

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Friday, 21 May 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Special Court Supplement

Sierra Express Media

Friday, 21 May 2010

Two American Stars to Testify at Taylor's Trial

The Prosecution in the ongoing Charles Taylor case filed a motion yesterday asking that the Judges of Trial Chamber II issue a subpoena to compel model Naomi Campbell to testify in the



Former president ...
Charles Taylor

Taylor trial. In a separate motion, the Prosecution asked that they be allowed to reopen their case to call three additional witnesses, including Campbell and actress Mia Farrow.

Super model Naomi Campbell may be forced to give evidence over a "blood-diamond" she allegedly received from Liberia's ex-president Charles Taylor.

A prosecution motion filed with the Special Court for Sierra Leone said: "Ms Campbell's testimony is necessary as there is evidence that Ms Campbell was given rough diamonds by the ac-

Contd. page 3



Model ... prosecutors pursue Naomi
Big

From page 1

cused (Taylor) in September 1997."

Ms Campbell's 'evidence concerns 'a central issue' in the case, a court document revealed.

Taylor's war crimes trial heard claims in January that he had given the model a "large" diamond after a 1997 dinner hosted by South African ex-president Nelson Mandela.

The gem was among those Taylor had obtained from Sierra Leone rebels and took to South Africa "to sell ... or exchange them from weapons."

Taylor, on trial since January 2008, denied the claims.

He has pleaded not guilty to 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity stemming from the brutal 1991-2001 civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone, including charges of murder, rape, conscripting child soldiers, enslavement and pillaging.

In a related development, a former NPFL Radio Operator, Joseph Dehmie testifying in The Hague has denied Prosecution claims that Mr. Charles Taylor

summarily executed several senior commanders of his rebel organization without any due process of law.

Mr. Dehmie told the court that those executed were tried by the NPFL Court Marshal Board headed by one McDonald Boan.

The Prosecution through some of its witnesses had alleged that NPFL Commanders, Oliver Varney, Legbeye Debon, Anthony Menkunagbe, Timothy Mulbah among others were executed without an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. Dehmie alleged Oliver Varney, the NPFL Former 6th Battalion Commander connived with other NPFL Commanders and surrendered NPFL territories to ULIMO, a Liberian rebel group opposed to the NPFL in 1992.

He said Legbeye Debon, one of the commanders executed by Mr. Taylor secretly disarmed about 300 NPFL combatants while they were fighting ULIMO.

Most of Mr. Dehmie's testimonies on Wednesday concentrated on his job as Radio Operator for the NPFL from 1990 to 1997.

Concord Times
Friday, 21 May 2010

Witness denies Taylor executed commanders

By Alpha Sesay

A former NPFL radio operator, testifying in The Hague, has denied prosecution claims that Charles Taylor summarily executed several senior commanders of his rebel organization without any due process of law.

Joseph Dehmie told the court that those executed were tried by the NPFL court marshal board headed by one McDonald Boan.

The prosecution through some of its witnesses had alleged that NPFL commanders, Oliver Varney, Legbeye Debon, Anthony Menkunagbe, Timothy Mulbah among others, were executed without an opportunity to be heard.

Dehmie alleged Oliver Varney, the NPFL former 6th battalion commander connived with other NPFL commanders and surrendered NPFL territories to ULIMO, a Liberian rebel group opposed to the NPFL in 1992.

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Most of Dehmie's testimonies on Wednesday concentrated on his job as radio operator for the NPFL from 1990 to 1997.

Earlier, the court heard a defence witness testimony as to how Tay-

lor ordered the execution of commanders in his Liberian rebel group because they sold arms to Sierra Leonean rebel forces, and he ensured that rebel fighters who committed crimes against civilians were punished.

Timan Edward Zimmy, a former commander in Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group sought to explain how the former warlord frowned at any perceived NPFL association with Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone. According to the witness, Mr. Taylor ordered the execution of two NPFL commanders because they had sold arms and ammunition to the RUF.

