer, rest and play.

The children pass their days playing cards and volleyball, and have lessons in basic literacy, our reporter says.

Supervisors say they hope that in a few months time the boys can return to their families but the road back to normality will be a long one.

"Some of the children were very violent when they arrived, but gradually they are changing their behaviour," says Brahim Abdulai, the centre's supervisor.

"Some are also very conscious that they are living in a different state from before, and that they must try to

forget the violence and what happened to them," he said.

"We are teaching them to love their friends, and not to get angry if someone does something bad to them."

Observers estimate that there are between 7,000 and 10,000 child soldiers on Chadian territory, either in the national army, or in rebel and paramilitary groups.