

**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**

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## Special Court for Sierra Leone Outreach and Public Affairs Office

# **PRESS RELEASE**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 16 July 2009**

### **Special Court Officials Brief U.N. Security Council on Progress, Challenges**

The President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Renate Winter, and Special Court Prosecutor Stephen Rapp today briefed the UN Security Council on the progress of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and challenges the Court faces in completing its mandate.



Justice Renate Winter

The two Court officials highlighted a number of “firsts” by the Special Court for Sierra Leone which have set many precedents in the development of international humanitarian law.



Prosecutor Stephen Rapp

The Special Court was the first to rule that a national amnesty does not apply to the prosecution of international crimes, and was the first court to adjudicate the limitations of immunity by a head of state before an international criminal court.

The Special Court was the first to enter convictions for the forcible recruiting and use of child soldiers, for acts of terrorism in a non-international armed conflict, and for the crime of attacks on UN peacekeepers.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone also pronounced the first-ever convictions on the charge of sexual slavery and for the crime of forced marriage as a crime against humanity.

Justice Winter noted that the Special Court’s impact on Sierra Leone extends well beyond the findings in its cases.

“The Special Court has transferred expertise to Sierra Leoneans via a number of programmes, including capacity-building and training on police investigations, case management, courtroom interpretation, archiving, witness protection, and detention standards,” she said.

Prosecutor Stephen Rapp asked the Security Council for the cooperation and support necessary for the Court to complete its mandate “so that justice can be achieved for the victims of those crimes (committed against the civilian population in Sierra Leone).” He also stressed the Court’s groundbreaking work in reaching out to the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

“(The Special Court) is also the court that has placed the highest priority on outreach—in providing accurate information about its proceedings to the population throughout Sierra Leone, and for the Taylor

case in Liberia as well,” Mr. Rapp said. “For as important as it is to do justice, for all those that a court intends to serve, it is also important that justice be seen to be done.”

Justice Winter told Security Council members that the Court is projecting a funding shortfall this year.

“This shortfall poses the real possibility of disrupting our work, which would have disastrous consequences for the Council’s extensive peace building efforts in Sierra Leone and Liberia,” Justice Winter said. “A disruption in the proceedings would send the wrong message to the international community, jeopardizing the fight against impunity and potentially calling into question our collective commitment to international justice.”

The Prosecutor told the Security Council that the Court’s immediate financial situation constitutes an “impending crisis.”

“Even if all pledged donations from donors for this year come in early, our funds will run dry before next year’s round of donations, and the Special Court will not have the resources necessary to complete its work,” Mr. Rapp said.

The Court officials also briefed the Security Council on the necessity to make arrangements for residual issues, such as the enforcement of sentences, Court archives, and the protection of witnesses who have testified before the Special Court.

“Because the necessary residual mechanisms must last as long as victims and witnesses need protection and until every sentence has been served, it will be a great and on-going challenge to maintain the mechanism in the long-term based purely on voluntary contributions,” Justice Winter said.

#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

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# Mr. Charles Taylor allowed conjugal visit in detention

Despite being in detention, Mr. Charles Taylor is allowed to make love, as conjugal visit is one of the facilities he enjoys.

Although Special Court security eavesdrop on conversation between visitors and detainees, which is routine, when it comes to this kind of visits he is allowed absolute freedom but within a limited time.

"Such visits are not allowed regularly", an official of the Special Court for Sierra Leone said last

Saturday. Adding, "In Mr. Taylor's case he is being held in a detention facility where he has time to do physical exercise, watch TV, read newspapers etc. "As soon as his status changes to a convicted prisoner, all this ceases to exist, including conjugal visits", the official says.

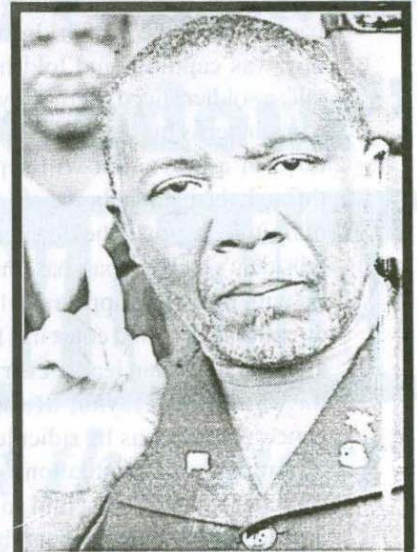
Here, we were also made to understand that conjugal visits are also part of the facilities those held at the court's detention centre enjoy.

# Africa's Cannibal Despot...

# Charles Taylor may go free



*Young fighters of Taylo: prepare to take on rebels in the streets of the capital Monrovia*



*Former Liberian president Charles Taylor*



*Youngsters were forced into the army during Liberia's violent civil war*

**D**ressed in an expensive, impeccably tailored suit and a pair of designer sunglasses, Charles Taylor could pass for a diplomat or businessman discreetly attending to his affairs in The Hague, the Dutch administrative capital. And yet Taylor is an alleged cannibal with a pen-

chant for eating the hearts and livers of his enemies.

He stands accused of masterminding one of the most macabre, blood-spattered episodes in African history. Helped by his teenage son 'Chuekie', Taylor allegedly orchestrated the slaughter of up to 250,000 people,

many of whom were tortured and raped before being cooked and eaten by Taylor's troops. In a wave of terror that horrified the world, Taylor also left tens of thousands of people maimed for life after ordering his drug-crazed fighters to hack off the arms and legs of civilians with machetes.

Rape was widespread. Thousands of women were kept as sex slaves, after the tendons in their feet were slashed so they were unable to run away. The atrocities defy belief. Pregnant women, normally revered in Africa, had their stomachs slashed open and their unborn children hacked from the womb. In one case, a boy was captured and told he was 'too tall': a soldier sliced off the boy's feet with a machete, as his comrades laughed. But now, in a move that will send tremors through the palatial homes of Africa's remaining despots, the former Liberian president's barbaric past has finally caught up with him as he appears before the international criminal court in The Hague.

The first African leader ever to be tried for war crimes, Taylor, 61, oozed arrogance yesterday as he ridiculed charges of murder, rape, mutilation, sexual slavery and conscripting child soldiers during the war he staged in neighbouring Sierra Leone. Announcing he was fed up with being treated 'like some common street thug', Taylor was indignant at suggestions that he was a cannibal.

'People have me eating human beings!' he exclaimed. 'How can people be so low as to think that of me? Have these people had their pound of flesh yet?' He also attacked as 'Lies! Lies! Lies!' suggestions that he was to blame for the slaughter.

'I am not guilty,' he said. 'I am a father of 14 children with love for humanity, and have fought all my life to do what I thought was right. The charges are false, malicious.' But according to Taylor's victims, thousands of whom on Wednesday night watched proceedings on giant television screens back in West Africa, there is just one problem with the former president's defence: it is complete nonsense. To them, Taylor is a butcher. Indeed, investigators claim he even made carnage a matter of government policy. Dubbed Operation No Living Thing, one of his madcap plans was to slaughter the entire civilian population of Sierra Leone, the former British colony, enabling him to make billions from exploiting the richest diamond fields in the world.

One close associate and former confidant has also confirmed longstanding rumours that Taylor had a fondness for eating the flesh of his victims. Joe 'D. Zigzag' Marzah, a former diamond trader with close links to the former president, claims he knows all of Taylor's secrets 'because we ate human beings together and so he trusted me'. Recalling a dinner at Taylor's palace in the Liberian capital, Monrovia, following the capture of two enemies, Marzah added: 'We ate these people's livers. This woman cooked the liver and Taylor shared it with me.'

A member of the Poro Society, an ancient West African cult of demon-wor-

shippers, Taylor believed that eating the organs of his enemies gave him their strength. He encouraged his soldiers to eat all enemies they captured. Born in a remote Liberian village in 1948, there was no sign at first that Taylor would become a monster. He excelled at school in the tiny West African country. Liberia was not a nation state until liberated slaves from America colonised it in 1847. They modelled their government on that of the U.S. and named their capital Monrovia, after the fifth U.S. President, James Monroe.

A promising student, he earned a university place in the U.S. After gaining an economics degree at Boston University, Taylor then returned to take a government job in Liberia - only to flee back to the U.S. after embezzling more than £1 million from Liberian state coffers. It was a short-lived flight from justice. On his arrival in the U.S., he was arrested for crimes committed in Liberia and jailed pending trial. But Taylor escaped again, this time using a knotted sheet to clamber out of his cell window. He climbed over the prison's outer fence - and was picked up in a waiting car by his Liberian wife, Enid, whom he had married in the States. Vanishing from the U.S., he was later reported to be undergoing guerilla warfare training in Libya. There were even rumours that U.S. Intelligence had let him escape, hoping he would overthrow Samuel Doe, the then Liberian leader, who was reputedly losing his mind.

Returning to Liberia, Taylor forged the National Patriotic Front of Liberia - in reality an army of gangsters who raped and pillaged while waging a bush war against Doe. This continued for most of the Nineties until, another warlord rival captured and killed Doe. But Taylor saw his chance to seize control out of the chaos in 1997 and staged rigged elections. Taylor, a Baptist preacher, campaigned with the slogan: 'I killed your pa, I killed your ma, now vote for me.' But victory for Taylor did not bring peace. Instead, it brought only more death and destruction.

After marching into Monrovia - using soldiers rounded up from tribal villages and fed cocaine and amphetamines to make them believe they had magic protection against bullets - Taylor promptly declared himself president-for-life. He installed his American-born son, Charles 'Chuckie' Taylor Jr, as head of the elite Anti-Terrorist Unit - his secret police - and got down to the real business of being an African dictator: killing opponents, gorging himself at state banquets and diverting the country's money to his private bank accounts. 'Chuckie', meanwhile, took to his job with relish. He buried victims alive. He tortured others with red-hot irons and electric shocks. He mutilated the genitals of prisoners and dripped hot oil in their eyes. Many, he simply shot through the head.

But both father and son knew that the real prize lay across the border in Sierra Leone, where the horrifying civil war, fought over the country's gems, would later inspire the Hollywood film *Blood Diamond*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio.

Taylor had an abiding hatred for Sierra Leone's government, after they fought alongside the Liberian government during his battle for power, and vowed in a radio broadcast that Sierra Leone 'would taste the bitterness of war'. He kept his promise. Dazzled by stories of his neighbour's spectacular new diamond fields, Taylor backed an erratic former photographer called Foday Sankoh to launch a rebellion there.

He then sent troops and arms to help Foday's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rag-tag collection of rebels and child soldiers recruited at gunpoint from rural areas and plied with drugs so they could murder and rape without emotion. Children as young as seven were forced into this army. They were taught how to use AK-47 assault rifles and how to terrorise villagers. Those too small to lift a gun were ordered to carry bullets.

In what Time Magazine branded Africa's new 'Heart Of Darkness', Sierra Leone descended into mayhem as Taylor's forces, many of whom dressed in women's clothes in the belief they would protect them from enemy bullets, rampaged through the country. In harrowing testimony collected at rehabilitation camps set up after Taylor was driven from power, child soldiers have told how they were forced to rape old women at gunpoint and torture anyone suspected of collaborating with government forces. The aim was to drive everyone away from the diamond fields. In accounts from former child soldiers, fathers were ordered to rape their own children, while village women were mutilated with broken bottles.

The stumps of both arms still wrapped in bandages, Alusine, who testified in court, was one of hundreds of thousands

to lose limbs. His hands were hacked off when Taylor-backed rebels poured into Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.

The 59-year-old told how rebels cut off his left hand with an axe as his wife and four-year-old son watched in horror. When the child started crying, the rebels held him down and prepared to hack off his hands, too. 'I said I would rather you cut off my second hand,' Alusine told the court, wincing as he recalled the trauma. 'I placed my hand [on a slab] and they hacked it twice. It was gone.'

As Liberia and Sierra Leone descended into anarchy, British forces intervened. Members of the SAS and the Special Boat Squadron were sent in after a group of British soldiers was captured in 2000 by one of the many rebel gangs. After freeing the captured soldiers, and killing huge numbers of the enemy, British intervention signalled the beginning of the end of the war. Rebel fighters, who had been told that Taylor's blessing made them impervious to bullets, deserted after hearing about the 'powerful magic' of the British. The RUF started to collapse and a United Nations peace deal followed in 2004.

A rebellion against Taylor also erupted in Liberia, forcing him from power. And after frantically trying to hide millions of pounds in bank accounts overseas, Taylor fled into exile in Nigeria. He was later arrested and in 2006 was sent to The Hague, where he has been held in a special prison ever since. Earlier this year, 'Chuckie' was sentenced to 97 years imprisonment by a Miami court for torturing people when he led his father's terror unit. He was arrested under a new law which makes it illegal for anyone involved in war crimes to enter or live in the U.S.

Now his father faces life behind bars. Hague prosecutors insist Charles Taylor is a pathological killer and liar. According to the indictment, Taylor 'supported and encouraged all actions of the RUF'. The UN has already frozen his many bank accounts, containing millions from the trade in blood diamonds.

Taylor admits that atrocities took place, but insists he was trying to broker peace in Sierra Leone. Asked in court whether he ever received diamonds in exchange for assisting the RUF rebels, Taylor replied: 'Never, ever did I receive, whether it is in mayonnaise or coffee or whatever jar, any diamonds. It is all a lie, a diabolical lie.' In Liberia and Sierra Leone, where the scars are slowly healing, his victims can only hope that truth and justice will prevail.



Cotton Tree News  
Wednesday, 15 July 2009

### **Charles Taylor takes the witness stand**

Written by Ndeamoh Mansaray

Former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor says the case against him at the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone is one of deception and of no truth.

He spoke on Tuesday while testifying as the first witness in his defense at the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in the Hague, Netherlands. He said he was not guilty of all the charges preferred against him by the court. The former Liberian Leader disputed testimonies of the many prosecution witnesses who testified in the court that he ate human beings. He said it was too low for people to think of him like that.

