

**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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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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Awoko

Tuesday, 21 July 2009

# Taylor denies planning invasion of Sierra Leone

By Betty Milton and Judy Vue

Charles Taylor yesterday told the Special Court in The Hague, The Netherlands that he never planned or took part in the plan to invade Sierra Leone.

He denied allegations made by certain prosecution witnesses that he was part of a meeting where the invasion of Sierra Leone was discussed.

Taylor said "I played no part in whatsoever in organizing the RUF; I had no knowledge that there was a group who called themselves RUF that was planning to invade Sierra Leone."

He said that he tried to convince Momoh that he was not part of the invasion but Momoh was not convinced and this ended the cordial relationship with them.

The witness said that he told president Momoh that he never sent a tanker and troops for the invasion, but Momoh could not believe this as he had been informed by the international community that he [Taylor] was part of the invasion.

In his evidence he denied the allegation that, he was asked by Foday Sankoh to assist him in the invasion of Sierra Leone.

"Even if Sankoh had asked me for any assistance I would not have done it against a friend and Sankoh did not have the credential and power for me to help him."

He said that he only got the information about the invasion of Sierra Leone through the BBC Focus on Africa programme

and he was disturbed about it.

Questioned about his action after the RUF invaded Sierra Leone, the witness said that the moment he became aware of the invasion and the role of other Liberians he immediately ordered the closure of the borders between

*Continued on Page 6*

## Kailahun delegates

By Saffa Moriba in Kenema

The Sierra Leone Teacher Union SLTU in Kailahun District east of the country has held its Kailahun District Delegate elections and Consultative Conference at the Kailahun District Education Committee (KDEC) school campus in Kailahun town.

Speaking to the press in Kailahun town just after the delegate elections, the SLTU Assistant Secretary General in Kailahun district Samai M. Kallon disclosed that the

## Taylor denies planning invasion of Sierra Leone

*From Page 2*

Liberia and Sierra Leone to ensure that there was no entry of arms from Sierra Leone to Liberia.

Charles Taylor also denied the allegation by the prosecution that he was aware of Sierra Leoneans being trained in Liberia at Camp Nama.

He said that training was indeed going on in Camp Nama and that several West African groups were part of the training but could not tell whether Sierra Leoneans were part of those in the training camp. He also denied the allegation that he was aware that Sankoh took people from Sierra Leone to be trained at Camp Nama.

Charles Taylor told the court that former president of Sierra Leone Ahmed Tejan Kabbah made arrangement for Sierra Leoneans to be trained in Libya and this arrangement was made through Ghana.

The witness also said that this group of Sierra Leoneans was called the Sierra Leonean Pan African Movement and it was headed by one Alie Kabbah a relative of Tejan Kabbah. And that he was told by the leader that they were groups of student from Fourah bay College.



# Taylor denies invading Salone



Former Liberian president Monday denied he had played any part in forming the guerrilla force that invaded Sierra Leone in the early 1990s.

In his second week of testimony at his war crimes trial in The Hague, Charles Taylor was categorical in rejecting the testimony of prosecution witnesses that he attended the meeting that planned the rebel incursion into Sierra Leone, that he trained the rebel forces and that he commanded their op-

erations.

"I was never involved. It's a lie," he said.

Taylor is charged with 11 counts of murder, torture and recruiting child soldiers for supporting rebels during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war. He is the first African head of state to be brought before an international court for war crimes.

Allegations that Taylor was instrumental in creating and commanding the Sierra Leonean rebel force known as

*Contd. page 4*

## Taylor denies invading Salone

*From page 1*

the Revolutionary United Front, or RUF, was a key element of the prosecution case, presented by 91 witnesses since the trial opened in January 2008.

"I played no part whatsoever in organizing the RUF, none whatsoever," Taylor told the three judges of the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"I had no knowledge in March 1991 or before then, that a group calling itself RUF was either planning or organizing or training to attack Sierra Leone, not at all," he said. The rebels staged their assault on Sierra Leone from Liberian ter-

ritory, where prosecution witnesses said they were recruited and trained in camps run by Taylor's forces. The Sierra Leone rebels were infamous for tortures inflicted on civilians, wielding machetes to slice off limbs, ears and noses of victims to suppress any opposition.

In Liberia, Taylor set out in 1989 to topple the government of President Samuel Doe. In 1991, he said, he was still fighting the remnants of Doe's army as well as a Nigerian-led African peacekeeping force sent to put down his revolution.

Asked if at that time

he was in charge of the RUF, Taylor replied, "Definitely not. How could I be in charge of RUF that I knew nothing about?"

Taylor said he never met RUF leader Foday Sankoh until five months after the invasion when his forces and the rebels in Sierra Leone were both fighting a third rebel outfit known as ULIMO, which controlled a swathe of territory on their common border.

Sankoh, pleading a shortage of men, asked Taylor for help. It was only then that cooperation with the RUF began, Taylor said.



The Spark  
Tuesday, 21 July 2009

# Inmates Bo Prison calls for justice

*By Gbessay Juldeh Bo*

Inmates at the Bo prison have said that justice is not for the poor in Sierra Leone. The prisoners made this pronouncement on world justice day last Friday during a visit of the National chairman Network Movement for Democracy and Human Right James Mathew who double as National chairman Sierra Leone coalition for international criminal court.

According to James Mathew the Inmate highlighted problems affecting them including lack of good toilet

facilities, mattress, blanket, good food and over population of prison cell among others.

Mr. Mathew observed that 90% of the prisoners are used with ages between 19-25 years. He added that a god number as inmates they have been captivity for over two years without trial describing their detention as gross injustice. The Human Right boss also disclosed that there are 5 female inmates including pregnant women by the name of Mariama Kamara a matter he referred to as purely civil and not criminal. The human right

chairman noted that prison is an institute which change or transform the lives of people from bad to good adding that what he saw at the Bo prisons is contrary to what obtained in principle. Government especially the justice sector n or the prison administration. He therefore called government to improve on the condition of prison and also the service of prison administration. Meanwhile, the prisoners are pleading with judiciary to fast tract the undecided and on presided back log of cases in the interest of justice and human right.

# Daily Observer (Liberia)

Thursday, 16 July 2009

## Liberia's Taylor: War Crimes Case Builds on Lies

### Liberia's

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor testified at his war crimes trial Tuesday that the case against him was built on lies and misinformation, and he denied he had commanded armed rebels who killed and tortured tens of thousands of civilians in neighboring Sierra Leone.

Taylor, the first African leader to stand trial for war crimes, is charged with 11 counts of murder, torture, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers and terrorism during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war.

An estimated 500,000 were the victims of killings, systematic mutilation and other atrocities during that war, with some of the worst crimes carried out by child soldiers who were drugged to desensitize them to the horror of their actions.

It is "very, very, very unfortunate that the prosecution' because of disinformation, misinformation, lies, and rumors would associate me with such titles or descriptions," Taylor said, when asked by his attorney what he thought of the charges.

"I am a father of 14 children, grandchildren, have fought all my life to do what I thought was right in the interests of justice and fair play," Taylor told the court. "I resent that characterization of me. It is false, it is malicious," he added.

Wearing a gray double-breasted suit and dark glasses, Taylor spoke confidently as he introduced himself to the three-judge panel as the 21st president of the Republic of Liberia. It was his first time on the witness stand.

Prosecutors at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone say Taylor led and armed rebels to help gain control of the West African nation and strip it of its vast mineral wealth, particularly so-called 'blood diamonds' mined using slave labor.

But Taylor said the case was aimed at removing him from power. "This whole case has been about let's get Taylor," he said. "Haven't they had their pound of flesh yet? I am not guilty of all of these charges."

Taylor's case has been hailed as a groundbreaking sign that the international community will hold autocrats responsible for human rights violations that occurred under their watch.

However, getting such leaders to court is not easy. The International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of crimes against humanity in Darfur, but he refuses to recognize the court. Most African leaders have supported al-Bashir in his defiance and refused to arrest him.

Anneke Galama of Fatal Transactions, a non-governmental group that lobbies for the fair distribution of profits from

Africa's natural resources, said the case also was a landmark in the fight against conflict diamonds.

"The Taylor process shows we don't allow diamonds any more as a way to finance violence and human rights abuses," she said.

Taylor's testimony aims to persuade judges that the 91 prosecution witnesses called since January 2008 were lying.

Some of those witnesses claimed Taylor shipped weapons to rebels in rice sacks in contravention of an arms embargo and in return got diamonds smuggled out of mines in Sierra Leone in mayonnaise jars.

Taylor flatly denied that allegation.

"Never, ever did I receive whether it is mayonnaise or coffee or whatever jar any diamonds from the RUF," he said, referring to the Revolutionary United Front rebel group he allegedly supported. "It is a lie, a diabolical lie."

Griffiths said Monday that Taylor will testify about his 'strenuous efforts to bring peace in Sierra Leone'.

Taylor completed an economics degree in the United States and military training in Libya before leading a revolutionary force into Liberia in 1989.

A year later, then-President Samuel Doe, whose regime also was accused of widespread rights abuses, was tortured to death by forces loyal to Prince Johnson, a rival of Taylor's who is now a Liberian senator.

"We launched the revolution to bring about stability in the country," Taylor told judges.

But Doe's slaying plunged Liberia deeper into factional fighting that lasted until shortly before Taylor was elected president in 1997.

He is accused of supporting the RUF in Sierra Leone in its fight to depose President Joseph Momoh and his successors.

Prosecutors say Taylor was trained in Libya with the RUF's leader, Foday Sankoh.

But Taylor said he never plotted with Sankoh to invade 'that friendly country', Sierra Leone. He also denied ever ordering rebels to hack off the hands of their enemies the signature atrocity of the Sierra Leone conflict.

"It is wrong. It never happened in Liberia, I would never ever have accepted that in Liberia and we would never have encouraged that in Sierra Leone," he said.



New Democrat (Liberia)  
Wednesday, 15 July 2009

# Taylor In The World Press

VOA

## Ex-Liberian President Says War Crimes Case Against Him Built on 'Lies'

**F**ormer Liberian President Charles Taylor has testified for the first time at his war crimes trial in The Hague in the Netherlands, saying the case against him is based on lies.

Mr. Taylor told the court it was "incredible" and "very, very unfortunate" that the prosecution would rely on what he called misinformation and rumors about his role in neighboring Sierra Leone's bloody 10-year civil war, which ended in 2002. He mentioned his 14 children when he said he had fought all his life to do what he thought was right.

The 61-year-old former Liberian leader is accused of supporting the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, smuggling weapons to the rebels in exchange for so-called "blood diamonds."

Mr. Taylor said allegations that he received mayonnaise jars filled with diamonds smuggled out of Sierra Leone as "a diabolical lie."

The RUF is blamed for atrocities including the mutilation of thousands of civilians by cutting off their arms and legs.