Taylor himself in his testimony as a witness in his own defense told the court that he had disciplined certain NPFL commanders because he found out they wanted to provide assistance to the RUF, an action which he was opposed to. Witness Zimmy corroborated the former president's testimony on this incident as he pointed out that one of the NPFL commanders who had sold arms and ammunition to the RUF and therefore executed was Anthony Menkunagbe.

Prosecutors have alleged that Taylor ordered the execution of Menkunagbe and a few other NPFL command-

ers because he thought they were opposed to his leadership of the NPFL. Mr. Taylor on his part has said the men were executed because they committed acts of treason against the NPFL by forming a group called Black Ghadaffa and planning to associate themselves with the RUF.

To justify his execution, Zimmy told the court that Menkunagbe himself had admitted to him that he had sold arms and ammunition to the RUF.

"He [Menkunagbe] sent me a hundred and fifty bags of rice and some pigs' feet - about five barrels, three motorbikes, and some food stuffs. And he told me that those are your own proceeds from the deal. He said but don't worry, I sold the arms, not you. We are fighting a rebel war," the witness explained.

The witness also dispelled claims that the NPFL targeted people belonging to the Mandingo and Krahn tribes during the conflict in Liberia. Defense lawyer for Taylor, Silas Chikera, sought to know whether this was the case.

"The prosecution alleges that when you were fighting in Liberia in 1990, you were targeting Mandingos and Krahns, especially civilians. Did you target Mandingo and Krahn civilians?" Chikera asked the witness.

Awoko

Friday, 21 May 2010

General Issa's trial documentary released

By Poindexter Sama

The trial documentary of one time RUF Commander, General Issa has been produced by a team headed by Rebecca Richman Cohen, a staff of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and launched at the British Council Auditorium past week.

The documentary explains in details the trial process of General Issa; and the role played by the witnesses, the prosecution and defence. It further pictures, General Issa himself elaborating on his responsibility as an interim leader of the Revolutionary United Front on the presumption that in his regime as a leader, he brought calmness to many areas that were under the control of the RUF. He further revealed that he practically contributed to the disarmament of his colleague who were not mostly ready to give up arms, since they thought "giving up their

arms would render them powerless"

That notwithstanding, he went on, upon the Lome Peace accord, having met with political godfathers and peace-preachers in the likes of General Sani Abacha, Maxwell Khobe and officers of the UN peace keeping mission, he saw the need for the prevalence of peace in the country.

He however sadly stated that "having gone to such an extra mile to allow peace in the country, I am now being kept behind bars for crimes I did not commit" and said that "one day the truth will be revealed"

Shortly after the documentary film, a panel of four was brought onboard comprising officers who are human right officers, Special Court officers and people working towards the sustenance of the truth and reconciliation programme.

In a short statement, Bishop Humper of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission regarded TRC as a forum for restorative justice and it deals with the entire populace of the country, whereas the Special Court is there to hold accountable those who bear the greatest responsibilities in the eleven years civil conflict.

Human Right Commissioner Mr. Edward Sam upheld the view that it is indeed necessary for people to be held accountable for crimes they commit. This will enhance sustainability of peace and disallow the existence of impunity.

Participants of the programme raised questions in respect of the judgment passed against the RUF leader on 16 counts, even when he is one of the contributors, a primary one to the end of the war.

Awoko

Friday, 21 May 2010

“Charles Taylor did not summarily execute Commanders” - witness

A Former NPFL Radio Operator, Joseph Dehmie testifying in The Hague has denied Prosecution claims that Mr. Charles Taylor summarily executed several senior commanders of his rebel organization without any due process of law.