His testimony continues on Wednesday. Mr. Taylor denies eleven counts including terrorism, murder, rape and torture, at the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor is accused of having armed and directed rebel groups from Liberia in order to seize control of Sierra Leone's diamond riches. He is the first African leader to be tried by an international court.

# UN News

Thursday, 16 July 2009

## Top officers of special court for Sierra Leone describe trial of Charles Taylor as critical for fragile peace, stability in West Africa



Security Council  
SC/9707

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Security Council  
6163<sup>rd</sup> Meeting (AM)

### President, Prosecutor Detail Achievements, Challenges in Security Council Briefing

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor was critical to preserving the fragile peace and stability of West Africa, the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone told the Security Council this morning.

Briefing the Council on the Special Court's activities, Judge Renate Winter said that it was now hearing Mr. Taylor's defence, which had started this week, after completing the trial of cases against leaders of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). According to the updated completion strategy for the Special Court, the trial judgement in the Taylor case would be delivered in July 2010 and the sentencing judgement, if necessary, one month later. The appeals judgement would probably be delivered in February 2011.

The Special Court was considered an exemplary model of international justice, having achieved many "firsts" and set many precedents in the development of international criminal law since its inception, she said. Through specific and sustained efforts, the Court had transferred expertise to Sierra Leoneans through a number of programmes, and its Outreach Section had made its legal proceedings a part of the country's national discourse and heritage.

She went on to say that, in order to maintain international standards and successfully fulfil its original mandate, the Special Court was still bound by several legal obligations that would not terminate after the completion of trials and appeals. With its Management Committee, the Special Court was working to determine a suitable arrangement to provide for residual issues. It continued to rely on the Council's indispensable support, which was more urgent today than ever before.

The Special Court needed approximately \$30 million for the successful completion of its mandate, she continued. Because the necessary residual mechanism must last as long as victims and witnesses needed protection, and until every sentence had been served, its long-term maintenance on the basis of voluntary contributions alone would be an ongoing challenge. Without adequate funds, it would also be difficult to retain competent court personnel in order to efficiently run the Taylor trial.

Also briefing the Council, Special Court Prosecutor Stephen Rapp said that for the thousands of victims who had been mutilated, the tens of thousands murdered and the hundreds of thousands subjected to sexual violence, the Special Court offered justice by holding to account those alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for those crimes. The trial of Charles Taylor was proceeding smoothly, with a high level of transparency, efficiency and fairness. The accused would be assured of his right fully to contest the indictment against him.

Pointing out the "ground-breaking precedents" resulting from the Special Court's activities, he said that, for the first time, the use of child soldiers had been recognized as an international crime, and perpetrators of attacks on United Nations peacekeepers had been convicted. The Court had also pronounced the first ever convictions arising from the charge of sexual slavery, and recognized forced marriage as an inhumane act constituting a crime against humanity.

As envisioned by Council resolution 1315 (2000), he said, completion of the Court's mandate would contribute to reconciliation and respect for the rule of law. It would also send a powerful message that the international community strongly supported institutions established to hold those responsible for atrocities to account, and by doing so, deter the perpetration of such atrocities in the future, thus saving others from the violence, injury, and death visited on the innocent people of Sierra Leone.

In the subsequent discussion, Council members noted that it was fitting that they were considering the Special Court during the week in which the defence stage of Charles Taylor's trial had begun. They underlined the importance of the Special Court in fighting impunity for the most serious crimes against humanity, and in contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone and the subregion as a whole. They appealed to the wider United Nations membership to ensure the provision of the necessary resources so that the Special Court could complete its mandate and the establishment of a residual mechanism.

The representative of the United Kingdom said the Special Court had participated in the re-establishment of the rule of law in Sierra Leone, and announced that his country stood ready to imprison Charles Taylor if he was convicted. The representative of France added that the Taylor trial was exemplary in that it was the first involving a Head of State indicted while still in office.

Echoing other speakers, the representative of Costa Rica said the Taylor trial was a clear example that the long arm of the law also reached the highest levels. Its conclusion was essential for ensuring peace and stability in the subregion. He added that the Court's work showed that the so-called "contradiction between peace and justice" did not exist. On the contrary, justice was a decisive factor in ensuring sustainable peace.

Sierra Leone's representative said his country had come a long way since the cessation of hostilities and had successfully organized three elections, among other things. Sierra Leone was the first country to institute a hybrid Special Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to allow its people to seek justice and vent their frustrations. The country thanked those members of the international community that had consistently supported the Special Court financially and morally, and appealed to them to continue to do so until it completed its deliberations.

Other speakers today were the representatives of Turkey, Croatia, Austria, United States, Viet Nam, Russian Federation, Burkina Faso, Japan, Mexico, China, Libya and Uganda.

The meeting began at 10:15 and adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

#### Background

The Security Council met this morning to consider the situation in Sierra Leone.

#### Briefings

RENATE WINTER, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, said that over the last six years the Court had issued, and the Chambers had confirmed, indictments against 13 people. Eleven people had been arrested and transferred to the Court. Two had died in custody, one had been killed in Liberia prior to being apprehended and the whereabouts of another remained unknown. To date, the Special Court had concluded proceedings against eight of the remaining nine indictees in the first instance.

She said the Special Court had combined its proceedings into four main cases, three against the leaders of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which had been completed in Freetown with the conviction and sentencing of all five individuals concerned. The Appeals Chamber was currently adjudicating the appeals in the RUF case and would deliver its judgement in October. Upon delivery of that verdict, the Special Court would have completed all judicial proceedings conducted in Freetown.

In its final trial, that of Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia, the prosecution had closed its case in February and the defence had started presenting its evidence this week, she said. Mr. Taylor was currently on the witness stand in The Hague, testifying in his own defence. According to the updated completion strategy, the Special Court predicted that the trial judgement in the Taylor case would be delivered in July 2010 and the sentencing judgement, if necessary, one month later.

She projected that the Special Court would have completed all its judicial activities in February 2011, upon delivery of the appeals judgement in the Taylor case. While it was not easy to predict the duration of trials, the Appeals Chamber had consistently adhered to the allocated time frame set out in the completion strategy, and had never taken longer than five months to conclude any appeal. The Special Court was considered an exemplary model of international justice, having achieved many "firsts" and set many precedents in the development of international criminal law since its inception. However, its impact on Sierra Leone extended well beyond the findings in its cases.

Through specific and sustained efforts, she continued, the Special Court had transferred expertise to Sierra Leoneans through a number of programmes, including capacity-building and police-investigation training on case management, courtroom interpretation, archiving, witness protection and detention standards. Parliament's enactment of three gender bills was a direct consequence of the Court's work on gender issues, and all three laws would greatly improve the lives of women in the country.

The Special Court's Outreach Section, known as the "Crown Jewel of the Court", had made its legal proceedings a part of Sierra Leone's national discourse and heritage, she said. The Court was also helping the Government of Sierra Leone, wherever possible, in its efforts to ensure the sustainability of the Special Court site beyond its lifespan, with several potential uses of the site having been identified, including as a regional training centre for the rule of law and a memorial component for commemorating the victims of war.

To maintain international standards and successfully fulfil its original mandate, the Special Court was still bound by several legal obligations that would not terminate after the completion of trials and appeals, she said. With the Management Committee, the Special Court was working to determine a suitable arrangement to provide for residual issues. A small successor body would likely need to be set up to manage and perform such functions as sentence enforcement, archive maintenance, witness protection and assistance, and possible trial or transfer of the case against the single indictee still at large.

She said that, in the long-term, there was a need to consider sharing an administrative stage with another institution, particularly since many of the residual functions that would be performed by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia were similar to those of the Special Court. That would help ensure the sustainability of the successor body in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

The Security Council's assistance would continue to be important in the future, she said, expressing gratitude for the Council's adoption of resolutions 1688 (2006), which requested all States to cooperate in transferring Mr. Taylor to the Netherlands; 1626 (2005), which extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); and 1750 (2007), which mandated UNMIL to provide support, with the consent of the Liberian Government, to the Special Court for activities conducted in Liberia. The Special Court continued to rely on the Council's indispensable support, which was more urgent today than ever before.

Despite efforts by the Special Court to contain costs and operate as efficiently as possible, its financial situation was most serious, she said. In March 2009, the Secretary-General had informed Member States of his "grave concern" about the funding situation and had sought their urgent support. Based on current available funds, the Special Court would experience a funding shortfall by the first week of August, which could disrupt its work, with disastrous consequences for the Council's extensive peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone and Liberia. That would jeopardize the fight against impunity and potentially call into question the collective commitment to international justice.

In total, the Special Court needed approximately \$30 million to complete its mandate successfully, she said. Because the necessary residual mechanisms must last as long as victims and witnesses needed protection, and until every sentence had been served, its long-term maintenance on the basis of voluntary contributions alone would be a great and ongoing challenge. Fundraising had proven to be time-consuming and costly. Much work must be accomplished in the next 18 months. The final case must be concluded, after which the facilities and operations in Freetown would be kept at a minimum provided the Special Court could transfer convicted persons to an enforcing State in a timely manner.

Emphasizing that the Special Court must complete the Taylor trial, which was so critical to preserving the fragile peace and stability of West Africa, she said that, without adequate funds, it would be difficult to retain competent court personnel, who might depart for better-paid and longer-lasting employment, to the detriment of an efficiently run Trial Chamber. The Special Court must also set up a residual mechanism -- the first of its kind -- that would be of use to other international courts when they reached their final stages, thus saving significant costs to the international community.

STEPHEN RAPP, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, said that for the victims -- the thousands mutilated, the tens of thousands murdered, the hundreds of thousands subjected to sexual violence -- the Special Court offered justice by holding to account those alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for those crimes. After three multiple-accused trials had been completed in Freetown, the trial of Charles Taylor had commenced in 2008. Some 91 individuals had travelled to The Hague to present their testimony. The trial had proceeded smoothly, with a high level of transparency, efficiency and fairness. This week, the defence case had commenced, with the accused taking the stand to begin his testimony. He would be assured of his right fully to contest the indictment against him. The Prosecution felt confident that the trial would come to judgement by mid-2010 and to finalization on appeal very early in 2011.

Turning to proceedings in Freetown, he said they had resulted in historic developments in international humanitarian law, including the groundbreaking precedent recognizing the use of child soldiers as an international crime. In addition, the recent trial judgement in the RUF case included the first convictions in history for attacks on United Nations peacekeepers. The Special Court had also pronounced the first ever convictions on the charge of sexual slavery, both as a war crime and a crime against humanity. It had further recognized forced marriage as an inhumane act constituting a crime against humanity. By alleging that that wider range of offences were among acts of terrorism, the Prosecution had been able to show that they had been committed as part of a strategy for dominating and instilling fear in the civilian population.

He said the Special Court represented a partnership between an African nation and the international community, in which 60 per cent of the workforce was Sierra Leonean and in which Sierra Leoneans held senior positions. The Court also placed the highest priority on outreach -- in providing accurate information about its proceedings to the population throughout Sierra Leone, and about the Taylor case to the population in Liberia as well. As important as it was to do justice, for all those that a court intended to serve, it was also important that justice be seen to be done.

Since the Court would be concluding its proceedings, the need for a mechanism to deal with residual issues must be addressed, he said. For the Prosecution, that concerned the case of one indictee-at-large, AFRC leader Johnny Paul Koroma. Although witnesses in the Taylor trial had testified to having heard reports that Koroma had been killed in Liberia, his remains had not been found and rumours about his whereabouts persisted in the subregion. It would be unacceptable for the country and for international justice if Koroma were to surface after the Court closed. The Prosecution had, therefore, been in discussion with the authorities in Sierra Leone and two other States to ensure that he could be prosecuted within a national system after the Court's closure.

Another issue involved the serving of prison sentences in secure facilities that met international standards, he said. The Government of Sierra Leone had expressed its wish that such sentences be served outside the country. The Prosecution's concern in that regard was for the safety of witnesses and Court personnel. It was, therefore, necessary to reach sentence-enforcement agreements with States that would provide that the enforcing State would cover the costs or provide funding through the residual mechanism. The Court and its Management Committee were working on proposals for a very small residual mechanism that might provide a model for other international courts. Even if very small, however, funding must be secured.

While the funding of the residual mechanism must be addressed, the Court's immediate financial situation might now be fairly characterized as "an impending crisis", he said. Even if all pledged donations for the current year came in early, funds would run dry before next year's round of donations, and the Special Court would not have the resources necessary to complete its work. Although the Council was not directly involved in financial issues, it was requested to consider urging Member States to make pledges and contributions so that the Special Court could conclude the RUF appeal in Freetown and the historic proceedings in the Taylor case in The Hague.

As envisioned by Council resolution 1315 (2000), the completion of the Special Court's mandate would contribute to national reconciliation and respect for the rule of law. It would also send a powerful message that the international community strongly supported institutions established to hold those responsible for atrocities to account, and by doing so, deter the perpetration of such atrocities in the future, thus saving others from the violence, injury, and death visited on the innocent people of Sierra Leone.

### Statements

DAVID QUARREY (United Kingdom) said Sierra Leone had made significant progress, including the holding of elections in 2007, and was beginning to consolidate peace and stability. The Special Court had participated in the re-establishment of the rule of law, and the United Kingdom, as one of its largest contributors, had participated in its Management Committee. It was fitting that the Council was considering the Court during the week in which the trial against Charles Taylor had begun. Mr. Taylor would receive a fair trial and the United Kingdom stood ready to imprison him if he was convicted. It was critical for the integrity of the international justice process to establish a residual mechanism. It was also essential that the international community ensure the necessary funding for the Special Court. The United Kingdom urged all Member States to pledge the contributions needed as the Court had played an indispensable role in bringing peace to Sierra Leone.