Mr. Taylor testified that he would have never encouraged such horrors in Sierra Leone, because he

would not have accepted it in Liberia.

Mr. Taylor, the first African head of state to be tried by an international tribunal, is charged with 11 criminal acts, including murder, rape, torture, enslavement and forcing children to become soldiers.

He was arrested in 2003, shortly after he was overthrown and forced into exile in Nigeria.

The Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone, the United Nations-backed court hearing the charges against Taylor, moved the proceedings to The Hague out of fears it would spark more violence in the region.



ALJAZEERA

## Taylor Dismisses War Crimes Charges

**C**harles Taylor, the former Liberian president, has dismissed charges against him of war crimes during Sierra Leone's civil war as "lies" and "rumours".

He made the comments as he took the stand at his trial in The Hague, in the Netherlands, on Tuesday.

Taylor denied the 11 charges against him, which include murder, rape, the conscription of child soldiers, and backing a rebel group known for mutilating its opponents.

"It is very, very, very unfortunate that the prosecution's disinformation, misinformation, lies and rumours would associate me with such titles," he said.

"It is quite incredible that such descriptions of me would come about. I am none of these, I have never been and never will be, whether they think so or not."

'Peace broker'

Taylor's lawyers began their defence on Monday at the court in The Hague, which is conducting the trial at the request of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. They argued on Monday that Taylor - the first African leader to be tried before an international tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity - tried to broker peace in Sierra Leone rather than fuel civil war.

Estimates of the 1991-2001 conflict's death toll run as high as 200,000.

Prosecutors, who closed their case in February, said Taylor armed and supported the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel movement that sought to destabilise the government, and attempted to gain control of Sierra Leone's diamond mines.

Taylor has been on trial at The Hague since June

2007 at facilities provided by the International Criminal Court.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is headquartered in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, but the trial is taking place in the Dutch capital due to concerns it may trigger violence in Sierra Leone.

In May, judges at the Special Court for Sierra Leone ruled against a defence request to acquit Taylor of war-crimes charges, saying the prosecution had produced enough evidence supporting a conviction.

However, Judge Richard Lussick has stressed that the ruling does not mean Taylor would be convicted.

A final verdict is expected in a year's time.

Local reaction

Local residents were able to watch Tuesday's trial in a courtroom in Freetown, where the proceedings were broadcast.

Al Jazeera's Yvonne Ndege, reporting from Freetown, said many residents lost interest in the case after it was moved to The Hague, but more people were coming to watch now that Taylor was in the stand.

"The courtroom was packed with a few hundred people representing non-governmental organisations and those who were affected," she said.

"There have been bursts of laughter, tears, and scenes of people's jaws dropping."

Speaking to Al Jazeera shortly before Taylor took the stand, Desmond Davies, the editor of Africa Week magazine, said that the former Liberian ruler was not the only person who should be on trial.

"It won't bring a great deal of relief to those who suffered because the perpetrators are still out there. Charles Taylor, I believe, is just a fall guy ... He's not as guilty as some others who are not in front of the court," Davies said.



*New York Times*

# Taylor Calls War Crimes Charges 'Lies'

**C**harles Taylor, the former president of Liberia, took the stand in his own defense here Tuesday—the first African leader to be tried for war crimes — and immediately denied a catalogue of horrendous charges based on testimony by prosecution witnesses telling stories of violence, rape, amputation and even cannibalism.

"This whole case against me is a case of deceit, deception and lies," he told the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting here.

He was beginning testimony that, his lawyers say, may go on for weeks, given the wide range of the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The prosecution, which has rested its case, has charged that he armed and commanded rebel groups to bolster his influence in West Africa and to seize a swath of neighboring Sierra Leone, in particular its diamond-mining areas.

His indictment holds him accountable for the rebels' barbaric methods as they pillaged, killed, raped, used drug-crazed children as soldiers and hacked off limbs, ears or noses to subdue civilians.

Opening the defense case on Monday, Courtenay Griffiths, the lead lawyer, said that Mr. Taylor was not "an African Napoleon" bent on taking over a region, but a broker of peace who would exonerate himself when he gave his account.

As many as 200,000 people died in the decade of fighting, and Mr. Taylor's war strategies are said to have affected many more in Liberia, his home country, but only crimes in Sierra Leone between 1996 and 2002 are within the mandate of the court.

For Mr. Taylor's trial, the international judges of the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone are sitting in The Hague to avoid potential unrest in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, where the court is based. The prosecution has brought 91 witnesses, many of whom made a 7,000-mile round trip to The Netherlands.

"We didn't have documents and orders signed by Taylor, so we needed much circumstantial evidence," said Stephen J. Rapp, the court's chief prosecutor. "But key players close to Taylor have testified and painted the complex picture. Taylor was in another country, it was not his country's army, he was not at the scene of the crimes. But we have direct evidence of his orders and communications."

Mr. Rapp said that about a dozen "insiders" — wit-

nesses once close to Mr. Taylor, whose testimony had been crucial — had been moved to other countries and given new identities. Several important witnesses had declined to testify because they had been threatened, he said.

The horrors of the Sierra Leone war have frequently perturbed the solemn setting of The Hague courtroom, with its officers in black robes with neatly starched white bibs and its crimson-robed judges high on the dais. At times, witnesses on the stand gesticulated with amputated limbs, swaddled in bandages. Or take the small but awkward incident on the day when Mustapha Mansary, a villager, came to testify. Rebel gangs had hacked off both of his hands.

The defense lawyer began: "Mr. Witness, can I ask you, can you read and write English?" Mr. Mansary listened to the translation, and then he held up his two stumps. "I have no hands to write anything," he said.

"I appreciate that; my apologies," the lawyer said. At other times, witnesses described scenes of incomprehensible cruelty.

A rape victim who testified under the name "064" described the day a gang of rebels mutilated and killed many adults and children in the village of Foendor, among them members of her family, including her two children. After nine children and the adults had been decapitated, Tamba Joe, the gang leader, ordered her to look for her people. Their severed heads were put in a sack.

"They gave me the heads to carry," the woman said. "But at first I couldn't."

A man was told to help her carry the sack, dripping with blood. When they got to Tombudu, the next village, the rebels ordered all the heads thrown into a pond. The heads of her two children were among them, she said.

No one knows exactly how many people were killed or maimed in the civil war of the 1990s. Human rights groups have said that close to 4,000 amputees have not survived. Up to 3,500 amputees are believed to be still alive. Numerous former child soldiers are still in rehabilitation homes.

During the trial, the magnitude of the atrocities has not been in dispute. But the prosecution and the defense have described the case as legally complicated. The defense lawyer, Mr. Griffiths, said that the prosecution must prove Mr. Taylor's effective control over the rebel groups and that demonstrating influence or assistance was insufficient. "The case is all about linking the crimes to Mr. Taylor, but the evidence has been riddled with inconsisten-



cies," Mr. Griffiths said.

Mr. Rapp, the chief prosecutor, insists that Mr. Taylor's criminal responsibility has been more than demonstrated with the insider witnesses. These included radio operators, describing orders given from the secret communications center in Mr. Taylor's mansion, and members of the president's security force who said they witnessed the movement of arms and ammunition to the rebels and attended high-level strategy sessions.

One of the most dramatic accounts came from Joseph Marzah, a longtime associate of Mr. Taylor's. He described himself as Mr. Taylor's one-time chief of operations and head of a death squad, now an affluent businessman. He said that African peacekeepers were killed and eaten by Mr. Taylor's

militiamen and that weapons were easily smuggled. Four other witnesses also referred to the ritualistic eating of enemy flesh by Liberian combatants.

Mr. Marzah, known as Zigzag, spoke of the ease with which weapons were moved to Sierra Leone from Liberia during the Taylor government, despite an arms embargo. He said that Nigerian peacekeepers at the airport in Monrovia, the Liberian capital, were bribed and the weapons were transported in the peacekeepers' vehicles.

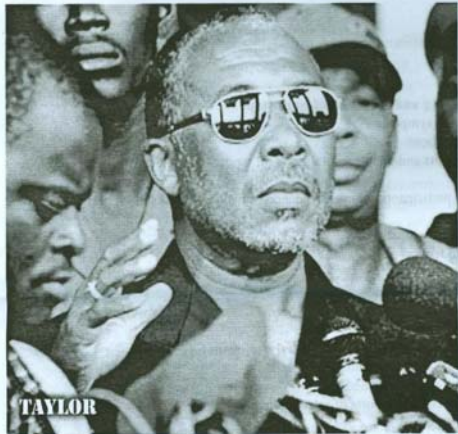
He became angry as the defense lawyer repeatedly insisted that he had no close contact with Mr. Taylor. Stung, Mr. Marzah blurted out that he and Mr. Taylor belonged to the same secret society and had together eaten human hearts. With that he nervously crossed himself.



### Taylor's Sierra Leone Peace Plan: "Thanks, But No Deal"

*Editor; note: AS Mr. Charles Taylor tells his version of the Sierra Leone story in now changed circumstances, it is necessary to take some steps back with background documents like this, his own peace plan for Sierra Leone:*

“Thanks, but no deal”, can best describe Liberia's President Charles Taylor's response to American and British threats of sanctions for backing Sierra Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels. In Taylor's lat-



erian Alpha Conde' is accused by Conte' of plotting dangerously with Taylor"

"The Ivory Coast can no longer be a dependable ally as it was during the war years because there are new actors, new problems, now making it a dangerous neighbour. This scenario resembles Milosovic's Yugoslavia geographically sitting between London and Washington, two archenemies. Fearing "enemies" and imagining them everywhere, Taylor is simply saying, "No way. I can't trust you. I rather die fighting and defending the RUF, my real, true allies in a region swamped with foes."

So, US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering's "weeks, not months" deadline would have been unnecessary if the American had listened to our self-declared guerrilla grand patron when he lectured ECOWAS leaders in Abuja months ago that a rebel leader such as Sankoh must "operate in a natural environment", and demanded his release. Now, Taylor has fought back, slapping the Americans, British, and the UN with an unconditional rejection of their demands and claims. His prescriptions for peace in Sierra Leone contain the following key features:

1. No trial of Sankoh

est "peace proposals" following an ultimatum from the Americans to show evidence of ending his RUF linkages, there is nothing new, only a rehash and entrenchment of old demands, excuses, and counter-accusations. The Liberian ruler is digging in, remaining defiant despite sanction threats against his collapsing economy and fragile political security. Taylor's reactions indicate how peace in one country hangs on the wishes and fears of another. "This is blackmail", says one human rights campaigner.

But more than that, the "peace proposals" reflect his paranoia about cementing his grip on power and guaranteeing his personal security in the midst of what he sees as "enemies" all around him. There is Sierra Leone. Without the RUF in power there, his sense of vulnerability and doom mounts dangerously, no matter the assurances from a weak and compromising President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah or anyone else in Freetown.