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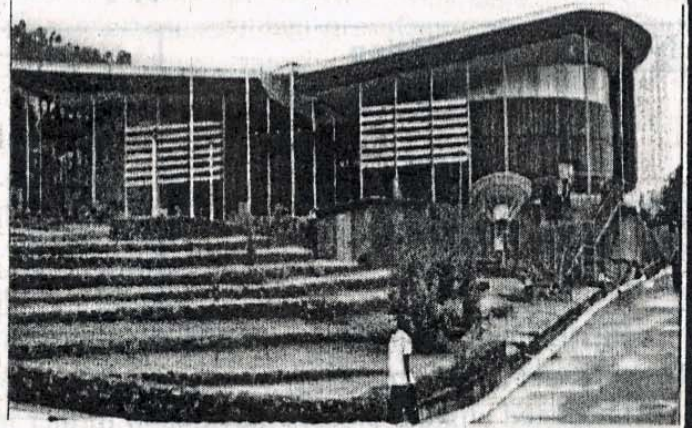
He said Legbeye Debon, one of the commanders executed by Mr. Taylor secretly disarmed about 300 NPFL combatants while they were fighting ULIMO.

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The Nation
Friday, 21 May 2010

Prisons Services Takes Over Special Court

Special Court Registrar **Binta Mansaray** and **Internal Affairs Minister Dauda S. Kamara** on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding which formally allows the Government of Sierra Leone to take physical possession of the Court's former detention facility. The detention block was handed over to the Government symbolically last November, but the facility had remained under the control of the Special Court for operational reasons. Friday's agreement means that the Sierra Leone Prison Service will now take full possession with immediate effect. The Prison Service will operate the facility independently, under its own mandate, while sharing the premises with the Special



Special Court for Sierra Leone: Now managed by Prisons

Court and with UN peacekeepers who ensure the Court's security.



Justice & Law



ICC Delegation Visits Guinea

From 19 to 21 May 2010, a delegation from the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is in Guinea to follow up on the mission carried out by the Deputy Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, in February this year. The OTP made public its preliminary examination in Guinea in October 2009. At the same time the international community unanimously called for accountability either through ICC or Guinean proceedings. Since then, the OTP has benefited from the full support of Guinean authorities as well as Regional and International Organizations. The purpose of this second visit is to liaise with Guinean judicial authorities and gather updated information on the on-going national investigation into the events of 28 September 2009. Guinea has been a State Party to the Rome Statute since 14 July 2003. As such the ICC has jurisdiction over war



Moreno Ocampo: ICC Chief Prosecutor

crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide possibly committed in the territory of Guinea or by nationals of Guinea. Other situations under preliminary examination by the Office include Afghanistan, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, and Palestine. The Office of the Prosecutor is currently investigating in four situations: The Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Uganda, the Darfur region of Sudan, and the

Central African Republic, all still engulfed in various degrees of conflict with victims in urgent need of protection. The International Criminal Court is an independent, permanent court that investigates and prosecutes persons accused of the most serious crimes of international concern, namely genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes if national authorities with jurisdiction are unwilling or unable to do so genuinely.

John Kollie

NEWS ITEM

Mr. Joseph Dehmie, a Former Radio Operator of the NPFL has refuted the testimonies of a Former RUF Radio Operator, Dauda Fonie who had testified for the Prosecution that he was an RUF Radio Operator trained by the NPFL in Tubmanburg, Bomi County. Mr. Dehmie also denied that RUF Fighters took advanced training from NPFL Commanders. John Kollie reports Reports for the BBC World Service....

Continuing his direct examination on Thursday, Mr. Dehmie said Prosecution Witness, Dauda Fonie was not a Radio Operator, but a cook in Tubmanburg, Bomi County in 1991.

Prosecution witness, Dauda Fonie told the court in 2008 that Former RUF Leader, Foday Sankoh assigned him to NPFL Former Lands, Mines and Energy Minister, Legbeye Degbon as a Radio Operator.

But Defence Witness Dehmie insisted that Dauda Fonie never served as a Radio Operator.