FAZLI ÇORMAN (Turkey) said the trial of Charles Taylor represented one of the Special Court's most significant cases. With Sierra Leone now emerging from a difficult period and showing signs of peace and stability, Turkey appreciated the Court's important role in efforts to end impunity and enhance the rule of law. The Court contributed to peace and harmony, as well as regional stability. In light of the Taylor trial, the continuation of the Court was more important than ever, as the trial would be a turning point in the fight to end impunity. While it was to be hoped that the Court would complete its work within the set time frame, successful completion was more important than meeting deadlines. A successful conclusion also depended on resources and continued contributions by the international community. The establishment of a residual mechanism could be an example for other international courts.

NEVEN JURICA (Croatia) said the Special Court's legal judgements and accomplishments represented a strong contribution to the global fight against impunity and to the creation and enforcement of international criminal law. The prosecution of Charles Taylor was a major milestone which Croatia was following closely. The Special Court's efforts represented an excellent way to spread awareness and contribute to lasting peace in Sierra Leone. Since the Court was funded voluntarily, adequate financing remained critical.

It was also important that the Court be able to make the necessary arrangements to address outstanding sentences and cases, he said, adding that his country supported its efforts to set up a residual mechanism to address such issues. Croatia

hoped that the Special Court's work with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on the creation of an administrative mechanism to address residual functions would continue and be of mutual benefit and interest for all concerned.

THOMAS MAYR-HARTING (Austria) said the Special Court was playing a pioneering role in combating impunity and strengthening the rule of law. Its judgements had contributed greatly to international criminal law and international humanitarian law, particularly on the recruitment of child soldiers and forced marriage. The Court's serious financial situation was also of great concern, given that its funds would be exhausted by early August. Austria, having been consistent in its financial contributions, including in the aftermath of the Secretary-General's March appeal, called on all other States to help alleviate its dire financial situation.

He went on to stress that the Special Court must finish its work, including the Taylor case, at the earliest possible time, while also undertaking outreach. Its work would not end with the completion of its last case. Several residual functions would have to be performed, and Austria supported ongoing discussions to set up a small successor body, including for sentence enforcement and archive management. Austria also supported the proposed trust fund to cover the upkeep of prisoners. It had been noted that closing down an international criminal tribunal was a much more complex task than setting up a new one.

ROSEMARY DICARLO (United States) congratulated the Court officers on their achievements, noting that their briefings came at a critical juncture -- the start of Charles Taylor's defence. The Court's completion strategy and the establishment of a residual mechanism remained a priority for the United States, which, as the largest contributor to the institution, encouraged all Member States to support it so that Sierra Leone and the wider region could sustain accountability.

Noting that the closing of the Special Court would end a chapter in Sierra Leone's history, she said it was important for the country's democratic development that all lessons of the past be recorded, stressing that the Court must play an important role in that regard. Preparations for a residual mechanism should be efficient and cost-effective. The Special Court had broken new ground in international law, including the recognition of the use of child soldiers and sexual slavery as crimes against humanity.

HOANG CHI TRUNG (Viet Nam), welcoming the continuing achievements of the Government of Sierra Leone in rebuilding stability, said the establishment of the Special Court had proved a positive contribution to the development of peace and security. Viet Nam commended the Court for its implementation of a completion strategy for ongoing trials and for the precedents it had set in international law. The Council should consider establishing a residual mechanism in the context of the completion strategies of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

VITALY CHURKIN (Russian Federation) said the Special Court had carried out serious work in international criminal law, demonstrating its effectiveness despite financial difficulties. It had assisted the federal institutions of Sierra Leone in terms of justice and the reintegration of former combatants, and it had shown that peace and reconciliation in post-conflict societies were possible. The Taylor trial was the most complex and politically sensitive of the Special Court's trials, and the Russian Federation was closely following its development. The Special Court's residual mechanism would be a compact and cost-effective structure. Projects initiated by the Special Court in that area would become important components of a future special court.

MICHEL KAFANDO (Burkina Faso) said that in combating impunity in Sierra Leone, a country long ravaged by civil war, the Special Court was making a major contribution to lasting peace. He congratulated the Special Court on its successes, despite the numerous difficulties it had experienced, including financial constraints. Without cooperation, the present results would not have been achieved. He welcomed the cooperation of ECOWAS and those in the international community that had provided funding for the Special Court's essential functioning and which had contributed to the peacebuilding efforts of Sierra Leone. He called on the international community to support the Special Court in implementing its completion strategy.

SHIGEKI SUMI (Japan) said it was timely to meet today in view of the recent commencement of the defence case in the Taylor trial. Japan was strongly committed to the realization of justice and the rule of law at national and international levels, in which the International Tribunals had played an important role. The closeness of the Special Court to the people of Sierra Leone, as exemplified in its outreach activities, had contributed to the people's understanding of the procedures. He hoped that through the continued efforts of the Court and contributing States, the Court could successfully complete its mandate. The Special Court had been a pioneer. The matter of residual functions was a challenge the Special Court must address. That exercise could offer useful insights for the other International Tribunals.

CLAUDE HELLER (Mexico) agreed that the Special Court had been a pioneer and a successful example of international justice. Without a doubt, its most important work had been its positive impact on the people of Sierra Leone. The Court had shown the population that the most serious crimes against international humanitarian law would not go unpunished, and its activities had confirmed that justice must accompany reconstruction. The Special Court had also made a decisive

contribution to the transition to peace and the rule of law, and had been key in efforts to ensure national reconciliation and reconstruction. Of particular importance was its enormous contribution to carrying out international justice and setting limits to impunity for a former Head of State. The international community must ensure the successful completion of the Court's mandate. Noting the Court's urgent needs, he stressed the importance of combating impunity for the commission of the most serious crimes against humanity.

CHEN PEIJIE (China) said in the last two years the Special Court had made further progress in its work, with only two trials left to complete. The goals of the completion strategy were coming into view, and it was feasible for the Special Court to conclude its work in 2011. She expected that the Special Court would continue to work effectively and achieve the goals of the completion strategy in due time. She hoped that States would provide financial contributions to the Court so that it could finish its work and undertake its residual functions.

ABDURRAHMAN MOHAMED SHALGHAM (Libya), agreeing that the Special Court had made tangible progress towards completing its work, expressed support for the measures it and its Management Committee had taken in such areas as amending the rules of procedure, evidence, support to court staff, and updating the strategy and dates of trials and appeals. Despite that progress, States able to do so should render financial and human resources support to the Special Court. He highly valued the impact of the Special Court on Sierra Leone's legal system, but stressed the importance of bolstering national judicial capacities to secure State ownership of archives, whose importance transcended trial procedures. The national judiciary in many States where crimes had been committed could now handle issues professionally, with the international community's support.

NICOLAS DE RIVIÈRE (France) said the seriousness of the crimes perpetrated during Sierra Leone's civil war deserved a commensurate response. At stake was the fight against impunity, and France had, therefore, provided full political support to the Special Court. The Taylor trial was exemplary in that it was the first trial of a Head of State indicted while still in office. It was being followed closely both in Sierra Leone and Liberia, which illustrated the tragic overlapping of events in both countries. Since the Special Court wished to complete its work in 2010, the Council should express its position on its completion strategy, which should be financially sustainable. The jurisdiction of Sierra Leone must take part in the residual mechanism while convicted persons served their sentences in other countries.

CHRISTIAN GUILLERMET (Costa Rica) noted the Special Court was the first of its kind to be established under an agreement between the United Nations and a Member State. In the fight against impunity, it had also been first in many ways: it was the first not to recognize amnesty; it had set limits on impunity for Heads of State; it had been first to recognize the use of child soldiers as an international crime; and it was the first international court to end its procedures and set up a residual mechanism that could serve as an example to other international tribunals. The Taylor trial was a clear example that the long arm of the law also reached the highest levels. Its conclusion was essential for ensuring peace and stability in the subregion. The Court's work showed that the so-called "contradiction between peace and justice" did not exist. On the contrary, justice was a decisive factor in ensuring sustainable peace.

Council President RUHAKANA RUGUNDA (Uganda), speaking in his national capacity, said the Special Court could rightly claim to be an exemplary model of international criminal justice. The challenges facing it must be dealt with properly to ensure the completion of its work. There was no substitute for witness- and victim-protection programmes, even after the last sentences had been served. Victims and the broader community must be informed at every stage of the process so that the healing process could start in the full knowledge that abusers would be punished for their transgressions. Uganda was concerned that, on the basis of the funds currently available, the Court would experience a significant financial shortfall by the beginning of August. Resources should be predictable and consistent; the Court should not have to be encumbered by fundraising, and its international partners should provide it with the necessary funding.

RUPERT DAVIES (Sierra Leone) said his country had come a long way since the cessation of hostilities. It had been able successfully to organize three elections, the last of which had seen Ernest Bai Koroma become President and form the present Government. Sierra Leone was the first country to institute a hybrid Special Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to allow its people to seek justice and vent their frustrations. The country thanked those members of the international community that had consistently supported the Special Court financially and morally, and appealed to them to continue to do so until it completed its deliberations.

### Concluding Remarks

Judge WINTER, stressing the importance of the meeting, thanked Council members for their continuing support while appealing to them not to forget the witnesses who had risked so much in coming forward to help complete the Court's work.

Prosecutor RAPP thanked the Council for convening the briefings and for the interventions made, in particular members' praise for the Special Court. All those working for the Court would continue to do so until its mandate was completed.

## The Guardian (UK)

Sunday, 19 July 2009

### Sierra Leone's long search for justice

The trial of Charles Taylor for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone's civil war is a milestone for the rule of law in Africa



"They give me a choice," says my Liberian friend David. "They say, 'Which hand you won?' I think quick – lef' hand. They cut off my right arm. They laugh; one guy say, 'Tomorrow, I take the lef' one – make sure your arms ain' lonely.'"

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, for war crimes allegedly committed during Sierra Leone's civil war of 1991-2004, is a transformative moment for Africa. He is the first African leader to stand in the dock. The proceedings also have wider significance; in a year when the Taylor trial overlaps with the ICC indictment of President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, and the forthcoming trial of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, this may be a historic moment for African and global justice.

In Africa, as elsewhere in the world, it is a cultural taboo for current or former heads of state to be indicted for war crimes. It is almost unheard of to press charges against a leader. It is thus groundbreaking that witnesses are directly presenting evidence against Taylor. As a commander, Taylor was revered by his soldiers, and feared as a wizard. A public trial, in which the victims of war literally face their demon, will be cathartic in breaking his spell.

Yet, there is no guarantee that Taylor will be found guilty. The onus is on the prosecution to prove a direct, causal connection between Taylor and the violence.

Critics argue that having the trial in The Hague, instead of in Sierra Leone, delegitimises the whole process and makes it a "show trial". This is nonsense; it is the special court for Sierra Leone, not the UN, which requested the trial be moved to The Hague, for security reasons. Taylor still has a following in west Africa, and there was a real risk of violence between Taylor's supporters and his opponents.

Another criticism is that Taylor is a victim of "white man's justice". Wrong. This trial is not about race. Taylor is being tried in Europe; but it is his fellow Africans who are bringing him to justice, and that is what matters.

Another criticism is that the trial and western media coverage promote a stereotypical "heart of darkness" image of Sierra Leone and Liberia, at a time when both countries have moved on from conflict. This is true; viewers will be bombarded with incessant images of shattered limbs and lives, and may embrace the comfortable orthodoxy of "murderous Africa".

So be it; we should not deny that terrible things happen in Africa, as elsewhere in the world, and it is important that those who suffered be seen and heard. No one can dispute that poverty and conflict are major problems in Africa, but not all Africans face a daily struggle for existence.

We, as Africans, need to free ourselves from blaming colonialism and the west for our problems. The violence in Liberia and Sierra Leone was black-on-black violence. We can argue about whether or not the west paid for the bullets, but these were African hands on the trigger. For Africa to move on and assert its rightful place in global affairs, we need to have an honest conversation with ourselves about governance and violence. The Taylor case is a milestone in this dialogue.



Accordingly, we should celebrate the real achievement of this trial: namely, that it highlights Sierra Leone's remarkable journey from no rule of law to a nascent world-class justice system. Taylor's acolytes in Sierra Leone have been tried and sentenced, and he is getting world-class legal representation. Nor is this limited to Sierra Leone; problems remain, but Africa is building its justice architecture.

The real risk is that Taylor's trial in The Hague could deprive Liberians of their opportunity to make him accountable for his Liberian atrocities. His trial overlaps with Liberia's recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC] Report. This report has recommended that Liberia's former warlords should be tried for war crimes. Those named insist, however, that they will not allow the creation of an Extraordinary Tribunal for War Crimes in Liberia. Taylor, in turn, cannot be tried for his Liberian crimes. Thus, justice delivered for Sierra Leone, could become justice denied for Liberia.

The trial's wider implications also shows the west that post-conflict reconstruction aid *does* work; but the obsession with security sector reform has to be balanced with investment in Africa's justice system. Africa needs good lawyers, not bad soldiers.

The crimes committed by forces loyal to Charles Taylor during the Liberian and Sierra Leone civil wars remain seared in Africa's consciousness. But this trial is about justice, not vengeance. Taylor and his victims deserve a fair hearing. Due process, whether in an African or international court of law, and whether delivered according to Muslim, traditional or western statutes, must be one of the benchmarks for the African century. This trial does not mean the end of authoritarianism and brutality; but it does mark Africa's emergence as an engine, rather than a cog, in the global justice architecture.

Africa laying down the law to the rest of the world? Now that's a change I can live with. As David reminded me, "We put Taylor an' his people on trial; we come a long way; we got the prize. You tell them that."

## Liberian Broadcasting System Online

Monday, 20 July 2009

<http://liberiabroadcastingsystem.com/news/>

### **GOL denies Pres. Sirleaf involvement in NPFL**

Govt. denies President Sirleaf's involvement with the defunct NPFL...

The Liberian Government has categorically denied the latest testimony by Former President, Charles Taylor, that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf supported his defunct NPFL Rebel Faction.

Deputy Information Minister for Administration, Cletus Sieh, termed Mr. Taylor's testimony at the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague as diabolical lies.