Africa Confidential: "When a dissident group approached Kabbah for financial backing against Taylor, Kabbah official reported the fact to Monrovia, to show they were serious about security cooperation. Some of the suspects were arrested and handed over, others escaped"

Then there is Guinea Conakry, always held in suspicion because it is the bigger home of the Mandingoes, one of his archenemy tribes in the power contest, but without reasons. Conakry suspects, too, that Taylor is determined to install like-minded rebels there. Says Africa Confidential:

"Liberia has been hosting the late President Ahmed Sekou Toure's son Ahmed who wants to build a rebel force to oust Conte. The respected Guinean politi-

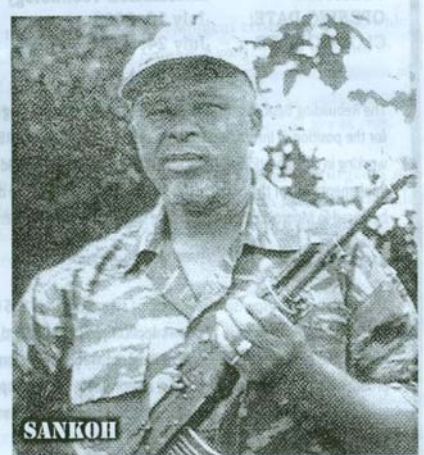
Let's now examine these crucial points as they relate to peace in Sierra Leone if Taylor remains the dominant player.

The rejection of Sankoh's trial for war crimes, and the reasons advanced, are revealing for their clarity of objective and demands. Although it has been generally assumed by critics that his opposition to trial was a reflection of his fears of being dragged before a tribunal as an accomplice, Taylor himself now admits what Liberians say, "If you haul rope, the rope will haul the bush." With unconfirmed reports that he is included in the Sankoh indictment as an accomplice, along with tangible evidence in the hands of the Americans and the British, the Liberian President is adamant against a trial. He says:

"Also directly threatening the durability of the peace efforts of the Liberian Government and our national security is the insistence on Foday Sankoh's trial for war crimes, which will most probably jettison the hard-won Lome Peace Agreement of 1999 and return the RUF and the Sierra Leone Government to the battlefield, with a possible spill over across the Liberian border.

"On the issue of bringing to trial culprits who are

suspected of derailing the peace process in Sierra Leone, Liberia believes that this move is premature. The question of trials for one party to the conflict while the country is infested with arms could be a misjudgement (sic) of the solution. If trials have to occur, then a full investigation of all parties to the conflict must be carried out in a free, fair and transparent manner following the disarmament and demobilization process. Carrying out trials of leaders of any of the warring parties while their supporters remain fully armed is not only a disincentive for cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization, but could lead to tribal, social and political backlash long after the war has ended".



What tribal "backlash"? The North, Saknoh's home region, is opposed to the war. Sankoh began his war in the East and South. If tribalism were a factor, he would not have had a base there. Unfortunately for the Liberian President, there are no Krahns and Mandingoes targeted tribes in Sierra Leone war, a factor he benefited from greatly in galvanizing aggrieved ethnic groups such as Gios and Manos to back his claims to power by instituting ethnic cleansing and regardless of the costs to the country in human and material terms. The war in Sierra Leone is non-tribal war, decidedly sustained by Liberian support and the diamond for weapons factor. It has brought in an array of international criminals to gain from the country's misery and therefore defend their diamond fiefdoms. This has made any possibility of solution bloodier and costly.

Furthermore, Taylor's demand for disarmament and



demobilization before any trial is pregnant with hidden intentions and a selfish agenda. First, as experience has shown in the war, there will be no disarmament as long as the RUF controls the diamonds and Monrovia remains a base. Second, as a reward for disarmament along an uncertain and tortuous road to peace, it is all too evident that the rebels will continue to insist on more general amnesties against prosecution in return for their guns, which they will always keep to blackmail the population in acquiescing as was the case in Liberia. They did this in Lome and succeeded, thanks to Taylor and his comrade in

thoughts, the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Yet, they continued the amputations, looting and other atrocities. Tactics of the Liberian war, in which 13 peace agreements were signed and dumped until the rebels were declared "democrats", are all too obvious here.

On linking Sankoh's trial to Liberia's "national security", there are several questions. What are national security implications for Liberia in a Sankoh trial? Why would the war spill over if the man stands trial?

To attempt to answer these questions, one must note the paralyzing fear of the Liberian President, fear due to the strong likelihood that facts coming out

of the tribunal could link him ever more strongly to Sankoh's alleged atrocities despite his (Taylor's) mountain of denials. Otherwise, it is difficult understanding the argument of "national security" implications. Would "national security" mean tying Taylor and his clan (including his son accused of being an RUF liaison for guns and diamonds), to the crimes during the trial? Why would he be so apprehensive even after denying links with diamond smuggling and gun running? Here is one of his lengthy and unequivocal denials:

"The Government categorically denies all of these allegations and challenges anyone to produce one shred of evidence. In spite of the gallant efforts of the Liberian Government to remain consistently engaged for peace in Sierra Leone, the international community remains unappreciative and

incorrigibly accusative of Liberia in complicity, diamond dealing and gun running to the RUF.

"In the first place, it is wrong to assume that the war in Sierra Leone is only about diamonds, since diamond dealing in that country has thrived for decades under British rule and since independence of the Sierra Leonean state.

"The war in Sierra Leone cannot and must not be trivialized by assertions of diamond dealing as its primary cause, when other issues such as ethnicity, tribalism, mistrust, the use



# Taylor's Sierra Leone Peace Plan

of mercenaries, and the struggle for state power have not yet been addressed.

"Nonetheless, it is the moral obligation of the Liberian government to set forth the following principles to first exonerate itself of the false charges as a first step in contributing to the resolution of the crisis".

If so, if he is clean, why the fanatical opposition to a trial?

Another oddity in the "peace proposals" is the continued rejection of UN deployment and peace enforcement, together with Taylor's highly religious preference for an ECOWAS solution, a solution he baptizes himself in because it contains the possibility of crowning the rebels leaders, just as he was crowned president under similar terms. By his opposition to UN peace enforcement, which has seen hundreds of rebels voluntarily disarming in the face of a superior military force, one is left to conclude that the Liberian game plan is tied around infinite war for an infinite supply line for diamonds and infinite peace talks. We must always remember Taylor's classic premise: "We will talk, and talk and talk about the talks." On the surface, the opposition to UN peace enforcement and massive deployment is odd because Taylor had volunteered to supply his own "peacekeeping forces", however laughable the offer. Here he elaborates:

"The ECOWAS formula used then, is still the most reasonable and relevant of the many prescriptions that are now being proposed to end the hostilities in Sierra Leone. The Liberian peace formula, basically embodied in the Lome Agreement, remains the best hope for a final resolution in Sierra Leone. Further, it seems absolutely important that the UN not get involved in a war in Sierra Leone, given the negative experience it has encountered in Somalia, Rwanda, Angola, and the Congo. The UN has to live up its reputation as a neutral and friendly force. The conflict will not and cannot be resolved through the deployment of a massive military force, apparently un-impartial (sic)..."

But it is Taylor's demand that all parties return to their previous positions before the taking of UN hostages and collapse of the Lome Agreement that is again baffling. Although there is a unanimous verdict within the international community that diamonds are the enticement for the war and holding of territory, he insists on all parties holding on their territory prior to the UN hostage affair for "A speedy return to the implementation of the Lome Accord" an immediate cease-fire" (with) a return to the original line as of the signing of the Lome Agreement, on July 7, 1999, demobilization and disarmament of all factions in the Sierra Leonean conflict..."

Now comes the element of a "conspiracy", which he believes is being designed by his enemies, to deprive him of the presidency as a "democratically elected leader." The "peace proposals" are colored with notions of threats against Liberia from every corner of the globe. The UN deployment is seen as "threatening to the continued welfare of the Liberian State and its freely elected Government" along with claims that, "British arms have found their way into the hands of dissidents that attacked Liberia from Guinea, they could also find their way into the hands of dissidents all across the sub region thereby posing imminent danger to stability"

And yet as Taylor sees it, "No one appears to be listening to the legitimate concerns of the Liberian Government about the large groups of Liberian combatants in Sierra Leone, some identified to be training with the un-restructured Sierra Leonean army, who pose, as well, a direct threat to Liberia's national security".

With Sierra Leone feeble and disintegrated, his attention is focused on Guinea in the "peace proposals." The deep mistrust between him and Guinea has been lingering for years, dating back to the time when Conakry hosted Alhaji Kromah of ULIMO-K. Now, even after Kromah was expelled from Guinea to address Taylor's fears, more fears abound, leading to an indirect threat last week from Taylor's defense minister of a possible attack on Guinea to "flush out" the dissidents. Ongoing incursion into the country by Liberian exiles and dissidents has solidified Taylor's paranoia and belief of an international and sub regional conspiracy designed to see him out of the region. Says he:

"In spite of these efforts and the objective realities, Liberia's strategic interests have not been served. Liberian dissidents abound in Sierra Leone as active members of the various warring factions, while Guinean-based Liberian dissidents have attacked Liberian territory for the third time within the year. At the same time, no one appears to be concerned enough to condemn the regular incursion into Liberia's sovereign territory or censure the Guinean authorities for this blatant breach of international law and convention against Liberia".

Although he is not specific, what is clear here is the linkage of his backing of the RUF to a change in Guinean policy in terms of his claims regarding dissidents stationed there. He would like to see hundreds of thousands who have fled to Guinea because of his policies arrested and sent back to face his "Final Solution."

Then the final, True Confession:

"Finally, the Liberia Government does admit to a relationship with the RUF, which is no secret. However, the government rejects any notion that that relationship is based on pecuniary gains from diamond dealing and gun running. Liberia has never, nor does it intend to represent the RUF at any forum".

In reality however, Liberia is the RUF. No other West African country has presented an independent peace plan for Sierra Leone. No other country has rejected UN efforts. No country insists on having the RUF as an integral part of government as Liberia has. And nowhere else does the RUF feel at home as in Liberia.

With this "Peace Plan" apparently drafted directly from the President's Office, Washington may have to go back on the drawing board. The ultimatum was "premature."



New Democrat (Liberia)  
Wednesday, 15 July 2009

# Why Me, Not Kabbah?

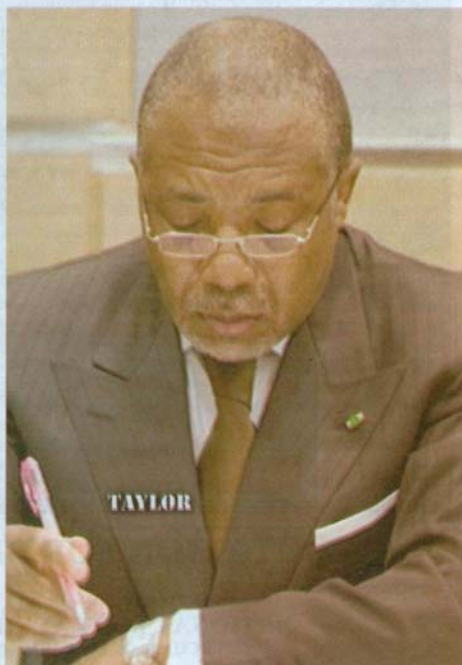
## Not A War Criminal, A Peacemaker

**M**r. Charles Taylor's charismatic lead lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, has told judges hearing war crimes against the former Liberian President that his client is not a war criminal as the prosecution claims, but a peacemaker.

Griffiths told the court that the trial was "political" because others who should have answered a case before the Special Court—such as the then Sierra Leonean president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah—were not indicted. Taylor's role in the conflict was skewed to suggest he bore the "greatest responsibility" for crimes committed during the war. Griffiths also suggested that Taylor's indictment suited western powers such as the United States and United Kingdom who wanted "regime change" in Liberia.

He said Mr. s Taylor is not a war criminal but a peacemaker turned scapegoat by the international community in its opening statement today.

The s lawyer told a packed courtroom today that his client will declare his trial "political" and "set



the historical record straight" that he was trying to bring peace, not foment war.

Reports: Mr. Griffiths, claimed that Mr. Taylor was a peacemaker. He was acting at the behest of West African states and the United Nations to broker peace between the warring factions in neighboring Sierra Leone, negotiate with rebels to set free abducted UN peacekeepers, and usher one of the most prominent rebel leaders, Sam Bockarie, out of Sierra Leone to help calm the conflict. Taylor took on this peacemaking role as the leader of the "Committee of Five," a group set up by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) designed to bring peace to Sierra Leone.

Griffiths—a charismatic advocate who infused his opening statement with a quote from Jamaican reggae singer Bob Marley and held up a sign to the public gallery that stated "Charles Taylor is innocent" before the judges entered the courtroom—listed a litany of problems he saw with the prosecution's case. Griffiths complained that the **Pg.11**

## Why Me, Not Kabbah?

prosecution's case was like a "lucky dip" because of its failure to settle on one consistent formula of joint criminal enterprise (a form of criminal liability) in its indictment, questioned the strength of the evidence linking Taylor to the alleged crimes, and stated that he would "expose" the prosecution's "corruption." "Evidence has been bought and secured through favors," Griffiths said. "Justice cannot be polluted in this way."

Griffiths also accused former Special Court prosecutor, David Crane, of trying to "scupper" peace talks for Liberia that Taylor attended in Ghana in 2003 by unsealing the indictment against Taylor at the same time. He said Crane later described this move as an effort to "publicly strip this warlord of his power." Griffiths pondered "such ego and hubris" before quoting a Bob Marley lyric: Crane, he said, was "working iniquity to achieve vanity." The central question of the case, Griffiths went on to tell the court, was whether the prosecution could show that Taylor was responsible for the alleged crimes. As Liberian President, not only was Taylor fully occupied with attacks on his own country which would not allow him to "micromanage" a conflict in a neighboring country, but as a West African leader and member of ECOWAS, he was "placed on the frontline" to bring peace to Sierra Leone, Griffiths said.

In an unusual move, prosecutor Stephen Rapp interjected during Griffiths' opening statement. Rapp objected because the defense was commenting on the prosecution's case rather than setting out the evidence his team will present. At the time, Griffiths was describing the breakdown of the prosecution's linkage and crime-based witnesses. The judges overruled the objection. Griffiths called the interjection "rude."

In a press briefing following the defense's opening statement, Rapp rebutted claims of corruption and described the legitimate forms of payments that could be made to witnesses to cover costs of testifying, including travel and lost wages. Rapp said the prosecution's formulations of joint criminal enterprise were fundamentally consistent throughout the case and that Griffiths' "lucky dip" description "mischaracterizes the case from the beginning." He also refuted the notion that the trial was political, and said that Taylor was on trial because he had a case to answer for serious crimes.



## New Democrat (Liberia)

Wednesday, 15 July 2009

# I'm No Superman

Specifically on his role in Sierra Leone and the backing of RUF rebels and the attending atrocities, he said: "It would have been "virtually impossible" for him to order anyone -- including the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the rebel group in Sierra Leone -- to carry out such actions, Taylor said, because he was too occupied with running his own country.

Reacting to witness testimonies of how he allegedly armed and trained the rebels, he said: "Some of those roads that the prosecution says we were using to transport ammunition," said Mr Taylor, briefly turning his tinted glasses to the prosecution team of Mr Rapp, "I don't think they even existed at the time."

"[I] have fought all my life to do what I thought was right in the interest of justice and fair play."

"I resent that characterization of me. It is false, it is malicious, and I stop there."

Mr. Taylor, answering a direct question from his lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths if he in any way shape and form sponsored the 1998 invasion of the Sierra Leone capital in which severe atrocities were committed. He answered, "This would be impossible. One would have to be a superman." He said charges against him are built on "disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumours", and "lies" and "misinformation", and that as father of 14 children, he cannot be a murderer.

He said he was too pre-occupied containing the ethnic vendettas in Liberia, with Gios against Krahns, to sponsor cross-border invasions, and that where evidence of atrocities were available, "I acted." He further said that as a "frontline" member of the Committee of Five, composed of African leaders designated to ensure peace in Sierra Leone and could not have worked against it.

Mr. Taylor, wearing his designer sunglasses and composed, said charges of murder, rape and using child soldiers in backing Sierra Leone war rebels are built on lies.

"This whole case has been — Let's Get Taylor!" complained Mr Taylor, 61, in a strong, confident voice.

"People have me eating human beings," he said, referring to prosecution witness testimony against him. "How could they sink so low as to think that of me?" He added, without apparent irony: "Haven't they had their pound of flesh yet?"

"Some of those roads that the prosecution says we were using to transport ammunition," said Mr Taylor, briefly turning his tinted glasses to the prosecution team of Mr Rapp, "I don't think they even existed at the time."

Interspersing his testimony with a few remembered Americanisms — "Gee, I don't know whether I can recall my Grandma's first name at this moment of time" — Charles Taylor argued that he was an idealist and, at heart, a democrat.

The first African head of state to be tried by an international court, Taylor is also charged with 11 counts of murder, torture, rape, sexual slavery and using child soldiers. Prosecutors at the UN-backed special court for Sierra Leone say he supported rebels in that country to help gain control of it and strip its vast mineral wealth.

Some of the 91 witnesses called so far have claimed Taylor shipped weapons to rebels in rice sacks in contravention of an arms embargo, and in return received "blood diamonds" mined by slave labour.

Lead lawyer Courtenay Griffiths said his client would testify about his "strenuous efforts to bring peace in Sierra Leone". The British lawyer urged the judges to give Taylor a fair hearing, and not to be overwhelmed by the parade of misery presented by the prosecution since the trial opened 18 months ago.

One witness had stumps where his hands had been hacked off. A woman testified that she was forced to carry a sack full of severed heads, including those of her children. One of Taylor's former aides told judges he was with Taylor when the president ate a human liver.



# I'M NOT GUILTY

## -Says Taylor, Calls Criminal Charges "Lies"



When the British, backed by UNAMSIL forces, routed RUF rebels from Freetown and eventually liberated the country, they rallied the international community to get to the bottom of the RUF resistance and mayhem. They found the then sitting president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, liable bearing the highest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UN hybrid court for Sierra Leone had since been holding pre-trial sessions in The Hague in which Taylor's defense had been doing most of the talking and legal technicalities. But now Taylor has taken to the floor as the first defense witness. **The Analyst Staff Writer** has been looking at correspondents' reports from The Hague.

Former Liberian President, Charles M.G. Taylor, yesterday, took the witness stand for the first time some 18 months after the start of his trial claiming innocence and described the charges against him as untrue and politically motivated.

"This whole case is a case of "disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumors, deceit, and deception," the former NPFL godfather told the court, rejecting all accusations regarding the 10-year brutal civil that devastated the tiny West African nation of Sierra Leone.

He said not only were the accusations and the charges that were derived from them "quite incredible" but that they were also "very unfortunate and completely false".

Dressed in a dark grey suit and crisp white shirt with a dotted tie and gold cufflinks, the 61-year-old former warlord said he had in fact been involved in attempts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to get the RUF "to come to the peace table".

"I am not guilty of all of these charges, not even a minute part of the charges."

Taylor, the first African leader to be tried before an international tribunal, told the judges he had sought to broker peace in Sierra Leone and not fuel war.

Taylor is accused of arming, training and controlling Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in exchange for what has come to be known as 'blood diamonds'.

He faces 11 charges for murder, rape, conscripting child soldiers, enslavement and pillaging.

The RUF is blamed for the mutilation of thousands of civilians who had their hands and arms severed in one of the most brutal wars in modern history, which claimed some 120,000

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## I'M NOT GUILTY

lives.

"Quite frankly, I cannot understand how some of these people were brought to the point to tell some of the lies I have heard sitting over there," said Taylor, gesturing to the accused docket from which he had been following the testimony since the trial began in January 2008.

He conceded that atrocities did occur in Sierra Leone during the civil upheaval between 1991 and 2001 but insisted that he has no hand in the destruction and mass murder.

"Yes, we did hear about certain actions that were going on in Sierra Leone. We heard that people were being killed, women were being raped. We could not understand it. For me, this was unacceptable," he told the jam-packed court.

Taylor described the act of amputation as "wrong" and dismissed claims he ever received diamonds from the RUF "whether it was in a mayonnaise or coffee or whatever jar", as is being claimed.

Calling himself a "pure democrat", Taylor said his actions, including his role in the "revolution" that unseated former Liberian leader Samuel Doe, were always motivated by "a desire for democracy and the rule of law".

"I fought all my life to do what I think was right in the interests of justice and fair play," he said in testimony before judges of the Special Hybrid Court for Sierra Leone convening in the trial facilities of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.

He said the purpose of his trial was to deliver justice or to prevent dictators from coming to power in Africa and elsewhere in the world but that it was about "Let's get Taylor".

"People have brought themselves so low. Here people have me eating human beings.

How can people be so low as to even think such a thing of me?" he asked rhetorically.

Taylor became president of Liberia in 1997 after rebels unseated Doe in 1989, but was himself overthrown by a rebellion and agreed to go into exile in 2003.

He was handed over the Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone in 2006 following his arrest in Nigeria.

Taylor claimed during his witness stand yesterday that the African Union and ECOWAS had decided that any charges against him should be quashed if he agreed to step down as president.

Despite this, Nigeria's then-president Olusegun Obasanjo "constantly reminded me he was under tremendous pressure to hand me over" and he did so eventually.

"I am damn angry about what Obasanjo did to me," Taylor told the court.

Taylor said instead of being the trouble maker his accusers are trying to present him to be, he facilitated the Sierra Leone peace process.

He said he invested his energy into fixing his war-torn country and helping other Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leaders to attain peace in Sierra Leone.