Minister Sieh instead accused the former President of embarking on a desperate campaign to falsely implicate other peace loving Liberians in his trial.

According to the Deputy Information Minister, President Johnson-Sirleaf remains committed to the mandate given her to transform Liberia in 2005 by the Liberian people.

Speaking at the Ministry's weekly press briefing Thursday on Capitol Hill, Minister Sieh also disclosed that President Theodora Huguen of Equatorial Guinea, is due in Liberia for the July 26 Independence Day Celebrations, slated for Gbarnga, Bong County, to be followed by a visit to Liberia of the President of Namibia on July 28.

# The New Vision (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

## Taylor Explains His Release from US Jail

### Taylor Explains His

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor told a war crimes court Wednesday he was "released" from a US prison in 1985 before returning home for the "revolution" that unseated his predecessor Samuel Doe. The American CIA and Libya's leader Moammar Gadhafi both had a hand in Charles Taylor's rise to power as Cold War politics and pan-African struggles helped propel him to the presidency in Liberia, according to his testimony Wednesday at his war crimes trial.

"I am calling it my release because I didn't break out," he told the Special Court for Sierra Leone of the episode, widely described as a prison break but alleged by at least one former ally to have been orchestrated by the US government.

"I did not pay any money, I did not know the guys who picked me up. I was not hiding (afterwards)," Taylor testified in The Hague without saying who helped him.

Prince Johnson, a former warlord first allied and then opposed to Taylor, told a Liberian truth commission last year that the US released the strongman from jail to engineer Doe's overthrow.

Taylor was imprisoned in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1985 pending an application for his extradition to face graft charges in Liberia.

He told the court he was fetched from the prison's maximum security section one night by a guard, who took him to the minimum security wing where two other inmates were waiting.

"We got to the window, these guys took a sheet and we tied it to the bars. I was taken out," Taylor testified. "There was a car waiting outside" which took him to New York.

In the following weeks, he moved around freely in the United States and Mexico and was never in hiding, claimed Taylor. "My name was on my passport. No-one asked me any questions."

Taylor said he eventually made his way to Libya where a group led by him underwent military training with the aim of invading Liberia and unseating Doe.

Taylor, 61, on Tuesday took the witness stand for the first time since his trial started in January 2008, describing charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity against him as "lies".

Meanwhile, Taylor sketched a turbulent African continent in the 1980s that was the backdrop for American anti-communist efforts and African freedom fighters backed by Gadhafi fighting to shake off "the yoke of colonialism."

Taylor is charged with 11 counts

of crimes against humanity and using child soldiers in his role backing rebels in Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war. He has denounced the accusations against him as "disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumors."

He took the stand for the first time Tuesday after listening in silence to 91 prosecution witnesses, many of them describing murders, mutilations, tortures and acts of cannibalism by Sierra Leonean rebels. Others who claimed to be former Taylor aides gave accounts of his communications with the rebels and supplying them with weapons, and the transfer of illicit diamonds in return.

In 10 hours of testimony over two days, Taylor portrayed himself as a liberator of the Liberian people whose intention was to sweep away the corrupt military regime in Monrovia and establish democracy.

His lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, said the former president is enjoying his time on the stand at the Special Court for Sierra Leone. "He's over the moon, he's buzzing," Griffiths told reporters during a break.

Taylor's testimony is expected to take several weeks before prosecutors begin their cross-examination.

In his second day of questioning by Griffiths, Taylor described a tumultuous period of coups and executions in Liberia, a West African nation buffeted by Cold War politics after a sergeant major in the Liberian army, Samuel Doe, seized power in a bloody coup in 1980.

Waving his hands or pointing his finger, Taylor gave an animated account of his falling out with Doe, his flight to the United States for safety and his escape via a sheet knotted to a window's bars from a Massachusetts prison where he was being held on an extradition request after the regime accused him of embezzling \$900,000.

Taylor said U.S. authorities helped organize his escape days before a failed 1985 coup by a former close friend, Gen. Thomas Quiwonkpa, who was later butchered by Doe loyalists. "He was cut to pieces and his flesh was eaten by military people," he said.

Taylor said he was "100 percent positive" the CIA bought weapons used by Quiwonkpa and his rebels in a coup Taylor supported, even though Washington had earlier pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into Doe's anti-communist regime.

Griffiths told reporters that by 1985, the U.S. government appeared to be embarrassed by the excesses of the Doe administration so that supporting the Quiwonkpa coup and Taylor's escape was likely "another route to a bit of regime change."

Returning to Africa via Mexico and Belgium, Taylor began recruiting rebel fighters to stage his own coup

in Liberia. He sent them for training in Libya at a sprawling former U.S. military base outside Tripoli where they spent two years.

The Libyans "were seriously involved in trying to free the rest of Africa and that is why I think Gadhafi whether people like it or not is an African hero," Taylor said, banging his finger hard on his desk.

Prosecutors allege that Taylor plotted to terrorize the people of Sierra Leone with rebel leaders at the Libyan camp. But he denied forming an alliance there with Sierra Leone rebel leader Ali Kabbah or meeting another key rebel, Foday Sankoh.

He said groups ranging from the African National Congress to the Irish Republican Army sent fighters to the camp.

"It was not a terrorist camp," he said. He said his men were trained "in the laws of war," and instructed on how to win the people's support which was necessary for the revolution to succeed.

Taylor said he never used child soldiers for military operations during his 1989 revolution in Liberia. "No child was to be recruited, or used or trained for military activities," he told a three-judge panel.

Griffiths lead his client through a reconstruction of his life, from his "humble" birth to the circumstances of his 1997-2003 presidency. That effort aimed to draw a picture of a peacemaker rather than the cannibalistic warlord described by prosecutors at the U.N.-backed court.

On Wednesday, Taylor spoke confidently about topics ranging from tribal rivalries to big power politics to a personal life strewn with an overlapping procession of wives and girlfriends and stints in jails in three countries.

Doe was the first Liberian leader of an aboriginal origin in a country that had been led for more than 130 years by freed American slaves and their descendants, who rarely mixed with the purely African population. Taylor, the son of an American-Liberian judge and his maid, parlayed his mixed background to gain entry to both groups.

Armed with an economics degree from the United States, he became a midlevel member of Doe's government.

Taylor, who is alleged to have siphoned millions of dollars when he became Liberia's president, said he took action to rein in rampant corruption among Doe's ministers and aides. "That made me very unpopular," Taylor said.

His unpopularity led to embezzlement allegations, Taylor said, while categorically denying the claim.

Taylor fled Liberia to the United States in 1983. He said he left out of fear for his life under the increasingly autocratic Doe regime.

## The New Vision (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

### CONTEMPORARY ISSUE

## The Taylor Case: a Test For Justice

As the war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor resumes in The Hague, the BBC's Mark Doyle looks back at some of the most horrific events of the 1991-2001 civil war in Sierra Leone. Mr Taylor is accused of responsibility for the actions of Revolutionary United Front rebels during the fighting.

At a dilapidated army base in the Sierra Leonean capital Freetown, newly-arrived Nigerian peacekeeping troops were being briefed by their commanders. The soldiers lined up in fresh uniforms, weapons by their sides. As they listened to their officers, they tried to look determined and warlike. Some managed it, but most looked scared, their eyes darting about to take in a new and fearful environment. The hillsides around the base were being protected by a ring of mortar launchers and every few minutes the sound of outgoing rounds started an echo across the city.

From the valley below, the constant sound of rifles and machine guns drifted up, along with the smoke from hundreds of burning houses and the sharp reek of explosives. The Kamajor militia was loyal to the government in the civil war. The Nigerian peacekeepers, with United Nations approval, were fighting off an invasion of the Sierra Leonean capital by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), who had been joined by some members of the disintegrated Sierra Leonean army.

The RUF, allegedly backed by neighbouring Liberia, was trying to overthrow the elected government of Sierra Leone. While I was watching the Nigerians, I became aware of a thick trail of blood on the ground next to them. My eyes followed the trail to the wheels of a truck, and when I looked up at it I realised that an open-backed Nigerian army vehicle had just arrived through the cacophony of noise and smoke.

The truck was full of Sierra Leonean civilians who were waving the stumps of the remains of their arms in my direction. Most had had their right hands chopped off and were left with a blunt and bloody arm-end.

One, however, held the remains of his severed right hand in his left - in the pathetic hope, I suppose, that some miracle might be performed. Their blood was pouring off the back of the vehicle. They were waving at me, I think, because I was one of the few white people at the scene. They probably thought I was an aid worker or a doctor. But of course it was only the Nigerians who could help. I heard a brief exchange between the army driver and his officer. The driver said the civilians had been attacked by the RUF on the outskirts of the city and that he had brought them to the base because it was the only safe place he knew.

He had thought the military hospital was the best place, but his officer told him it was too busy and to take them to another clinic. The victims on the back of the truck were some of the many thousands of civilians deliberately targeted by the RUF in a reign of terror tactics that lasted around a decade in Sierra Leone.

The limb-chopping appears to have originated as a tactic during the Sierra Leonean elections in 1996 - the rebels severed the hands of those accused of using them to vote for President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

The prosecution in the trial of Charles Taylor will try to prove a link between him and the civilian victims of the war in Sierra Leone, which has a common border with Liberia. It is the first time an African leader has appeared before an international criminal court and prosecutors hope it will prove to be a test case to end impunity on the continent.

The chief prosecutor in the case, Stephen Rapp, said: "This is an enormous test of international justice." Charles Taylor is accused of being one of those who "bear the greatest responsibility" for war crimes committed during the hostilities in Sierra Leone. He is charged on 11 counts of crimes against humanity including terrorising civilians, murder, rape, using child soldiers and looting.

He is accused of having command responsibility for the actions of the RUF - of knowing what they were doing and colluding with them, either by commission or omission. The prosecution is expected to refer to reports by United Nations experts who said Charles Taylor used looted diamonds from Sierra Leone to buy weapons used by the RUF. Charles Taylor is Africa's first leader to face war crimes charges.

At a preliminary hearing in the premises of the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown, he said: "I did not and could not have committed these acts against the sister Republic of Sierra Leone." "I think this is an attempt to continue to divide and rule the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone, so most definitely I am not guilty," he said.

After the preliminary hearing in Freetown the case was moved to the premises of the International Criminal Court in The Hague partly because of fears Mr Taylor might escape from the facility in Sierra Leone. But the case will still be heard by judges from the Special Court for Sierra Leone. There is no doubt that atrocities were committed in Sierra Leone, by the RUF and others. But the prosecution, led by American lawyer Stephen Rapp, will have to prove a direct link between those atrocities and Mr Taylor.

That will not be a simple task, and Mr Taylor's defence team, led by the British Queen's Counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, will seek to prove his innocence. Throughout the years that I covered the wars in Sierra

Leone, although there was plenty of circumstantial evidence - and a working assumption that the RUF could not have done what it did without rear bases in Liberia - few people would claim to have irrefutable proof.

Perhaps Mr Rapp, with the benefit of years of research and a big team of investigators, has got it. The circumstantial evidence includes reports that Mr Taylor met and trained alongside the (now dead) RUF leader Foday Sankoh in camps in Libya.

There was also the fact that when the RUF battlefield commander Sam Bokarie retired, he set up house in the Liberian capital Monrovia (I met him there). And there is the fact that the Sierra Leonean police had secret files which alleged that Mr Taylor sent envoys to and from the RUF (I obtained these files). But none of this, I suspect, would stand up in a court of law.

That is what the trial starting in The Hague on Monday is for - to decide whether Mr Taylor is guilty of responsibility for atrocities, or whether, as he says, the whole affair is part of an attempt to divide and rule the people of West Africa.

# Taylor Traces His Past

## *I Drafted The Coup's Security Plan...*

**U**S Special Forces Trained Coup Makers Carefully led on by his lawyer who intermittently corrected the dates, and in calculated somewhat rehearsed tune, Charles Taylor Wednesday began narrating his version of events before and during the traumatic 1980 military coup, his role in it, claiming that the US Central Intelligence Agency spearheaded the coup that killed President William R. Tolbert, an event that laid the basis for his civil war. At times chuckling with laughter as reflected on events before his civil war, Mr. Taylor, with the crafty assistance of lead counsel Courtenay Griffiths, is seeking to construct the basis of the wars that spilled over to neighbouring countries, including Sierra Leone, where he is charged as one of those bearing he greatest responsibility for crimes.

He said all of the 1980 coup makers were trained by US Special Forces at Camp Todee, and that they seized power "almost immediately" after their training. Mr. Taylor, answering tutoring questions



from his lawyer, said he knew all of the 13 officials that were killed, including the President of the Senate, Frank Tolbert, whose daughter he said he dated. Asked why, if this were the case, he joined the junta, he said his desire was to bring about change in the country and to guard "the revolution.

In this connection, he said he drafted the

post-coup security plan, which he said coup leader Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe approved. He said this first act in this direction was to seek and get the release of detained "top security personnel", including Mr. E. Sumo Jones, now ambassador to Guinea, who, he said assisted in drafting the plan.

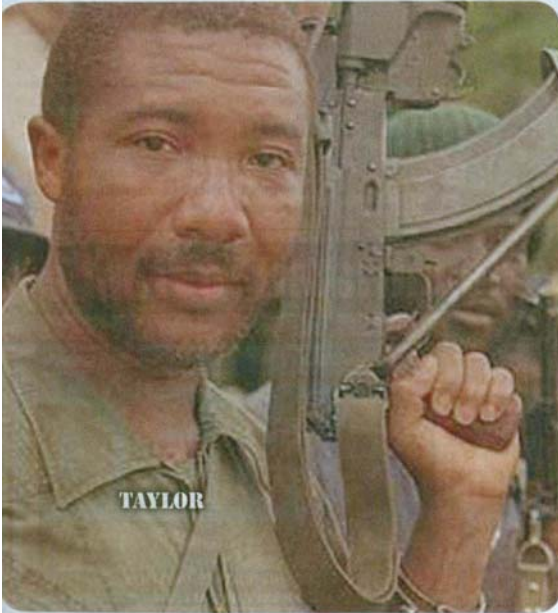
He claimed that he and others **Pg.10**

## Taylor Traces His Past

reduced the number of those targeted for execution from 200 to 13, and that he watched the scene from the balcony of the Barclay Training Center, where he was now most living to direct events.