Taylor then revealed that for all times that he was in contact with RUF leaders in Sierra Leone, he did so with the consent of ECOWAS leaders.

Taylor denied allegations of any association with former RUF leader Foday Sankoh, emphasizing that he had no knowledge of earlier RUF plans to attack Sierra Leone in 1991.

"I was outraged when I

heard the RUF invaded Freetown on January 6, 1999 after all my work to secure peace," Taylor said.

He 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.

Much of today's testimony, however, described Taylor's early years, from childhood to his role as a student leader during the coup d'état in Liberia in April 1980.

Mr. Taylor, whose testimony is expected 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."

Mr. 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.

Commenting on the allegations, Taylor's lawyers said the former warlord could not have micro-managed a rebel operation in Sierra Leone while also running affairs of state in 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.

Meanwhile, reports say Taylor testimony is expected to last several weeks with a final verdict due in about a year's time.

The Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, last week, released a damning report on the Liberian civil war of 1989-2003 and included Taylor on a list of eight warlords it wanted brought to trial for crimes against humanity.



# War Crimes Court Crusaders In Disarray

## -Suspended Leader Fights Back, Brands Colleagues "Stooges"

The National Executive Committee of the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crime in Liberia has finally announced the expulsion of its suspended chairman, Mulbah Morlu.

The committee said it was compelled to take the action against Mr. Morlu because his actions over the last few days were incompatible with his status as a chairman of an advocacy movement.

But the suspension announcement hardly went into circulation before Mr. Morlu fired back, denying his expulsion and branding his former colleagues "stooges".

He however did not say whose stooges his former colleague have become, but he noted that he was still head of the group.

With the claims and counter-claims coming from the two opposed sides, observers say the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crime in Liberia liable to devolve into total disarray.

The decision to expel Morlu was announced for and on behalf of the group by the

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Mr. Mulbah Morlu.

## War Crimes Court

National Secretary General of the group, Boakai Jaleibah, Jr in the Conference Room of the Center for Democratic Empowerment on Ashman Street following several hours of deliberations with several members of the group who are believed National Executive Committee members, the group said in a release issued late yesterday.

Shortly following the meeting, Secretary Jaleiba told journalists that it has now become of extreme necessity to inform the Liberian people, heads of foreign missions accredited to this country especially the United States of Embassy, the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) and their partners that the FORUM regrets the embarrassing comments made by the then chairman, Mulbah K. Morlu, Jr.

Mulbah Morlu told the Liberian people that he had a six-minute discussion with the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama in Accra, Ghana.

Morlu claimed he discussed a

wide range of issues, including US support for the setting up of a war crimes court in Liberia, governance, and corruption, with the US President during his two-day stopover in Ghana from the G-8 Summit in Italy.

The United States Embassy in Monrovia, Monday this week, categorically denied that Mr. Morlu met with President Obama and that there were discussions held between the two men or their representatives.

As the result of the U.S Embassy's denial, the FORUM National Executive Committee suspended Morlu for lying to the Liberia people.

Observers had that thought that Morlu's suspension would have put the issue to rest, but they said they did not know what went wrong between the time of suspension on Monday and 24 hours later yesterday that led to the former chairman's final oust from the movement.

Meanwhile the National Executive Committee of FORUM has named Sampson Tweh, National Vice chairman, as Acting National Chairman until the group can hold another congress to elect a new corps of officers.

Security General Boakai Jaleiba said the institution viewed the lies and comments made by now former chairman, Mulbah Morlu, as a shocking embarrassment and a well calculated effort to hinder all of the energies and resources pumped into the campaign.

"From all facts and records available to us to date," the FORUM's Secretary General revealed, "we have disturbingly learnt that funds allocated to the FORUM meant for the viability and growth and development of the institution have been misused by Mr. Morlu to support his overpriced lifestyle, and that

today he owns a fleet of cars at the expense of the institution."

He then noted further, "In an effort to help promote a popular system of fiscal accountability, we as institution have always scrutinized acts of national government to adhere to the very tenets of such accountability process, and that it was embarrassing that the leader of the group was seen at the peak of corruption."

Against this, he said, the National Executive committee has meticulously cross-checked their facts and considered the shaming nature coupled with the continuous whimsical approach adopted by Mr. Morlu in bringing into public disrepute the institution.

He said cognizant of the essence of the movement's forward march, Mr. Morlu's expulsion was necessary to shield it from his "wounded image".

He use the medium to ask the public to refrain from doing

business with Mulbah Morlu as he no longer represented the interest of the group, stressing that any one doing business with him was doing it at his or her own risk.

Earlier on during the day, the expelled chairman held a press conference in which he said he met with president Obama despite the statement from the U.S Embassy in Monrovia that no such meeting took place.

Morlu said FORUM would like to inform the Liberian people that a statement emanating from the United States ambassador suggesting that the claimed meeting between him and President Obama did not take place comes as a surprise to him.

He added that the FORUM would like the US Embassy near Monrovia to conduct a more thorough and appropriate investigation by contacting the State Department in Washington and President Osama's office to ascertain facts surrounding the meeting.

"This organization maintains that there was a meeting held between Mr. Obama and me and that supporting facts and documents will be published appropriately," he vowed.

He also indicated that his organization believes the ambassador's view on the matter would be different when the appropriate agencies of the U.S government were contacted.

Morlu described his suspension as a mere propaganda launched by "paid stooges of the Sirleaf regime" that is desperately battling to detract from the ongoing resignation campaign against war criminals in government.

He then disclosed that in this vein, the leadership of the FORUM convened had

extraordinary session, with immediate effect expelled the Security General of the FORUM, Boakai Jaleiba, and is now calling on the general public and the international community not to do business with him as he was no more in the movement.



## BBC World Service Trust

Monday, 20 July 2009

### Report from The Hague

The Prosecution alleged in its indictment that Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor controlled, commanded, and led the RUF rebel group which committed horrific atrocities in the Sierra Leonean conflict. Mr. Taylor said he didn't know RUF Leader, Foday Sankoh and he denied helping to organize the Sierra Leone Rebel Group, the RUF. He however admitted cooperating with RUF to attack the Liberian Rebel Group, ULIMO. The Former NPFL Leader again refuted allegation of diamonds. Mr. Taylor said initially he did not know Foday Sankoh. He also testified to the involvement of Gambians with the NPFL. Joseph Cheeseman reports.

CHEESEMAN: The decade long civil war fought in Sierra Leone was tied to the command and support of accused former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Continuing with testimonies in his own defence, Mr. Taylor strongly denied that he assisted RUF Leader Foday Sankoh with the invasion of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor told the court the plan to invade Sierra Leone was carved in Libya by one Sierra Leonean named Ali Kabbah. In Libya Ali Kabbah had Sierra Leoneans training under the name the Sierra Leone Pan African Revolutionary Movement, Mr. Taylor declared. He said he had no knowledge of Foday Sankoh's entry and presence in Liberia. He testified that he was surprised at news of the invasion of Sierra Leone.

TAYLOR: If Foday Sankoh had come to me in Liberia and had said to me, "oh, I'm one of the guys that was in Libya, I want you to help me. And in my mind, if I had the means – which I didn't have – there is no way that he would have started that revolution as he did, and especially against a friend of mine. I would not have accepted it, just as I did not accept it in Ivory Coast, I did not accept it in Guinea. There is no way I would have permitted it.

CHEESEMAN: Mr. Taylor later admitted that in the middle of 1991 he invited Foday Sankoh to Liberia for a common plan to fight the Guinean and Sierra Leonean backed rebel group, ULIMO. He emphatically declared that his action to cooperate with the RUF to stop a common enemy was justified. The former NPFL leader affirmed that he provided a guest house for Foday Sankoh in Gbarnga, Bong County, when he and Sankoh collaborated against ULIMO.

Mr. Taylor said he gave ammunition and a jeep to Foday Sankoh to assist the NPFL contain ULIMO. Defence Lawyer Courtenay Griffiths put a series of questions to Mr. Taylor about his involvement with the RUF from 1991 to 1992.

TAYLOR: Between August in 1991 up until May of 1992, yes.

GRIFFITHS: Secondly, during that period that RUF period, NPFL combatants on your instructions were employed in Sierra Leone?

TAYLOR: During that period I accept that NPFL combatants were deployed in Sierra Leone, and let me not end it there, for the protection of Liberia.

GRIFFITHS: Thirdly, do you accept that those NPFL combatants you sent to Sierra Leone, that their departure followed complaints by Foday Sankoh about their behaviour?

TAYLOR: They did not just leave because of the complaint alone, they left because of the complaint and the combat. I would say yes.



GRIFFITHS: And do you accept that the complaint being made by Foday Sankoh was that your men were looting, pillaging, and committing other atrocities in Sierra Leone?

TAYLOR: That is correct.

CHEESEMAN: The former Liberian leader told the court he terminated relationship with Foday Sankoh in May 1992.

Mr. Taylor for the second time since the commencement of his testimonies denied receiving diamonds from the RUF in exchange for arms and ammunition.

He challenged the prosecution and other international organizations to prove that he has huge accounts in foreign banks.

TAYLOR: I'll tell anybody, if a bank account is found anywhere in the world that has any money belonging to Charles Taylor, that Charles Taylor has lied – his whole life then is a lie. Never happened. Never.

TAYLOR: According to Mr. Taylor, Ali Kabbah, a Former Student Activist of Fourah Bay College went to Libya with support from former Sierra Leone President, Tejan Kabbah.

Mr. Taylor said the appearance and testimonies of Ali Kabbah before the Special Court would be vital to proving his innocence.

He called on Ali Kabbah to come forth and help exonerate him of the charges that he organized the RUF and provided men for the invasion of Sierra Leone.

TAYLOR: Now Ali, and if he can hear me, and I think in the interests of justice if he's got any heart he should come forward. I mean I'm suffering here on a lie that I was supposed to plan this whole thing when he was the one.



## Associated Press

Monday, 20 July 2009

### **Ex-Liberian leader denies invading Sierra Leone**

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Former Liberian president Charles Taylor says he played no part in forming the guerrilla force that invaded Sierra Leone in the early 1990s.

Taylor is testifying before a war crimes court for the second week. He is defending himself against 11 counts of murder, torture and recruiting child soldiers for supporting rebels during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war.

Taylor denies he colluded with rebel leaders who led the incursion into Sierra Leone from Liberia or helped them create the rebel force.

He told the three judges of the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone on Monday he was busy trying to set up his own government in Liberia and did not know of the presence of Sierra Leonean rebels.

He describes the prosecution case as conjecture.



## Boston Globe

Tuesday, 21 July 2009

### **Taylor denies ties to Sierra Leone**

*'I was never involved. It's a lie,' Taylor told the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.*

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor yesterday challenged anyone to find a bank account of his holding illicit funds or blood diamonds from the civil war in Sierra Leone.

In his second week of testimony at his war crimes trial, Taylor denied any role in forming the guerrilla force that invaded Sierra Leone in 1991, that he helped plan the rebel incursion, that he trained the rebel forces, or that he commanded their operations.

"I was never involved. It's a lie," he told the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague. He is the first African head of state to be brought before an international court for war crimes.

Frequently agitated and thumping his desk, Taylor dismissed accusations that he accepted diamonds in exchange for arms from Sierra Leone rebel leader Foday Sankoh.



Examiner.com

Monday, 20 July 2009

## Taylor-made truth: What is justice when limbs have been lost?

By Isaac Ugbabe



*Charles Taylor takes notes at his trial in the Hague.*

(AP Photo/Robin van Lonkhuijsen, Pool)

Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, this week finally took to the stand, intent on deflecting the numerous charges brought against him by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone. Eleven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, as disclosed by Reuters news agency, include enlisting child soldiers and encouraging the use of rape, sexual slavery, and mutilation in the overlapping Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars. Taylor's emotive attempt at self-vindication, as quoted by Reuters, was to say "It is very, very, very unfortunate that the prosecution, because of disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumours, would associate me with such titles or descriptions." Here was a proverbial raising of the hand, to declare 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'

According to the BBC, the international court only issued a warrant against Taylor in 2003, and he was arrested in neighbouring Nigeria as recently as 2006, but Liberia's ex-president had been a fugitive of justice before, and his reputation was sullied many years prior to the delivery of those 11 counts. In the early 1980s, while overseeing an important Liberian budgetary office under then-president Samuel Doe, the wily Taylor was accused of embezzlement and forced to seek refuge in America. Being an Americo-Liberian (the privileged class of Liberians whose ancestors, as freed slaves, founded the country in the mid 19th century), Charles Taylor had received a good education, and spent much of the 1970s as a student in the United States. Fleeing the West African nation for America, many years later, must have been, in a sense, like returning home.

Yet, with a warrant having been issued for his extradition, Taylor found himself being detained in a Massachusetts correctional institute. There are conflicting reports as to what happened next, but there's evidence that the U.S. government, keen on overthrowing Samuel Doe's mismanaged regime, allied themselves with the confident and power-hungry Taylor before facilitating his conditional release; Liberia, a country that owes its creation as much to the insistence of former slave owners as to the efforts of freed slaves, has often been described as America's only colony.

Charles Taylor went on to command a dominant rebel group in Liberia's bloody civil war (1989-1995), and eventually attained the presidency in 1997. But of particular interest to the Special Court for Sierra Leone is his alleged involvement in the Sierra Leonean conflict. It is from this civil war, in fact, in which a third of the people were displaced and tens of thousands murdered, that the 11 counts against the accused have been unearthed. Although Taylor vehemently denies participating in Sierra Leone's illegal



diamond mining operations and attempting to extend his regional influence through military support of the country's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), prosecutors say there has always been sufficient evidence of his involvement. Stephen Rapp, the American Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, claimed, in an interview with the Al Jazeera news network, that the RUF had always been close to Taylor. "[They were] sort of junior partners....," he said.

Probably the most enduring symbol of the Sierra Leonean war, other than an overabundance of grave sites, seemingly surplus to those left to mourn, is the number of amputees. The RUF is best remembered for instilling fear in potential dissenters by chopping off their arms. Al Jazeera's 'People and Power' highlighted the plight of Jassu Jakka, a middle-aged Muslim man who'd been dismembered as he attempted to keep his teenage daughter from being taken into sex slavery. After showing him praying at the mosque, the news program interviewed Jakka in his dilapidated home, where, with sunken shoulders, he leaned into the camera and said, "If [Taylor] is found guilty, he could serve a sentence...although that could not replace what we've already lost."

In addition to the loss of life, Liberia, like many African nations, has seen the withering away of its economy at the hands of inept and corrupt leaders. Taylor alone, as reported by the BBC, maintained U.S. bank accounts in which billions of dollars passed through during his presidency. Chief Prosecutor Stephen Rapp, speaking to the BBC's Focus on Africa program, said he was trying to trace the funds. He hopes that, once recovered, they will be distributed among Sierra Leonean civil war victims and the current Liberian government.

Coincidentally, this week also saw the BBC cover a story on the late ex-president of DR Congo, Mobutu Sese Seko, who lived a notoriously extravagant lifestyle at the expense of his people: A Swiss court has ruled that the dictator's assets, held in Swiss bank accounts and subject to a freeze since his death in 1997, should be returned to his family. An attempt by the government of DR Congo to reclaim the stolen money has been rejected, by virtue of a statute of limitations: Apparently, they took too long to ask for the money back. It beggars belief how justice can be such a contradictory and tedious process.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is actually conducting Taylor's trial in The Hague, home of the International Criminal Court (ICC), "amid fears the trial could create instability in the [region]..." reports the BBC. The ICC, which itself took fifty long years to fully materialize, would probably have been more effective as a deterrent if it had existed during the tenures of such African strongmen as Idi Amin and Mobutu Sese Seko. In fact, it might have prevented subsequent suffering if it had been around during the reign of Belgium's King Leopold II. In a review of Dr. Muzong Kodi's recently published study, *Corruption and Governance in the DRC* (The Institute of Security Studies, Pretoria), the BBC's Mark Doyle points to the telling fact that King Leopold, in an attempt to milk the Congo of its rubber and ivory supplies, often inflicted the harshest of punishments on those who didn't meet production quotas: "Their villages were burned to the ground, people's limbs were chopped off."

If the international community continues to stick its hand in African affairs while sending mixed messages on what should be condemned and condoned, it risks one day losing the favour it's so often taken for granted. Being denied access to the oil and other natural resources that have played such an important role in global development would be like losing a limb. Saudi Arabia, home to the world's largest oil reserves, and an advocate of Sharia law, would agree: It's called meting out justice.



## The Patriotic Vanguard

Tuesday, 21 July 2009

### Collins assumes RUF leadership

By Alhaji Jalloh in Freetown.

Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF) has got a new leader; a letter signed by Special Court detainee, Issa Hassan Sesay states.

Sesay writes “I wish to inform all RUF supporters, members and sympathizers that I have asked Mr. Eldred Collins to be Acting Interim Leader of the RUF.”



Sesay urged all the aforementioned to give their “untiring co-operation and assistance” to Mr. Collins.

Issa Sesay has been acting as leader of the party until recently when he was sentenced for 52 years along two senior members, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao of the RUF by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for overseeing atrocities during the country’s civil conflict.

In a brief interview with the new acting leader, he reiterated his plans to bring in new political ideas and initiatives that would help revamp their party.

Asked if they intend contesting the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, Eldred Collins was quick to say that Article 3 of the Lome Peace Accord signed in July 1999, made provision for the Government of Sierra Leone in collaboration with the International Community to facilitate the transformation of their movement into a democratic political party.

When further asked about funding to run for the elections, he responded: “We shall work on modalities to mobilize resources and besides the same article made provision for the setting up of a trust fund for that purpose.”

Eldred Collins was born in Freetown in 1953. He was Secretary of State Trade, Industry and State Enterprises, Secretary of State Works, Energy and Power in the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council led by Johnny Paul Koroma in 1997. He later joined the SLPP under the leadership of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah but now seems to have returned to the RUF.

Photo: Collins, left, and Jalloh in Freetown.



## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 20 July 2009

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

### International Clips on Liberia

#### **Ex-Liberian leader denies invading Sierra Leone**

Source: AP Online Regional - Europe Date: July 20, 2009 ---THE HAGUE, Netherlands\_Former Liberian President Charles Taylor denied on Monday that he had played any part in forming the guerrilla force that invaded Sierra Leone in the early 1990s. In his second week of testimony at his war crimes trial, Taylor was categorical in rejecting the testimony of prosecution witnesses that he attended the meeting that planned the rebel incursion into Sierra Leone, that he trained the rebel forces and that he commanded their operations. "I was never involved. It's a lie," he said. Taylor is charged with 11 counts of murder, torture and recruiting child soldiers for supporting rebels during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war. He is the first African head of state to be brought before an international court for war crimes. Allegations that Taylor was instrumental in creating and commanding the Sierra Leonean rebel force known as the Revolutionary United Front, or RUF, was a key element of the prosecution case, presented by 91 witnesses since the trial opened in January 2008.

### International Clips on West Africa

#### Local Media – Newspaper

##### **Japan Gives Over 8,000 Metric Tons of Rice To Government**

(The News, The Analyst, The Inquirer, The Informer, New Vision)

- The Government of Japan has handed over to the Government of Liberia over 8,000 metric tons or of 30 kilogrammes rice as food aid for Liberia.
- The food aid assistance will facilitate the establishment of a Counterpart Fund from proceeds of sale of the rice.
- It is also expected to facilitate the financing of development activities which in return will contribute to the achievement of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) objectives.
- According to a Foreign Ministry release, the Japanese Government decision on food aid to Liberia was made in response to the direct appeal by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to the Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda for Food Aid to Liberia.

##### **Government Dedicates Traditional Council Headquarters**

(Liberian Express, The Informer, The Monitor, New Democrat, The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has formally dedicated the first national headquarters of the Traditional Chiefs Council of Liberia with a call for citizens to unite and make progress.
- The President said the traditional council was an important partner whose participation is crucial for the smooth functioning of Government and should never be relegated.
- The Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj lauded government's initiative and hoped the council's new headquarters will help unite the people of Liberia.

##### **Over 500 Chinese Peacekeepers Get U.N. Medals**

(Public Agenda, Liberian Express, Heritage, New Vision, The Informer)

- U.N. Envoy, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj has urged Liberians to ‘focus on the way forward’ and demonstrate to other countries that after emerging from conflict, it is possible to sustain peace and enjoy the prosperity that citizens deserve.
- Speaking when she awarded peacekeeping medals to over 500 Chinese peacekeepers serving in the UN Mission in Liberia, Ms. Løj said UNMIL is committed to partnering with government and civil society to preserve Liberia’s hard won peace.
- She acknowledged China’s partnership in Liberia’s development and applauded the Chinese Contingent for the significant contributions to Liberia’s infrastructure.
- For the last 8 months, they have repaired and maintained main and secondary roads and have 750,000 kilometres delivering 300,000 tonnes of cargo, water and fuel and extended vital healthcare services to Liberian local communities.

### **PUL Indicts Senate for “Abuse of Power” over Labour Minister-Designate Rejection**

(The Inquirer)

- The Press Union of Liberia (PUL) has described as contradiction and abuse of power the reasons given by the Liberian Senate for the rejection of Labor Minister designate Cllr. Tiawon Gongloe.
- The Union says it is worried that the Senators would choose to punish the former Solicitor General on account of the performance of his duties.
- The former Solicitor was recently rejected twice by the senate after President Sirleaf appointed him to serve as Labor Minister.
- The senators argued that he was not qualified to serve the posts, citing several reasons including his prosecution of Senator Roland Kaine for murder.