Taylor said he and his delegation of Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas (ULAA) were received like "rock stars in 1979 when they arrived in the country upon the invitation of President Tolbert.

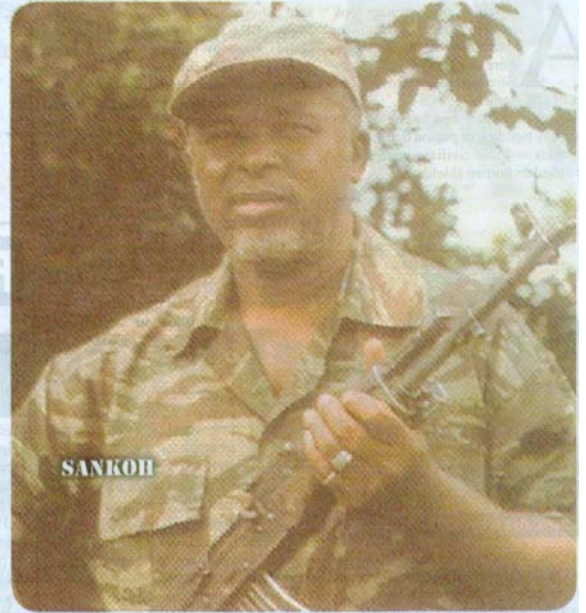
# Sankoh Ties Denied



TAYLOR

Continuing his denial of role in Sierra Leone war and atrocities, former President Charles Taylor Wednesday categorically denied association with the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), saying he only heard of him in Libya, where they both trained. Taylor emphasized that he had no knowledge of earlier RUF plans to attack Sierra Leone in 1991. He was "outraged" when he heard the RUF invaded Freetown on January 6, 1999 after all his work to secure peace.

He said that for all times that he was in contact with RUF leaders in Sierra Leone, he did so with the consent of ECOWAS leaders. He however admitted an alliance with the RUF between 1991 and 1992 against the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO). But the Ghanaian journalist and editor of the London-based New African magazine, Banfour Ankamah, in a 1991 article headlined "Inside Liberia with Charles Taylor," wrote: Sierra Leonean rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by 'Captain Foday Sankoh which has been fighting a guerrilla war



SANKOH

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## Sankoh Ties Denied

inside Sierra Leone since early 1991. Sankoh, who has had problems with the Sierra Leonean leadership for years, fought alongside Taylor against Doe. According to conventional thinking in Monrovia, Taylor used Sankoh to "invade" Sierra Leone as a way of putting pressure on Sierra Leone to remove the Ecomog supply base in Freetown. But this tit for tat could be easily removed by Ecomog. But it hasn't. Ecomog would only say in the Dakar communique that "some progress had been made" in the implementation of Yamos-soukrou IV without elaborating. For instance, Ecomog would not say that its troops had been deployed at all the major entry points into Liberia since April 1992 - including Gbarnga, Taylor's I Allies - Nigerian General Ishyaga Bakut of Ecomog (left) and Amas Sawyer, President of the interim government in Monrovia (right) - headquarters - and that the most substantial point in the Accord left for Taylor to implement was disarming and encamping his troops. Neither would Ecomog admit that its troops had been on the Sierra Leone border since 30 April and that it withdrew its troops from the border in mid-July as soon as Ulimo intensified the war against Taylor. Which brings into focus again the partiality of Ecomog in the conflict. Since the ceasefire in November 1990, no fighting has gone on between the three main warring factions. Thus the only external threat to Liberia has come from Ulimo. The Ecomog troops were on the border in the first place to prevent just what Ulimo is doing, but Ecomog, while I was still in Liberia, was happily issuing press releases showing the position of Ulimo in the war instead of concentrating on "eliminating" the threat posed by Ulimo as Yamoussoukrou IV had



agreed... (See complete article on pp 6&7) When asked by his defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, what he thought about the charges against him, Taylor responded that they are "quite incredible, very unfortunate." Taylor said he has fought all his life to pursue justice and that the prosecution's characterization of him was "completely false." Taylor said he "could not understand" why he was

handed over to the Special Court after his ECOWAS peers told him they would work to quash his indictment. Mr. Taylor explained that he led a rebellion as leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) because the then president of the country, Samuel K Doe, was leading a "violent campaign against the country." He said that elections were stolen by Samuel Doe and it therefore became necessary to restore order and democracy in Liberia. Mr. Taylor admitted that during the conflict in Liberia, his NPFL rebels committed some atrocities but that perpetrators were tried under military law and those found guilty were executed.

### GEMAP Leaked

New Democrat (Liberia)  
Thursday, 16 July 2009

# Taylor-RUF: The Truth?

*Do you believe former President Charles Taylor's accounts of ties or absence of ties with the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone? He said severed ties between 1991-1992 and had no links with RUF leader Foday Sankoh.*

**Amos Kortu**  
Employee of GAC

Taylor himself established his involvement at The Hague. Therefore, one does not need a rocket scientist to know his involvement with the RUF in Sierra Leone. But all I saying is that he should be given free and trial because this is a trial that has claimed international attention.



**Mitchell Jones**  
Civil Rights Advocate

It possible that Taylor supported the RUF, but not to the extent that he commanded atrocities against the people of Sierra Leone. Look, brother, the Sierra Leonean themselves are wicked to one another. How many times did you see Liberians amputating their brothers? RUF themselves killed and maimed is people.



**Resell Allen**  
Protection Counselor

Yes, indeed, Taylor abated, assisted and supported the RUF. We were here and saw his commanders masquerading on the streets of Monrovia. His men were border commanders for the RUF and you know this. Taylor's Gbatata base-- training by the RUF was no secret. Therefore, Taylor supported the RUF.



**Alfred M. Kromah**  
Mechanic

Taylor did not have anything to do with the RUF. I agree that the NPFL and the RUF were trained in Libya, but when they returned from training base, everybody went on their own. How could Taylor support the RIUF when the force has its own commanders. Taylor did not support the RUF at all.



**Alphonso Gorh**

Taylor made no secret of his involvement with the RUF. I can recall vividly during the ULIMO days the first commander that led the incursion to Sierra Leone came from Taylor's NPFL forces. Apart from that, there were so many indicators to prove Taylor's involvement with and assistance to the RUF. Let's not joke here. Sankoh and Sam Bokari were all here riding on the streets of Monrovia.



**Mariam Gomu**  
Business Woman

Former President Charles Taylor never supported the RUF in Sierra Leone and they are accusing him, that he's the one that made people handicapped. No. He's, not the one, it is the war.



**J. Alex Matiah Barclay**  
Student

According to Mr. Taylor's own statement yesterday, he told us that he gave little relief to RUF, but did not support the RUF. As a student of government, in that direction, he supported the RUF and I strongly believe that he supported the RUF.



**Orlando Sammie**  
Civil Servant

Firstly, this is the process of legality and the former President is in The Hague facing Justice. And a matter of such has to be proven beyond all reasonable doubt. The witnesses the prosecution presented did not link the former President to the crimes. So I will say no, he did not support the RUF unless the prosecution can prove the contrary.



## TAYLOR EXPLAINS RELEASE FROM US PRISON



THE HAGUE (AFP) — Former Liberian president Charles Taylor told a

war crimes court Wednesday he was "released" from a US prison in 1985 before returning home for the "revolution" that unseated his predecessor Samuel Doe.

"I am calling it my release because I didn't break out," he told the Special Court for Sierra Leone of the episode, widely described as a prison break but alleged by at least one former ally to have been orchestrated by the US government.

"I did not pay any money, I did not know the guys who picked me up. I was not hiding (afterwards)," Taylor testified in The Hague without saying who helped him.

Prince Johnson, a former warlord first allied and then opposed to Taylor, told a Liberian truth commission last year that the US released the strongman from jail to engineer Doe's overthrow.

Taylor was imprisoned in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1985 pending an application for his extradition to face graft charges in Liberia.

He told the court he was fetched from the prison's maximum security section one night by a guard, who took him to the minimum security wing where two other inmates were waiting.

"We got to the window, these guys took a sheet and we tied it to the bars. I was taken out," Taylor testified. "There was a car waiting outside" which took him to New York.

In the following weeks, he moved around freely in the United States and Mexico and was never in hiding, claimed Taylor.

"My name was on my passport. No-one asked me any questions."

Taylor said he eventually made his way

Cont'd On Page 3

## TAYLOR

to Libya where a group led by him underwent military training with the aim of invading Liberia and unseating Doe.

Taylor, 61, on Tuesday took the witness stand for the first time since his trial started in January 2008, describing charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity against him as "lies".

He faces 11 charges for murder, rape, conscripting child soldiers, enslavement and pillaging stemming from the brutal 1991-2001 civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone.



# TAYLOR DESCRIBES HAGUE CASE AS "LIES"

-I Wanted To Bring Peace To Liberia's West African Neighbor

**P**resident Charles Taylor has dismissed as "lies" the war crimes case against him, as he took the stand for the first time at The Hague.

He denies all 11 counts charges against him, including terrorism, murder, rape and torture, at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The former President Charles G. Taylor is accused

of having armed and directed rebel groups from Liberia in order to seize control of Sierra Leone's diamond riches, Taylor is the first African leader to be tried by an international court.

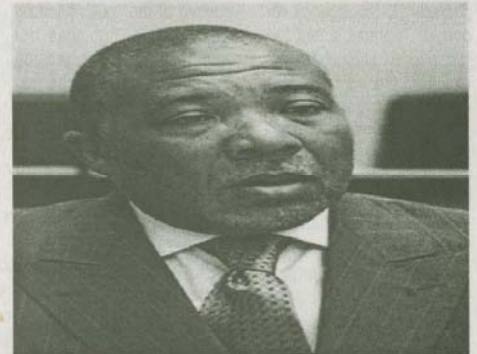
"It is very, very, very unfortunate that the prosecution, because of disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumors, would associate me with such titles or descriptions,"

he said of the charges.

He denied involvement in atrocities committed by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war.

Testifying for the first time since his trial began more than two years ago, he told a packed courtroom he had only wanted to bring peace to Liberia's West African neighbor. Taylor, whose testimony is ex-

pected to last several weeks, continued: "I am a father of 14 children, grandchildren, with love for humanity, have fought all my life to do what I thought was right in the interests of justice and fair play." Wearing a dark suit and tinted spectacles, he told his lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, that the charges were "false" and "malicious". Taylor denied



Cont'd on Page 6

## TAYLOR

providing military assistance to the rebels who were notorious for using machetes to hack the limbs off civilians or having plotted to invade Sierra Leone with RUF leader Foday Sankoh. He also denied having been given coffee jars full of blood diamonds by the RUF. "Never, ever, did I receive whether it is mayonnaise or coffee or whatever jar, never received any diamonds from the RUF. It's a lie, it's a diabolical lie. Never," he said. Taylor's legal team began setting out its case on Monday. He is the first of 249 witnesses the defense has said it may call to the stand. His lawyers say Taylor could not have micro-managed a rebel operation in Sierra Leone while also running affairs of state in Liberia. The prosecution

Liberia. The prosecution called 91 witnesses, many of whom provided graphic testimony of amputations, murder of children and cannibalism, before wrapping up its case in February. Taylor started a civil war in Liberia 1989, before being elected president there in 1997. He was himself overthrown by a rebellion and went into exile in 2003. After a spell in Nigeria, he was eventually extradited from Liberia in 2006. The trial at the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone was moved to the Netherlands from Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown, amid fears it could create instability in the country and neighboring Liberia. According to the court a verdict in the case is expected some time next year. Bottom of Form

# The Inquirer (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

# How Taylor Escaped U.S. Prison

*The former Liberian President, Charles Taylor says he did not pay a dime to leave the American maximum security jail in the United States of Liberia.*

Standing trial for some 11-count charge ranging from rape to torture before the Special Court sitting in The Hague, former President Taylor dispelled a widely accepted allegation that he broke the US jail after being imprisoned for some 15 months following an accusation of embezzlement of State

funds during the Samuel Doe regime.

Though it was a question not relevant to the ongoing trial, Mr. Taylor told the jam-packed courtroom that one prison guard from the supervisory division told him that night that he would be leaving.

"I was escorted by the same guard. With my prison

cell unlocked by a US prison guard late one night in November 1985, I walked out of the maximum security area of the Plymouth County Correctional Facility in Massachusetts," Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday.

Taylor said he was escorted to the minimum security area and a sheet

*Cont'd on page 10*



*Former President Charles Taylor*

## How Taylor

*Cont'd from front Page*

was tied to a window which they used to climb down but added that the distance to the ground was short and they climbed out of the window and over the prison fence to a parked vehicle. The former Liberian leader said two men were in the car waiting and they drove him to New York where he was assured of being okay.

"The guards who set me free had to be operating with someone else. And I assume that the car that took me to New York had to be a US government car," Taylor disclosed.

Taylor was in US custody in 1985 pending a US government decision on an extradition request by the Liberian government on charges of embezzlement.

Taylor's escape took place only days before his friend and Liberian military leader, Thomas Quiwonkpa, staged an unsuccessful coup against the Liberian government of President Samuel Doe in November 1985. Taylor alleged that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was working with, and arming, Quiwonkpa to overthrow the Doe government in the months leading up to the coup attempt. Taylor told the court that he was "one hundred percent positive" that the weapons Quiwonkpa was using "were paid for by the CIA."

Taylor later went on to describe his efforts to recruit a total of 168 men and women to be part of his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) group to undertake military training in a former US military base in Libya between 1987 and 1989.