### **US\$7M ‘Illegal’ Iron Sale Audit Report Faces Review**

(Heritage, Daily Observer, The Inquirer)

- Several officials of the erstwhile National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) appeared before the House Committee on Public Accounts and Expenditure today.
- The former officials were summoned to amongst other things provide information on their role played in the “controversial” sale of a huge stockpile of iron ore in Liberia from January 2004 to January 2006.
- Those invited today included former Lands, Mines and Energy Minister Jonathan Mason, Finance Minister Luseni Kamara, Deputy Finance Minister Tugbeh Doe, Lebanese Businessman George E. Haddad and the former President of the mining company that left the ore at the Buchanan Port due to the Liberian Civil War, Liberia Mining Company (LIMINCO), S. Ciapha Gbollie.

### **GAC Begins Liberian Government Properties Audit**

(Heritage, Public Agenda, The Analyst, The News)

- The General Auditing Commission (GAC) is conducting properties audit of all government assets, including land, buildings, plants and equipment and investments owned in and out of the country by the Government of Liberia.
- According to GAC release issued in Monrovia, the intent audit is to establish a viable data base and Balance Sheet for the country and to also assist the Government in instituting measures that will procure and prevent public properties from illegitimate ownership.

Local Media – **Truth F.M.** (News monitored today at 10:00 noon)

### **Civil Society Organizations Frown on Attempts to Discredit TRC Final Report**

- In a statement issued in Monrovia, Liberian civil society organizations frowned on the “negative tendencies” being exhibited by some of those named in the Truth and Reconciliation of Liberia (TRC) final report.
- The group said such action has the propensity to undermine the commission’s work.



- Meanwhile, the civil society organizations said threats against TRC Commissioners was unacceptable and cautioned those issuing such threat to immediately desist.

**E.L.B.C.** *(News monitored today at 12:00 noon)*

**House of Representative Differs with TRC Chairman over Right of Lawmakers to Approve TRC Final Report**

- The House of Representatives has reacted strongly to recent statements made by Truth and Reconciliation of Liberia (TRC) Chairman Jerome Verdier that the TRC final report needs no Legislative approval for implementation.
- Speaking at a news conference in Monrovia, the Chairman of the House Committee on Truth and Reconciliation, Representative Wesseh Blamo described the statement as out of order unfortunate.
- He said as the National Legislature was the direct representation of the people and anything that affects them will also have an effect on the lawmakers. The House Committee is currently reviewing the report.

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## The Analyst Online (Liberia)

Monday, 20 July 2009

### **DDRR Program Closes Tomorrow**

President Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will formally close the Liberia Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program (DDRR) on Tuesday July 21, 2009. The closing ceremony which is scheduled to commence at 10 AM will be held at the centennial Memorial Pavilion on Ashmun Street, Monrovia.

An exhibition showcasing the handiwork of DDRR beneficiaries and the achievements of the program will take place at the same venue and will run until July 24, 2009. The DDRR program was crafted as an outcome of the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra, Ghana, and implemented in conformity with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1509.

The program was implemented in two phases: (1) During the Disarmament and Demobilization (DD) component thousands of arms including heavy weapons and million of ammunitions were collected from former combatants of fighting forces.

The former fighters received a safety net allowance to facilitate their transition from disarmament to Reintegration. (2) The Rehabilitation and Reintegration (RR) component provided education, vocational skills and agricultural training for almost one hundred thousand ex-combatants.

DDRR has been hailed as a success story because of the space it provided for the elections and the introduction of measures to sustain the peace and transition to recovery and development. Among the partners that collaborated with the National Commission on Disarmament and Demobilization (NCDDRR) are UNMIL, UNDP, EC and USAID. Others are: Sweden, Norway, United States, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Ireland and Denmark and Norway.

Tuesday's program will be attended by members of the cabinet, the judiciary, the legislature, the diplomatic corps, representatives of the International Community and NGOs.

### **Abuse of Power - PUL Describes Senate Rejection of Gongloe**

The Press Union of Liberia has described as contradiction and abuse of power the reasons given by the Liberian Senate for the rejection of Labor Minister designate Cllr. Tiawan Gongloe.

The Union says while it does not wish to question the wisdom of the Senate, it is worried that the Senators would choose to punish the former Solicitor General on account of the performance of his constitutional duties as the Government's Chief Prosecutor for which he was confirmed by the very Senate.

PUL observed that if the former Solicitor General was wrong for prosecuting a member of the Senate who was in conflict with the law, then the Senators should as well begin to make laws that will immune them from prosecution because there is no guarantee that the next Solicitor General will not prosecute them if they were accused of violating the laws of the country.

The Union believes that the Senate should feel vindicated that it handed over one of its members to face justice and he was acquitted, but instead the Senate is getting even with the prosecutor. PUL also dismissed as weak and sheer vendetta the argument that Cllr. Gongole's brother serves at the Labor Ministry and therefore he could not be confirmed as Minister in the same ministry.

If this reason is legally and morally correct, PUL calls on the Senate to also begin a radical sweep to rid the government of this act of nepotism that is so visible in the government including the legislature. The PU urges democratic forces not to allow this act of the Senate to pass unnoticed because it has propensity to erode the representative democracy Liberians seek to nurture.

"We cannot afford to subvert the aspirations of the people for democratic governance of the state," the Union added.



## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 20 July 2009

### UN tribunal jails Bosnian Serb cousins for war crimes

By Saskia van Huijgevoort



*UN judges convicted two former Serb paramilitaries Monday of crimes against humanity committed during the 1992 - 1995 Bosnia war.*

Cousins Milan and

Sredoje Lukic were charged with 21 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including charges of extermination, murder, persecution and inhumane acts, for their actions as members of a paramilitary group in the small-eastern Bosnia town of Visegrad. In total, they were found guilty of the deaths of some 132 Muslim civilians.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague sentenced Milan Lukic to life imprisonment while Sredoje Lukic will serve 30 years in prison.

"What the two accused destroyed in June of 1992 is far beyond their capacity to repay," prosecutor Dermot Groome told judges as the trial wrapped up in May. "Spending the remainder of their lives incarcerated is simply a nominal token toward the loss they occasioned."

The cousins' defence attorneys argued that they should be acquitted for lack of evidence, citing inconsistencies in the accounts of a handful of survivors of the horrific attacks who testified for prosecutors.

Groome told judges at the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal that in one massacre in June 1992, the cousins barricaded nearly 70 Muslims, including elderly men, women and children, in a house and set fire to it.

As flames tore through the crowded rooms and the victims inside screamed in agony, the Lukic cousins stood outside shooting anybody who tried to escape, he said.

41-year-old Milan was a founding member of the group known as the 'White Eagles' or 'Avengers' that terrorized Muslims in Visegrad. His 48-year-old cousin Sredoje also joined the group later.

Milan Lukic was arrested in August 2005 in Argentina and sent for trial in The Hague. His cousin surrendered to Bosnian Serb authorities and was transferred to The Hague a few weeks later.

## Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Tuesday, 21 July 2009

### Former Khmer Rouge Interrogator Recounts Torture Techniques

By International Justice Desk



#### *Phnom Penh*

A former interrogator at the main Khmer Rouge prison told Cambodia's UN-backed war crimes tribunal Tuesday how staff were taught to torture prisoners using electric shocks and suffocation.

Prak Khan, 58, was testifying against Khmer Rouge prison chief Duch, who is accused of overseeing the torture and execution of around 15,000 people held at Tuol Sleng prison, also known as S-21, in the late 1970s.

"We were taught how to torture the prisoners and to avoid the prisoners dying; otherwise the confession would be broken and we would be punished," Prak Khan told the court.

The witness, who was assigned to be an interrogator in late 1976 after being initially hired as a prison guard, said Duch and other high-ranking Khmer Rouge cadres often taught torture methods.

"We were trained how to whip the prisoners with the sticks, on how to electrocute, and on how to use the plastic bag to suffocate them," Khan said.

"Detainees would be told not to make loud noises, not to curse or exchange swear words, or to shout slogans. And they were also warned not to scream while being tortured," he added.

Prak Khan said interrogators would torture prisoners until they confessed to spying on the Khmer Rouge regime and provided names of others in so-called espionage networks.

In earlier testimony, Duch admitted he did not believe that confessions obtained through torture were accurate.

The 66-year-old Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav, has accepted responsibility for his role governing the jail and begged forgiveness near the start of his trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

But the defendant has consistently rejected claims by prosecutors that he held a central leadership role in the Khmer Rouge, and says he never personally killed anyone.

Led by Pol Pot, who died in 1998, the Khmer Rouge emptied Cambodia's cities in a bid to forge a communist utopia. Up to two million people died of starvation, overwork and torture or were executed during the 1975-1979 regime.



## Daily Nation (Kenya)

Sunday, 19 July 2009

### **Kenya: Cabinet in Last Ditch Bid to Save Local Trials**

Bernard Namunane and Peter Leftie

Nairobi — Justice minister Mutula Kilonzo was on Sunday confident that Kenya's Cabinet will agree to try violence suspects at home in a Cabinet session scheduled for Monday.

But the Cabinet is passionately divided between those who prefer home trials and those who want the suspect tried by the International Criminal Court. And even if the Cabinet endorses the Independent Tribunal Bill, MPs will almost certainly reject it.

Some ministers felt that to absolve Cabinet of blame in the whole thing, they should endorse the Bill even if it is likely to fail in the House.

#### **Strike consensus**

"I'm confident we will strike a consensus on a local tribunal. I'm a very cautious person. I won't tell you what I have done so far, but I'm sure we will strike one," Mr Kilonzo told the Nation.

He, however, was adamant that he will not review the draft Bill to make it more acceptable for doubting ministers.

Monday will be the second time that the Cabinet will be trying to hammer out an agreement in an effort to stop suspects accused of masterminding and funding election violence from being sent to The Hague for trial.

Three options the local tribunal, The Hague and the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) have been proposed as the likely mechanisms for dealing with the crimes against humanity. However, the TJRC is outside the recommendations of the Waki Commission, which investigated the violence.

The areas affected by the violence in Rift Valley are yet to recover, and there is uncertainty and fear of fresh attacks over the trial dispute. Western governments have taken a keen interest on impunity and have been pressing the government to take decisive action.

#### **Opened envelope**

Also applying pressure is the International Criminal Court (ICC) chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo, who opened the envelope bearing the names of key leaders and business persons who are suspected to have planned and financed the violence, in which 1,133 people were killed.

While Party of National Unity (PNU) ministers were deadlocked on the clause that proposes to strip the President of his immunity from prosecution, their Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) colleagues were not yet decided on the call to end impunity by punishing those who were behind the violence.

A meeting at the Prime Minister's home last week ended in a deadlock.

The drafting team has not met since the last Cabinet meeting during which the draft Bill was rejected because of some clauses.