He further explained before the court that the training aimed to produce a "well-trained and disciplined force" which were "trained in the laws of war" and could "work with the local population" in Liberia.

Taylor stated further that his aim generally was for the National Patriotic Force of Liberia to support the Liberian people in staging a revolution in Liberia and then submit to fair and free elections.

"I would be stupid to terrorize civilians but for a revolution to be successful, one would have to rely on the civilian population and that was the case in Liberia," Mr. Taylor explained.

He also described the separation of military and civilian activities when he eventually attacked Liberia in 1989, telling the court that military people who carried out atrocities would be dealt by military courts under the military justice code.

Taylor also said that he did not encourage children under 17 to be involved in and identified with military activities.

## Daily Observer (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

## Taylor Alleges US Help in 'Jailbreak'

*By Tracey Gurd*

**I**n a dramatic day of testimony, former Liberian president Charles Taylor told of his 1985 escape from an American maximum security jail with alleged United States government

help, only days before a failed US-backed coup attempt to overthrow the then Liberian government.

With his prison cell unlocked by a US prison guard late one night in November 1985, Taylor walked out of the maximum security area of the Plymouth County

Correctional Facility in Massachusetts, he told the Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday. Taylor said he was escorted by the same guard to the minimum security area. Tying a sheet to a window, Taylor climbed out the window and over the

*See pg 10*

# Taylor

prison fence, where a car containing two men was waiting to whisk him to New York, he said.

Taylor told the court that he believed the guard who set him free 'had to be operating with someone else'. Taylor also said he assumed that the car that took him to New York 'had to be a [US] government car' because the men driving him feared he may be 'picked up' if Taylor changed cars to be with his then wife, who had driven to meet the escape car with money to get Taylor out of the country.

Taylor was in US custody in 1985 pending a US government decision on an extradition request by the Liberian government on charges of embezzlement.

Taylor's escape took place only days before his friend and Liberian military leader, Thomas Quiwonkpa, staged an unsuccessful coup against the Liberian government of President Samuel Doe in November 1985. Taylor alleged that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was working with, and arming, Quiwonkpa to overthrow the Doe government in the months leading up to the coup attempt.

Taylor told the court that he was 'one hundred percent positive' that the weapons Quiwonkpa was using 'were paid for by the CIA'.

Taylor later went on to describe his efforts to recruit a total of 168 men and women to be part of his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) group to undertake military training in

a former US military base in Libya between 1987 and 1989. Taylor told the court that the training aimed to produce a 'well-trained and disciplined force' which were 'trained in the laws of war' and could 'work with the local population' in Liberia.

His overall aim, Taylor said, was for the NPFL to support the Liberian people in staging a revolution in Liberia and then 'to submit ourselves to fair and free elections'.

Taylor told the court that for a revolution to be successful, he would have to rely on the civilian population in Liberia. He said it would be 'stupid to terrorize civilians' because he would 'lose their support'.

He also described the separation of military and civilian activities when he eventually attacked Liberia in 1989, telling the court that military people who carried out atrocities would be dealt by military courts under the military justice code.

In speaking of the NPFL in the 1980s, Taylor also said that he 'did not encourage any children under the age of 17 to be involved in military activities'.

Charges against Taylor by the Special Court include, among others, the war crime of terrorizing the civilian

population, and the conscription, enlistment and use of child soldiers under 15 years of age (categorized as other serious violations of international humanitarian law) in neighboring Sierra Leone after November 30, 1996.

The Analyst (Liberia)  
Thursday, 16 July 2009

# Taylor Makes Shocking Revelation



## -Says US Unleashed Him on Liberia

It has been speculated in Liberia for many years that Charles Taylor escaped from a US maximum security prison in Massachusetts back

in 1985 with the assistance of some Liberian residents in the US. But Taylor now says that version of his embarrassing dramatic

escape was not the full story. He says his escape was directed by a US prison operative acting on orders from high places in the U.S.

government. Below is a dispatch from The Hague regarding Taylor's escape testimony:

In a dramatic day of

testimony, former Liberian president Charles Taylor told of his 1985 escape from an American maximum security jail with alleged United States government help, only days before a

*Continue on page 10*

## Taylor Makes Shocking Revelation

failed US-backed coup attempt to overthrow the then Liberian government.

With his prison cell unlocked by a US prison guard late one night in November 1985, Taylor walked out of the maximum security area of the Plymouth County Correctional Facility in Massachusetts, he told the Special Court for Sierra Leone today.

Taylor said he was escorted by the same guard to the minimum security area. Tying a sheet to a window, Taylor climbed out the window and over the prison fence, where a car containing two men was waiting to whisk him to New York, he said.

Taylor told the court that he believed the guard who set him free "had to be operating with someone else."

Taylor also said he assumed that the car that took him to New York "had to be a [US] government car" because the men driving him feared he may be "picked up" if Taylor changed cars to be with his then wife, who had driven to meet the escape car with money to get Taylor out of the country.

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Taylor later went on to describe his efforts to recruit a total of 168 men and women to be part of his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) group to undertake military training in a former US military base in Libya between 1987 and 1989.

Taylor told the court that the training aimed to produce a "well-trained and disciplined force" which were "trained in the laws of war" and could "work with the local population" in Liberia.

His overall aim, Taylor said, was for the NPFL to support the Liberian people in staging a revolution in Liberia and then "to submit ourselves to fair and free elections."

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Taylor continues his testimony tomorrow.

# The Analyst (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

## Reports on Charles Taylor's Trial – BBC World Service Trust

**Tuesday July 14, 2009:** The former Liberian president Charles Taylor has began giving evidence at his war crimes trial in The Hague on Tuesday. Mr Taylor denied prosecution claims that he was everything from a rapist to a terrorist and accused witnesses of telling lies about him. He said he had no part in supporting the invasion of Sierra Leone by the former rebel Revolutionary United Front RUF nor did he ever receive so-called "blood diamonds" from them. The BBC World Service Trust John Kollie has this report.

After the presentation of the prosecution's case in his landmark trial lasting over two years, Former Liberian president Charles Taylor began having his day in court on Tuesday July 13. Mr Taylor dressed in a dark blue suit and grey silk tie and wearing sun glasses for the morning session, looked eager to take centre stage as a witness in his own defence. Taylor then took oath in preparation for witnessing in his defence.

Former Taylor's testimony then opened with questions by his lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths first on his launch of the rebellion to oust slain Liberian president Samuel Kanyon Doe in 1989. Moving on to accusations of his role in the crisis in neighbouring Sierra Leone, he vigorously denied the charges made against him by a succession of prosecution witnesses that he was a murderer, had practised cannibalism and encouraged rape and mutilation in Sierra Leone and Liberia. "All those claims are malicious baseless and diabolical lies aimed at destroying my hard earned reputation", the former Liberian leader asserted.

Mr Taylor was asked a number of times about his alleged support for the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone. He admitted hearing reports of mutilations and other atrocities but said he could not understand why such things were happening and it was nonsense to suggest that he would embark on such a venture when he was fully occupied in re-building his own country, Liberia, after seven years of civil war.

In response to a question about his attitude towards the United States of America, Mr. Taylor said he had no personal problem with America, but he added the United States has not been a friend it ought to have been to Liberia. Mr. Taylor denied prosecution claims that he had enriched himself through corruption.

One of the key prosecution claims is that Mr Taylor's reward for supplying the RUF with weapons was regular shipments of so-called "blood diamonds". "This is a lie," said the former president, "a diabolical lie."

Charles Taylor is expected to give evidence for several weeks and in order to lessen the strain on the defendant, the judges have agreed that during his testimony, the court will sit for only four days a week. This is the first time that such special consideration has been given to a witness since this war crimes trial started.

**Wednesday July 15, 2009 :** On his second day of evidence at his war crimes trial in the Hague, the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, has given his first account of the circumstances surrounding his escape from a jail in the United States in the 1980s. He also told the court that the Liberian president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was one of the founding members of the rebel group, NPFL, which eventually overthrew the regime of Samuel Doe... John Kollie transcribes The Hague reports for the BBC World Service Trust...

One of the most controversial episodes of Charles Taylor's political life took place in the mid 1980s, though not a key part of his trial before the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting at the International Criminal Court in the Hague, Taylor talked about his imprisonment and eventual escape from detention.

He told his war crimes trial that he had fled to the United States after being accused of embezzling \$900,000 as head of the government's public procurement Bureau, the Government Services Agency (GSA) in the regime of Samuel Doe. The Liberian government submitted an extradition request and he was jailed for fifteen months in the state of Massachusetts. In November 1985, he disappeared from the prison, provoking speculation that he had been helped by agents of the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA. He explained that his escape began when a prison guard appeared without warning in his cell.

Describing his preparation for the insurrection in 1989 which toppled the regime of Samuel Doe, Mr Taylor said 168 men loyal to him trained for nearly two years at a camp in Libya. He visited the camp every three to four months while he was based in the state of Burkina Faso. He also alleged that the current Liberian president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, was not merely a financial backer of his rebel group, the NPFL. She was, he said, a founding member.

Earlier, Mr. Taylor described how he had personally intervened to protect the daughter-in-law of the deposed President William R. Tolbert in 1980. She was allowed to leave the country to return to the Ivory Coast, but her husband, AB Tolbert, was executed.

Mr. Taylor told the court. Continuing his direct examination, Mr Taylor said he also took action as a minister in the Doe regime to prevent the American CIA from taking over a building in Monrovia in 1981. He felt this was subsequently held against him by the United States.

Mr Taylor also spoke at length about the tensions between Americo-Liberians and Indigenous Liberians. He said some in the Doe regime strongly resented him because he had tried to prevent the abuse of government privileges by fellow ministers and officials.

At the start of the session, Mr Taylor's lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, was admonished by the judges for holding up a sign visible to the public gallery which read: Taylor is innocent. Griffiths promised not to do it again.

Mr. Taylor's testimonies continue on Thursday.

## The Analyst

Friday, 17 July 2009

### **Liberia: Taylor Explains How Tolbert Was Killed**

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor on Tuesday, the first day he took the witness stand, explained how former President William R. Tolbert was killed during the April 12, 1980 bloody coup, indicating that the first bullet at the president was fired by coup plotter, Nelson B. Toe and that second shot came from the gun of Harrison Pennue.

Emphatically, he quoted another coup plotter, Thomas Quiwonkpa as telling that Tolbert was actually shot by these two men before the rest of them were able to approach the place he was gunned down to the face.

Responding to an inquiry from his lead Counsel, Griffiths, the former president who denied all eleven-count charges leveled against as 'lies' said "President Tolbert was killed on the 8th floor of the Executive Mansion.

Now, I know that place because I lived up there myself. What General Quiwonkpa and the main killer of Tolbert explained, this was a young man who actually shot him.

The 8th floor is the family living floor of the President. It is very, very secured. All of the glasses up there are bullet proof glasses. The doors are sealed, so when the President enters, there is the living room, his bedroom, his wife's bedroom, the entire area once the President - once he enters it is secured."

He said still quoting the late former General Quiwonkpa: "I am told by General Quiwonkpa after the firing started - and, quite frankly, it is a very sad scenario. Most of the soldiers at the presidency that were guarding the President fled because their friends were staging a coup. They were all together, so they just didn't budge.

"They went upstairs and they actually have to knock on the President's door. After he had apparently called around the different stations and no-one answered, he got up, got dressed, because the body of Tolbert was still dressed - fully dressed - in a white suit."

He got up and got dressed, they knocked on the door, they kept knocking on the door and he opened the door, because they could not get in. Like I say, that area is secured. You cannot enter unless the President inside opens the door. And the first gentleman I am told by Quiwonkpa there was a young man called the late Nelson Toe."

The former president who looked very composed and confident told open court, in response to his lawyer's question, that another shots came "a gentleman called Harrison Pennue.

"He is also Krahn," Taylor made reference to his ethnic background. "Then he was the second, but I am told by General Quiwonkpa that the original first shot was fired by a young man called Nelson Toe, a very fiery young man who ended up getting executed with Weahseng too because of his fiery behavior."

It was rumored during the days of the People's Redemption Council (PRC), the junta that took power following the death of the Tolbert regime that Pennue killed the former president. That many people did not believe on grounds that he (Pennue) was said to be going out of his mind. The cause of his going out of his mind was however blamed on that the fact he did shoot former President Tolbert who was magically stronger than him.

With the revelations coming from former President Taylor, as someone who worked very closely and dearly with one of the coup plotters, observers said Harrison did not conjecture at the time nor did he try to give himself a vain glory of something he had no hands in at all.

### **Other issues raised with Taylor**

Answering to whether Tolbert was the only individual in that administration who met such a brutal fate, the former President who became a member of the PRC as a self-styled head of the General Services Agency (GSA) responded in the negative, saying "following the killing of Tolbert several members of the government were executed," a reference to the 13 former officials of the Tolbert government executed by firing squad."

He struggled with the exact number of former officials killed by the PRC for what they called "to stabilize and consolidate their grip to power.

"If I am not mistaken it could have been as many as 17," he responded to the question and also added "Right on the beach outside of the barracks. The Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia is located on the beach, and I will say from the office of the commanding general to where the execution took place may be 500 metres - 500 to 1,000 metres - where the execution took place."

Taylor told the court that he observed the killing on the men and that he felt the impact of their brutal killing.

" I had never seen anybody killed. I have seen dead bodies before as in normal death. It was a very chilling experience for me. I stood on the balcony of the commanding general's office and looked over to where it - the execution occurred," the war crime indictee said.

Besides that, he said he personally knew some of the former 13 government officials killed by the PRC administration that turned brutal later and even killed their own members.

"I knew all of them. I knew all of them; some of them better than others. The speaker and others that were executed I can say were personal friends of my father. The President Pro Temp of the Senate by the name of Frank Tolbert I had dated a daughter of his and visited his home many, many times as a young man, and there was a very good friend of mine - a personal friend of mine - by the name of John, John like in J-O-H-N, Sherman. He was the minister of commerce. The rest of the ministers I knew them very well," Taylor told the court.