Ministers who attended the meeting said that while President Kibaki was non-committal on the clause proposing to strip him of immunity from prosecution, several ministers allied to PNU spiritedly opposed it, warning of a "constitutional crisis" in the country in the event that the President is implicated and therefore forced to step aside.

There were also concerns that other parties might take advantage and sue him over other issues. Mr Kilonzo insisted that the law was drafted to suit the law and not political interests.

"Any arrangement we arrive at must be about law, not political arrangements. I can assure you any political arrangements will fail. A political arrangement means you arrest the wrong people or leave out some people who are guilty," he argued.

A minister allied to PNU said the fate of the draft Bill will depend on how it is presented and what political mileage ministers feel they will gain. Speaking on Sunday, Nairobi Metropolitan minister Njeru Githae appeared to lean towards a hybrid system that would see both the ICC and a local tribunal used to try suspects.

Mr Githae argued that the kingpins of the violence be tried at the Hague, while the small fish are subjected to a local tribunal.

The draft Bill proposes to strip the President of his powers to pardon people found guilty by the tribunal. It proposes also that a leader will only be required to resign from office immediately one is charged, in essence allowing ministers to retain their positions while under investigation by the tribunal.

For others, the problem lay in the way the crafters of the draft Bill envisaged a public officer. The clause causing disquiet within the Cabinet proposes that any "public officer" named in the Waki envelope containing the names of post-election violence, steps aside. One minister said going by the definition in the Public Officer Ethics Act, "public officer" included the President, Cabinet ministers and MPs.

Another minister was sceptical that MPs will agree to pass a law that will be "used to hang them" and added that a way around it must be found.

On Sunday, Cherangany MP Joshua Kutuny, a close ally of Mr Ruto, warned that calls for The Hague are causing tension in the Rift Valley, with fears that it could ignite a fresh wave of violence.



**Sudan Tribune**  
 Sunday, 19 July 2009

## **African Union now officially naked before the world & Darfuris**

By Wasil Ali\*

(WASHINGTON) — The African Union (AU) circus that took place in Libya this month is yet another example of why Africa remains the world's poorest and most underdeveloped continent with the worst human right records.

There are so many aspects of the AU summit that exposes the true nature of the African leadership in place today, and the mentality that prevails among them that kills every hope of any real progress in the continent's fate in the foreseen future.

Yet weeks after all the mess that the world has witnessed in Sirte, the AU issues a statement with the purpose of trying to convince us that the decisions were taken in full transparency and in line with the body's rules and procedures without pressure from any single party, namely Libya.

Nonetheless, we will go through the facts that will help the reader understand how and why the term "misleading" is an understatement of the AU's press release defending the events that occurred at the summit.

### **The AU Chairperson's CV & Background**

The elected chairperson of the AU Muammar al-Gaddafi C.V. contains a record of assuming responsibility to bombing two civilian airplanes and a discotheque killing hundreds of people. It is also an established fact that Gaddafi has been a major financier of several terrorist organizations and activities.

During his visit to the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa last February, Al-Gaddafi defended the Somali pirates who terrorized naval vessels in the Red Sea. He described it as "self defense.... against the greedy Western nations."

### **AU Summit atmosphere and Gaddafi intimidation**

The Libyan leader has invited the controversial Iranian president Mahmoud AhmediNajad without consulting the other AU members to their own dismay. One West African diplomat told Agence France Presse (AFP) that "It's a little strange to invite him [AhmediNajad], unless you consider who made the invitation,".

During the preliminary ministerial AU meetings days before the summit, Gaddafi threatened to use the two-thirds rule if he does not receive consensus on his unpopular African government initiative. He said, "We need to resolve this, even if we have to take it to a vote... if two thirds agree, the remaining third must respect the decision of the majority".

The Libyan leader, deeply concerned about his African government proposal, walked into the AU foreign ministers meetings in defiance of all political and protocol norms to the point where even Commissioner Ping became irritated.

Gaddafi has also twice stormed out of the conference room upset that his peers were challenging his views on African government.

### **Non-cooperation with the ICC by consensus?**

AU Commissioner Ping told reporters at the summit that there would be no "dramatic or binding conclusions" for African ICC signatories. It is truly amazing that Ping did not see the draft resolution coming despite his position at the AU.

The ICC signatories held a conference in Addis Ababa last month to discuss de-ratifying the Rome Statute. Libya was one of the main countries pushing for a mass withdrawal. However, Libya along with other non-signatories

were barred from the meetings. As such, the Libyans could not interfere in their deliberations and the proposal failed to see the light.

It is undisputed that the overwhelming majority of African countries were very unenthusiastic about the Libyan proposals of the African government and the ICC non-cooperation yet they ended up being adopted. It is interesting to see how African figures frequently speak in a paranoid manner about “Western neo-colonialism” plots. Yet this month the African leaders have unconsciously fell victims to the Libyan form of colonialism when they accepted resolutions under pressure from Gaddafi.

How could the AU claim that consensus was reached on the ICC resolution when they admitted in their own statement that there was “one opinion to the contrary”?

Chad and Botswana have verbally stated their unequivocal commitment to the Rome Statute. Uganda took a practical step by politely asking Bashir not to attend a summit in Kampala. South Africa may also soon follow their footsteps. So where exactly is the consensus that the AU is talking about?

### **Legal aspects of the AU decision on ICC**

It is inconceivable that a regional body would ask its sovereign members to dishonor the agreements they signed and ratified through a lengthy process that went through the legislative assemblies. Is the executive branch allowed to overrule international treaty obligations endorsed by the legislative branch? Who has the power to order the arrest of an individual in one of those countries? Is it the government or the judicial branch? In the case of South Africa for example is president Jacob Zuma allowed to block a judge’s order to apprehend Bashir if he was to visit?

The Rome Statute is a treaty that can only be accepted by a state in whole and not partially. Article (120) of the Rome Statute clearly states that “no reservations may be made to this Statute”.

Article (98) of the Rome Statute relating to immunities referred to in the AU resolution is irrelevant to the case of Bashir. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling in case of the Congo vs. Belgium in 2000 established that there are certain exceptions to the principle of immunity where an incumbent “may be subject to criminal proceedings before certain international criminal courts, where they have jurisdiction. Examples include the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)...and the future International Criminal Court (ICC)”.

By trying to dishonor international treaties, African countries are entering into a dangerous territory that could set a precedent for others to use against them. If it was that simple, East African nations for example could have ignored the Nile Water Agreement of 1929, which effectively gives Egypt veto power over any projects that could affect its share of the water. Even though the agreement was signed by Britain on behalf of its East African colonies, it is still binding to them.

### **Ironic**

The AU summit calls on the UNSC to impose a no-fly zone and a sea blockage on Eritrea but at the same time wants to punish the council for not freezing the ICC arrest warrant against Bashir.

While the summit was taking place in Libya, the Kenyan Justice Minister signed a memorandum of understanding at The Hague with the ICC prosecutor, stating that his government will refer the post-elections violence cases to the ICC if the parliament does not establish a local court by specified date.

Last year Senegalese president announced that he told Bashir that his country is a party to the ICC and they cannot “make an exception” or offer him refuge. Somehow, Senegal later became the leading country trying to get its peers to withdraw from the ICC at the Addis Ababa meeting and a month later to accept the Libyan draft resolution on non-cooperation with the ICC.

A day before the resolution, Ghana’s Foreign Minister Muhammad Mumuni told reporters that his country disagrees with the Libyan proposal. “For us in Ghana there is absolutely no equivocation at all about our acceptance and respect for the jurisdiction, the integrity and high honor of dignity of the ICC,” he said. A day later Mumuni



had a change of heart and approved of the AU resolution saying that the UN Security Council's failure to consider the suspending Bashir's indictment amounted to a "slap" to Africa.

South Africa a superpower in the continent and an established democracy acted more like an autocratic, third world nation. Last May, South Africa has publicly warned Bashir about coming to Zuma's inauguration or he would face arrest. At the summit, South African delegation said nothing about their legal obligations. Did that commitment disappear overnight or were they too scared to confront Gaddafi?

President Zuma knows more than anyone else about the dangers of political interference in judicial affairs. It was a South African judge that found former president Thabo Mbeki guilty of colluding with the prosecutors to frame Zuma on corruption charges. Yet in Libya, Zuma had effectively threw his own laws that cleared his name in the past under the bus.

Mbeki has been extremely opposed to the Libyan backed ICC resolution and lobbied against it saying it undermines the work of his panel, which of course is very true. The AU has now clearly demonstrated that it is more interested in protecting a fellow president from prosecution rather than bringing justice to Darfur. This has totally defeated the purpose of the Mbeki panel and its credibility is now very much in question.

The AU never made any mention of the ICC prosecution of rebel leaders who killed their own troops in Darfur. When the attack on the AU soldiers took place, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Said Djinnit said that members states "will not rest until they (the perpetrators) are found out and brought to swift justice,". When one of the suspected rebel commanders appeared at the ICC, the AU maintained silence likely for fear of giving credibility to the court angering Sudan and its allies.

The AU statement to defend the ICC decision makes a first-time reference to empowering the "African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to deal with serious crimes of international concern in a manner complementary to national jurisdiction". Perhaps the AU needs to be reminded that it was Sudan itself that has rejected the special Darfur tribunal proposed by Nigeria in 2005. Moreover it is agreed that Sudan is not serious about conducting any credible prosecutions on Darfur crimes. A year ago, Sudan said it will try militia leader Ali Kushayb. To date no such trial took place. Sudan has even rejected the idea of hybrid courts consisting of African judges.

All the African leaders who talk about being unfairly targeted by the court fail to mention that they are party to bringing the case before the ICC.

UN Security Council Resolution 1564 which established an international commission of inquiry gained the blessing of two African countries sitting on the council at the time, Angola and Benin while Algeria abstained.

The five member International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur consisted of predominantly African figures which included Mohammed Fayek, from Egypt, Dumisa Ntsebeza, from South Africa and Theresa Striggner-Scott, from Ghana. They were the ones that recommended that the case be referred to the ICC not Western powers.

UN Security Council Resolution 1593 which referred the Darfur case to the ICC was approved by Tanzania and Benin while Algeria abstained. If they voted against, the resolution would have failed.

There are three African figures who handled the Darfur case at the ICC. Deputy prosecutor Fatou Bensouda from Gambia, Judge Akua Kuenyehia from Ghana and senior Trial lawyer Essa Faal from Sierra Leone.

Therefore, it is safe to say that the AU's claim of possessing "unflinching commitment" to combating impunity has no basis whatsoever. The AU said nothing about the ICC arrest warrants for Haroun and Kushayb or the case against those who killed their own troops. They never pressed Sudan on the issue of war crimes except privately and with no success. However, they all started jumping up and down when the arrest warrant was issued for the Sudanese president.

The pressing question now following the resolution as to what is the point of the Mbeki Panel they established or an Article 16 resolution?

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