Whether he was a party to the decision to execute them, he said "Really we were party to a decision to help reduce the number of people that they really wanted to execute. I remember one evening I am sitting down and General Quiwonkpa returns from the - from a council meeting."

He explained how the whole thing went "sitting and he comes and he is very sad. These meetings were held without anyone being invited in the beginning. Only those that staged the coup d'état were permitted. He came very sad and he called me. He said, "Taylor, the chairman, Chairman Doe, has decided with the council that we should execute some people". I said, "What?" He said, "Yes". He said, "The people ..." - you know, this is almost like Liberian English. He said, "The people are plenty."

I said, "What do you mean?" I said "About how many?" He said, "Oh, it could be almost 200." I said, "No, no, no, no." I say, "Thomas, Thomas, Thomas, this cannot happen." I got to know subsequently that other individuals, other progressive individuals, had also heard this about a day later and were also pleading to say, "You can't do this." We fought - at least I fought for my end to tell them that it was not - that Tolbert's death was sufficient, but they insisted that some people had to go because this would show that the old system had been totally uprooted and so they finally settled on these few."

Taylor said he was not down with the decision to kill the men in such huge number. "No, I did not agree with that. I said that it was bad enough for Tolbert to be killed as President when they could have saved him, but that it would just be terrible in the eyes of the international community to begin to line people up on the beach and execute them where they were not being put on trial. here was not a trial where, "We are going to try you before a military tribunal." None of that. They just decided, "These are the so-called Congo people who caused the trouble. They have to go." I was opposed to that.

On whether he agreed or disagreed with the brutal decision to cut the tie with the past, Taylor told the court "There are several reasons. Look, number 1 it would not have made any difference if I did, but number 2 - even more important number 2 - we would have lost, or I would have lost, an opportunity to bring about the meaningful change that we were trying to construct to bring about. Pulling out - imagine all of the progressives in Liberia are on board. I have an opportunity and it has been realized I am in the system, I am respected, I speak freely to all of them.

Pulling out would have been maybe a very glorious act to do, but I believe at that particular time it would have been a stupid thing to do because Charles Taylor alone wanting to pull out and return to the United States would not have

meant anything because everybody else was on board and I felt that my staying in there would also give me an opportunity to be meaningful in what I saw as the way forward for Liberia.

The former president was bothered with an inquiry whether "In any event the executions take place, and his response was positive but when further as saying that it helped to legitimize the Doe regime.

"Oh, it really - it really did not help. After the executions most of the western countries and donor agencies and different things frowned on the whole process and this really intensified the anti-activities on the part of the international community towards the Doe government," Taylor garbed in a dark glasses and a double-bracelet coat said and in the same vein indicated that also played on the entire population.

"When you look at the percentages that I gave you before and you look at the underlying problems of Liberia between the Americo-Liberians and Aborigines, the vast majority of the population that were the Aborigines were happy and wouldn't care less and in fact I would say probably wanted more to go. People saw this as this opportunity to at last vent this anger over the years.

"These people came. They have overlooked us. They have treated us like slaves in our own country." To be frank, people were happy and I would say in the majority."

Taylor told the court that he worked with Quiwonkpa, then Commanding General of the Armed Forces of Liberia for three months. "I was in the barracks for about three months. I would say I can just help by extending some percentages. I would say I spent as of that time about 70 percent of my time at the barracks.

"As to what he did there, he said "Oh, working, receiving complaints, talking to diplomats, getting matters to the general, dispatching people to put out troubles where people were - the soldiers are misbehaving, looting people's properties, all kinds of problems."

"I just stayed there and, you know, tried to get things back on an even keel in as far as getting the soldiers back to barracks, because one of the things that I really was interested in - and let me tell you what I mean by barracks. I am not just talking about the Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia.

"By the time this coup occurred soldiers from all military bases across the country instead of remaining at their bases and waiting for orders, everyone is moving to Monrovia and so you have got everyone coming. So they see this now as - in fact one expression used at that time was "This is our time. This is our time".

"And so trying to get people to go back to - go back to your station, helping to get logistics arranged in terms of transportation to return them back, imagine at this particular time the international airport is closed, trying to get things - just getting it cranked up. Don't forget these are young men that had just come into power, know nothing about governance, know nothing about international relations, know absolutely nothing and they are now depending on us, this whole progressive group, to come and help them steer the country back to normalcy."

" So I am there with him, because most of the other progressive are at the ministries and dealing with other members of the council and General Quiwonkpa in the barracks has no-one there to help him and so I stayed there to help him carry out these functions."

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## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 17 July 2009

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

### International Clips on Liberia

#### **War crimes trial is told of soldiers' skulls on spikes**

Source: The Birmingham Post Date: July 17, 2009-- In an unusual war crimes defence, former Liberian president Charles Taylor told a court today he saw nothing wrong with displaying the skulls of enemy soldiers on spikes at roadblocks. Taylor, 61, insisted he was trying to bring peace and the rule of law to Liberia as he gave evidence in his own defence on the third full day at his trial. He is charged with 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for allegedly supporting rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone who unleashed a campaign of terror in their country's 1991-2002 civil war. An estimated 500,000 people were the victims of killings, systematic mutilation or other atrocities in that war. Taylor has pleaded not guilty to all charges at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, calling the allegations lies and rumours. Taylor's 1989-90 invasion of Liberia and his ascent to power in a seven-year civil war were a prelude to his involvement in the brutal Sierra Leone conflict. Taylor is not on trial for offences in Liberia. But his lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, told the judges that Taylor's testimony about the campaign to oust his predecessor, Liberian President Samuel K. Doe, was meant to counter the image drawn by prosecutors of a pattern of brutality.

#### **I was not bribed with jars full of diamonds,**

Taylor tells The Hague [Daily Telegraph (UK)]

Source: The Daily Telegraph, Date: July 17, 2009 DAPPER in a navy suit and dark glasses, Liberia's fallen tyrant had lost none of his flamboyant self-righteousness when he gave evidence in The Hague yesterday. Six years after losing power in a welter of bloodshed, Charles Taylor blithely described himself as the "21st president of Liberia" and passionately denied 11 charges of war crimes. The opening day of his testimony before the United Nations Special Court marked the first occasion that any African leader has been forced to defend his conduct before international justice. Relaxed and immaculate, Taylor alternated between icy charm and contrived outrage as he denied accusations ranging from terrorism to looting and murder. Any suggestion that he was bribed with jars stuffed with diamonds, "whether it is mayonnaise or coffee or whatever jar", was a "diabolical lie", he said.

#### **House Hears over US\$800M Concession Agreement**

Jul 16, 2009 (MENA News from Al-Bawaba via COMTEX) -- The Joint Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Judiciary, Investment and Concession, Contracts and Monopoly of the House of Representatives yesterday, July 15, 2009 held a public hearing on the concession agreement between the Government of Liberia and the Sime Darby Plantation Liberia Incorporated. The company is expected to provide over 20,000 jobs for Liberians in Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, and Bong Counties. The hearing took place in the chamber of the Lower House.

## **International Clips on West Africa**

### **African woman defies death threats fighting circumcision**

Carola Grosse-Wilde, dpa

Source: Dpa English Date: July 16, 2009

Hamburg\_(dpa) \_ Her work has brought her death threats. Rugiatu Turay, 32, helps girls avoid the cruel and internationally condemned ritual of female genital mutilation (FGM). Speaking about the millennia-old practice, which affects 8,000 girls worldwide daily, is taboo in Turay's homeland Sierra Leone, as it is in many other African countries. But she refused to remain silent. In 2003, Turay founded the Amazonian Initiative Movement (AIM), a women's rights group that fights FGM. "It's my heart's desire to spare girls the brutal genital mutilation that I myself experienced," she said. Turay was 12 years old when she fell victim to female circumcision, a procedure in which the clitoris and labia are removed with knives and razor blades. It happened 10 days after the death of her mother, when Turay was taken to a secluded place along with her sisters and female cousins. "We were glad. We didn't know what awaited us. We thought it was an outing," she emotionally recalled in the Hamburg office of the children's rights organization Plan International, which backs AIM.

### **Ivory Coast launches cocoa pesticide scheme**

ABIDJAN, July 16 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast's cocoa authorities have launched a campaign to spray plantations with insecticide and chemicals to fight black pod disease, the campaign's manager said late on Wednesday. Farmers have long complained that they cannot afford the treatments that would protect cocoa plants against the damaging effects of parasites and of black pod disease, a fungal infection encouraged by wet weather of the type many growing regions have endured in the past two months. "This year we will treat 500,000 hectares of cocoa against harmful insects, and 312,000 hectares against black pod disease," said Patrice Domoraud, who is managing the operation for the Fund for the Development and Promotion of Farming Activities (FDPCC). Last year there was no such centrally-administered scheme, and though cocoa exporters welcomed the move, they said more needed to be done. "It's all very well to treat 500,000 hectares of cocoa against insects and 312,000 hectares against black pod disease, but that's nothing compared with the 2.5 million hectares of land on which cocoa is cultivated," said the director of a major European exporter in Abidjan.

## **Local Media – Newspaper**

### **UNMIL Says Security Stable at Liberia-Guinea Border**

(Daily Observer, Heritage, The Inquirer, New Vision, New Democrat, The Analyst, Public Agenda)

- The U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) says it is carefully monitoring the situation at the Liberia-Guinea border amidst reports of military activities on the Guinean side of the border.
- According to the reports, there have been mass movements of Guinean troops at the border since the Military alleged some forces were regrouping in Liberia to enter Guinea.
- UNMIL Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Zahiri Alam said following the allegation, the Mission investigated and have found no sign of a regrouping exercise in Foya.
- General Alam assured that the situation at the border remains calm and there is no need for fear.
- He however said UNMIL would do everything within its mandate and rules of engagement to protect the borders of Liberia from outside forces.

### **Former Opposition Politician Challenges TRC Recommendation on Public Sanction**

(Heritage, The Inquirer, The Informer, The Analyst, The News)

- The Standard-bearer of the Liberia Action Party in the 2005 Presidential elections says the TRC recommendation barring President Sirleaf from holding public office is legally flawed.

- Addressing a news conference yesterday, Counselor Varney Sherman said he is of the considered opinion that the recommendation lacks any legal or political effectiveness.
- He vowed to challenge the recommendation banning President Sirleaf from holding

### **USAID, LCIP Begins US\$1.2M Rehabilitation on UL Engineering Building**

(Daily Observer, The News, National Chronicle)

- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Liberia Community Infrastructure Programme Thursday commenced rehabilitation work on the Engineering building of the University of Liberia Fendall Campus.
- Speaking at the launch of the rehabilitation work, USAID Mission Director, Pamela White said her organization has earmarked US\$1.2 million for the full rehabilitation of the University of Liberia (UL) engineering building.
- Repair work on the building will include repair of the roof, windows, installation of a new electrical system, water supply and the supply of furniture among other things. The project is expected to be in five months.
- USAID/LCIP is currently funding other projects including the construction of the headquarters of the National Elections Commission (NEC), the renovation of the Tubman Institute of Medical Arts (TNIMA), the Harper City Hall among other projects

### **Government Dismisses Claim That President Sirleaf is Founding Member of NPFL**

(Daily Observer, New Democrat, The News, Public Agenda)

- Government has described claims by former President Charles Taylor that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was a founding member of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel movement as false.
- Addressing a news conference yesterday in Monrovia, Deputy Information Minister Cletus Sieh said Taylor's claim was an attempt to implicate the President in his war crime trial.
- Appearing before the TRC, President Sirleaf admitted raising funds for the group at the early stage but Taylor in his testimony said she was a founding member and not a "mere" fund raiser.

### **Government Reaffirms Support for Private Sector**

(Daily Observer, The News, The Analyst)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has underscored the need for a strong private sector, describing it as the main engine of growth for the Liberian economy.
- President Sirleaf acknowledged the many challenges faced by the business community and reaffirmed Government's support to improving the private sector.
- The President spoke at the Third Annual Private Sector Day organized by the Liberia Better Business Forum (LBBF).
- The LBBF is a structured partnership that brings together the Government of Liberia and the private sector to engage in constructive dialogue, aimed at identifying, prioritizing and resolving key constraints to private sector development.

### **Another TRC Commissioner Gives Dissenting Opinion on TRC Final Report**

(Liberian Journal)

- [SIC] Reports say another Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) has given a dissenting opinion on the group's final report.
- According to the report Commissioner Gerald Coleman questioned the validity of the report when majority of the Commissioners requested an extension.
- This brings to three the number of commissioners that have disagreed with the report.
- Earlier, Counselor Pearl Browne-Bull and Sheikh Kafumba Konneh differed with some aspects of the final report.

**Local Media – Star Radio** (*culled from website today at 09:00 am*)

### **Former Opposition LAP Standard Bearer Challenges TRC recommendation on public sanction**

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

## **UNMIL Monitors Situation at Liberia-Guinea Border**

*(Also reported on Sky F.M., Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

### **TRC Commissioners get Security Hotlines**

- The Liberia National Police (LNP) and UN Police have made available telephone numbers for TRC Commissioners to call in case of threats on their lives.
- The release of the fifteen telephone numbers followed report of threats on the lives of some commissioners and calls for government to provide protection.
- The reports of threats came after the release of the TRC final report which recommends prosecution for several warlords.

*(Also reported on Sky F.M., Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

### **Government Dismisses Claim That President Sirleaf Founding Member of NPFL**

*(Also reported on Sky F.M., Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

### **Police Inspector General-Designate Confirmation Postponed**

- The Senate has deferred the confirmation of rejected Police Inspector General-designate Marc Amblard to next week.
- The Senate reached the decision in a closed door session on Thursday following controversy over the trial of two separate motions for reconsideration.
- The controversy erupted when Senator Gbehzongar Findley of Grand Bassa County contended that the motions cannot be tried.
- Mr. Amblard was among three Presidential nominees rejected for confirmation by the Senate on Tuesday this week but a motion of reconsideration was filed on his behalf.
- The confirmation of Mr. Amblard has face hitches at the Senate following his admission that he did not have security knowledge.

**Truth F.M.** *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

### **Another TRC Commissioner Gives Dissenting Opinion on TRC Final Report**

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## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 20 July 2009

### Most Kenyans want violence suspects tried by ICC

By International Justice Desk



*Nairobi, Kenya*

The majority of Kenyans want suspects in the east African nation's post-election bloodshed to stand trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) not a local tribunal, a survey said on Saturday.

Foreign donors, Kenyans and local markets are closely watching the debate over whether those behind the 2008 violence, which killed 1,300 people and displaced 300,000 more, should be tried at home or at the Hague-based court.

Kenya's coalition leaders, President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga, are trying to push the local option. But there is resistance from some politicians, and the ICC has said it is ready to step in if the government fails.

Respected local pollster Steadman said 68 percent of Kenyans wanted perpetrators tried at the ICC while only 14 percent preferred local courts and 13 percent favoured an amnesty. The data was almost identical when broken down by political parties.

While some analysts see justice for the 2008 violence as crucial to future stability in east Africa's largest economy, others warn a judicial process may destabilise Kenya by stirring up old hatreds.

The Steadman poll highlighted Kenyans' widespread scepticism that any powerful individuals will be brought to account locally for the worst bloodshed in the nation's post-independence history due to traditional impunity among its political class.

Crisis mediator and former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan handed over a sealed envelope last week with the names of 10 top suspects to ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo. Steadman's study was carried out before the envelope was handed over.

#### **Ministers named**

Kenyan newspapers ran front-page pictures on Saturday showing Ocampo opening the envelope. Kenyan political sources say at least two ministers' names are on the list.

Kibaki's cabinet, which is split over the court debate, is to meet on Monday about the issue. An earlier attempt to push a local tribunal measure through parliament failed.

The government's human rights body this week released the names of 219 people -- including seven sitting ministers, and one now deceased minister -- whose role in the post-poll violence it said should be investigated.

One of the ministers named, Finance Minister Uhuru Kenyatta, is suing the state-funded Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) to expunge his name from the report.

Another official named, Culture and Heritage Minister William ole Ntimama, dismissed the rights report. "It's all rumour, it's all hearsay," he told the Daily Nation newspaper.

Western donors have urged the government to set up a special tribunal quickly, or let the ICC take over.

Kenya's shilling currency and stocks are susceptible to any sign of political instability, and are eyeing the debate closely.

Half of Steadman's 2,005 respondents said they strongly opposed the shaky power-sharing pact between Kibaki and Odinga. It brought peace after two months of ethnic clashes following the disputed December 2007 vote, but has dragged on reform.

Only 19 percent said they strongly supported the pact, with 25 percent saying they supported it "a little". The majority, 63 percent, said they wanted an early election with 34 percent saying the vote should happen as scheduled in 2012.

## The Boston Globe

Saturday, 18 July 2009

### A look inside the International Criminal Court

By Sam Allis, Globe Staff



*“The Reckoning,” which airs on PBS, includes a scene about former Congolese child soldiers. (Human Rights Watch International Film Festival)*

Some might glance at the title of this program and opt for “Curb Your Enthusiasm.” They expect a preachy, soporific treatise about the tenets of international justice. And while there is a whiff of that in “The Reckoning: The Battle for the International Court,” they’d miss an excellent piece of journalism.

**THE RECKONING: The Battle for the International Court** Director Pamela Yates and producer Paco de Onis bring us into the wilderness of mirrors that International Criminal Court prosecutors face in documenting, arresting, and trying the architects of crimes against humanity around the world. The 90-minute film runs briskly through war-crimes trials from Nuremberg to the present, and then chronicles in intimate fashion the attempts of the ICC’s first chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, and his small team to bring the court into existence and then prosecute perpetrators.

We see the politics, the legal mind games, and the gutsy on-the-ground investigations to document massacres and issue arrest warrants for them. The program exposes the great flaw in the system: The court has no enforcement powers of its own and must rely on local governments to apprehend the suspects and bring them to The Hague in the Netherlands, where the court is located.

As of today, for example, the ICC has failed to bring to justice Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for massacres in the Darfur region of the country after issuing an arrest warrant against him. Just who is going to take the man into custody in his own country?

“The Reckoning” also uncovers the determined - indeed, shocking - efforts by the United States under President George W. Bush to block the creation of the court and, failing that, to kill it once it went into business in 2002. The issue was national sovereignty, and we hear John Bolton, a senior State Department official at the time, say, “We should isolate and ignore the ICC,” adding the American objective must be

to make it “wither and collapse.” More than 120 countries have joined the court, yet the big dogs - the United States, Russia, and China - have not.

The future of the court is an open question. If the ICC does not deliver the goods, it will become an impotent symbol rather than a feared force in the crucible of international justice.

What elevates the documentary was the decision to take us with ICC investigators to the Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Sudan, among other countries, in the effort to amass evidence that supports arrest warrants. This is powerful raw footage that brings us down from the lofty language in the Hague to the brutality on the ground. The balance works.

We are mere feet away from survivors of the vicious Lords Resistance Army in Uganda as they describe the massacres committed against women and children as well as men. The army used rape as a means of intimidation and child soldiers to do the dirty work. While the victims talk, we confront appalling pictures of dead bodies and grainy footage of scary militias on the prowl.

We gain great sympathy for the charismatic Moreno-Ocampo as he struggled to bring the ICC into existence. The proceedings at the Hague may be dry and slow, but the memories of evil are riveting.

*Sam Allis can be reached at [allis@globe.com](mailto:allis@globe.com) ■*



## Sudan Tribune

Sunday, 19 July 2009

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article31864>

### **African Union dismisses criticisms on ICC resolution**

July 19, 2009 (WASHINGTON) — The African Union (AU) issued a statement last week in response to growing criticism over the procedure that led to the adoption of a resolution halting cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in apprehending Sudanese president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir.

The decision at the summit held in Libya earlier this month was reportedly taken by consensus but officials from Botswana and Chad accused the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi forced AU countries to accept the draft text without debate.

Both countries said they will not adhere to the AU decision and that they will arrest Bashir if he arrives at their shores.

The AU rejected the claims saying that the decision was taken by consensus.

“The decision by the Assembly on the Meeting of African States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was arrived at by Consensus after due consideration by the Executive Council at which a number of amendments were made to the draft decision” the AU said.

“At the level of the Assembly, the decision was adopted by consensus with only one opinion to the contrary, which was duly recorded as a reservation”.

The Chairperson of the Commission of the AU Jean Ping had told reporters at the beginning of the summit that the countries are unlikely to taken any stance against the ICC despite widespread criticism towards the court.

However, it was later reported that Libya abruptly circulated a draft text calling all African ICC signatories not to execute any arrest warrant for African indicted personalities.

The text, which was hotly debated, was changed from refusing to arrest any African individual to specifying that it was only Bashir who would be afforded immunity.

Darfur rebels and human right groups accused Gaddafi of “bullying” his peers into adopting the resolution which runs contrary to their obligations under the ICC Statute.

They also said that the AU resolution amounts to condoning impunity and human right violations against African civilians.

But the Pan-African body said that the decision “was taken in conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and the Executive Council and was not and could not have been dictated by any one Member State against all the others as implied in some press statements”.

The AU further said that the resolution “reflects the consistent position of the AU of unflinching commitment of AU member states to combating impunity and promoting democracy, the rule of law and good governance on the continent as enunciated in the constitutive Act of the Union”.

“It also underlines the need to empower the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights to deal with serious crimes of international concern in a manner complementary to national jurisdiction”.

The Rome Statute, which is the founding text of the ICC, prevents the prosecutor from initiating investigation into cases being looked into by the national judiciary.

In 2004, the UNSC formed a UN commission of inquiry to look into Darfur abuses headed by former President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Italian Antonio Cassese.

The commission concluded that the government did not pursue a policy of genocide in the Darfur region but that Khartoum and government-sponsored Arab militias known as the Janjaweed engaged in “widespread and systematic” abuse that may constitute crimes against humanity.

They further said that Sudanese judiciary is “is unable or unwilling” to prosecute those crimes and thus recommended referring the situation to the ICC.

The ICC prosecutor in his reports said that the Sudanese government has not taken serious steps to prosecute those suspected of being behind the war crimes in Sudan’s Western region of Darfur.

The AU statement asserts that the decision Sudan “is a logical consequence of the stated position of the AU on the manner in which the prosecution against President Bashir has been conducted”.

“The publicity-seeking approach of the ICC Prosecutor, the refusal by the UN Security Council to address the request made by the African Union and other important International groupings for deferment of the indictment against President Bashir of The Sudan, under Article 16 of the Rome Statute of the ICC”.

The AU has failed to convince the UNSC to defer the indictment of Bashir which angered some African officials.

The AU commissioner Ping, who is one of the fiercest critics of the ICC said that the regional body is “showing to the world community that if you don’t want to listen to the continent, if you don’t want to take into account our proposals... if you don’t want to listen to the continent, as usual, we also are going to act unilaterally,”.

The statement reiterated calls on the UNSC to halt the ICC proceedings against the Sudanese head of state.

“The AU decision should be received as a very significant pronouncement by the supreme AU decision-making body and a balanced expression of willingness to promote both peace and justice in Darfur and in The Sudan as a whole”

“It is now incumbent upon the United Nations Security Council to seriously consider the request by the AU for the deferral of the process initiated by the ICC, in accordance with Article 16 of the Rome Statute”.

Last week more than a dozen South African NGO’s called on their government to distance themselves from the AU decision.

The NGO’s were also joined by several prominent South African figures including Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Richard Goldstone, former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

“As a State Party to the Rome Statute, South Africa is obliged to cooperate fully with the ICC in the arrest and transfer of President al-Bashir to the ICC, whether or not it agrees with the indictment” the statement read.

“Should the South African government persist with its support for the decision it will do so in open defiance of its own Constitution and law”.

Also this week the Ugandan government, a signatory to the ICC, agreed with Sudan that Bashir would not attend a summit he was invited to in Kampala to avoid a “diplomatic incident”.

Khartoum responded angrily saying that Uganda is reneging on its obligation under the AU decision.

The Huffington Post  
 Monday, 20 July 2009  
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

## Why The ICC Should Speak Out on Iran

*By Christopher Santora and Gissou Azarnia*



Recent images of brutality and suffering in Iran have again brought to the forefront an on-going global debate -- balancing the doctrine of state sovereignty with today's increasing recognition of universal human rights.

Reaction of political leaders from around the world have run the spectrum from either roundly criticizing the regime's brutal crackdown on civilians to alternatively pronouncing it is a matter of internal sovereignty and that no outside state or institution has proper grounds to comment. However, one international institution, whose very existence is premised on the principle that certain non-negotiable human rights trump state sovereignty has been noticeably silent -- the International Criminal Court.

Recently, a petition was signed by nearly 200 lawyers and other practitioners in the field of international humanitarian and human rights law, including Iranian human rights lawyer and 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, requesting the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to comment publicly on the situation in Iran . The petition simply asked the Prosecutor to remind all individuals that no matter if their state is or is not a member of the Court, all individuals are still under a legal obligation to not violate international humanitarian and human rights law. The petition is premised on the belief that the International Criminal Court, and specifically the Prosecutor, does and should always remind the world that whether it is in relation to Iran or any other state, all individuals must abide by human rights law, regardless of that state's relationship with the International Criminal Court.

Why does this matter? Of the many criticisms levied against the international community's efforts to promote accountability, perhaps the most pervasive critique is a rather simple one -- the lack of consistency. There is a perception that international justice applies only to some. This has been an issue for all of the various war crimes tribunals constituted in relation to the situations in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, East Timor and Cambodia and now most recently the permanent International Criminal Court in The Hague. Misinformation about how these institutions were created and how they actually work in practice has allowed some to manipulate public perception by castigating international judicial institutions as political tools. This occurred in the US, when certain politicians painted the International Criminal Court as some "UN new world order" mechanism to target the US . This occurred in relation to Sudan as opportunistic leaders have depicted the same Court as some neo-colonial tool designed to interfere with internal African affairs. It has occurred in relation to the other tribunals where spreading misinformation has suited the respective protagonists. And unfortunately, it works.

Part of the reason why some political actors are successful at obfuscating the work of these institutions, including the ICC, is because the institutions themselves rarely counter this rhetoric publicly. This is why establishing a pattern now is a must. While the old notion, "no one is above the law" is taken for granted in developed domestic legal systems, it simply has not seeped into global public awareness in respect to international human rights law. No matter the politics, no matter the players, it is time for the proponents

of human rights law to start establishing a pattern of consistency and repeating one simple truth -- basic human rights are non-negotiable. And today, the one international institution that can potentially promote this principle regardless of political considerations is the International Criminal Court.

For the prosecutor to speak out now on Iran is neither premature nor inappropriate. The limited information available suggests that the regime has extensively employed an untrained quasi-militia group known as the Basij to target unarmed civilians. And there is no indication the violence has stopped, rather more ominously, it has moved behind closed doors, or rather prison walls, potentially in the form of targeted arrests and torture. These recent developments have even prompted ten Nobel Laureates, including former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and South African Bishop Desmond Tutu, to write to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

How far the regime is willing to go is anyone's guess. But speaking out now is essential, before the world does find out how bad the situation in Iran really is. For the citizens of Iran it is a reminder the world may someday do more than simply express remorse about their suffering. And to the more pragmatic members of the regime, it may even be a deterrent, checking its worst impulses before they occur. While the regime will predictably chafe at any comments from the outside, that should not stop the Prosecutor from reminding individuals that if they go too far, some day, somewhere, there will be consequences. In short, an urgent message is needed to the regime and the world at large -- no one is above the law.

*Christopher Santora currently works in The Hague as a prosecuting attorney for the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Gissou Azarnia currently works as a defense attorney in The Hague at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The petition link is [here](#).*