Questioned by Defence Lawyer Morris Anyah, Mr. Dehmie said RUF Fighters were never trained by NPFL Commanders in Bomi County.

The Defence witness later started his cross-examination on a confused note, stumbling over 1992 and 2002, the date he said NPFL Former Lands, Mines and Energy Minister, Legbeye Degbon was assigned to Bomi County by Charles Taylor. He later settled down for 1992.

Mr. Dehmie's cross-examination continues on Friday.

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United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
20 April 2010

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

UN News in Liberia

UNMIL

Justice System Needs to be harmonized ... Says Minister

[The Inquirer, Front Page Africa]

- Justice Minister Christiana Tah on Wednesday stressed the need to harmonize the informal and formal justice systems in Liberia as a means of ensuring that the people receive the required justice services throughout the country.
- Minister Tah who is also Attorney General said the justice system needs to be given more attention because citizens residing in other parts of the country, particularly those in the rural communities feel that the formal justice is not meeting their needs.
- The Justice Minister made the statement at the headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Liberia when she addressed the media on “Enhancing Access to Justice”, during the Mission’s regular press briefing.
- According to Minister Tah, in order to make the justice system more effective in the country, the government and communities need to examine all of the practices of justice and determine the best ones that could be used in the justice system in the country.
- The Attorney General pointed out that there is a need to empower the chiefs in the various communities to make them work along with other stakeholders in the justice system.
- She reiterated that the country needs a clear system where the two systems could be harmonized.
- The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Rule of Law, Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu was in attendance for the press briefing.

Local News on Liberian issues

GAC Accuses Executive Mansion of Planting Ruth Yeaher Against Auditor General

[New Vision, In Profile Daily, New Democrat, Daily Observer, The News, National Chronicle, Heritage, Front Page Africa]

- The General Auditing Commission (GAC) has accused the Executive Mansion and Finance Ministry of planting Mrs. Ruth Yeaher at the GAC.
- The Commission alleged Mrs. Yeaher, the suspended employee of the GAC was planted to attack the integrity of Auditor General John Morlu.
- The GAC however said it was in firm control of the facts and evidence to disprove Mrs. Yeaher’s sexual harassment claim against Mr. Morlu.
- The GAC said it was inconceivable to plant a woman on the Auditor General whose husband has been indicted of stealing taxpayers’ money.
- The GAC alleges Mr. Alexander Yeaher was indicted for stealing over US\$100,000 of County Development Fund.
- The Commission’s Communications Director Ernest Maximore further disclosed Mr. Yeaher, was sacked from the Internal Affairs Ministry and ordered arrested by the Justice Ministry.

BIN Re-arrests Six Bangladeshi Fugitives

[The Inquirer]

- Authorities of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) have rearrested six Bangladeshis who escaped from the Bureau’s cell Monday night.

- BIN's Acting Commissioner, Archie Williams said the six Bangladeshis were rearrested early Wednesday at Bo Waterside.
- Acting Commissioner Williams said the Bangladeshis were in the process of crossing over to Sierra Leone when BIN officers assigned at the border picked them up.
- The six men were previously arrested and charged with human trafficking following preliminary investigation.
- Meanwhile the Bureau of Immigration says it is investigating some of its officers who were on duty when the six Bangladeshis escaped.

Hearing Starts on Freedom of Information Act

[Daily Observer, The Inquirer, Front Page Africa]

- A consortium of fifteen civil society organizations has called for the passage of the draft Freedom of Information Act.
- In a statement, the civil society groups said it was time to enact the bill which spent over two years before the Legislature.
- The call was made Wednesday during a public hearing on the proposed Act by the House Committee on Information and Broadcasting.
- The head of the National Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee, Lancedell Matthews said the Act is crucial to the fight against corruption.
- Mr. Matthews stressed, the bill if enacted, would transform Liberia and ensure ordinary people have access to public information without hindrance.
- Also, the head of the Center for Transparency and Accountability Thomas Doe-Nah said without the Act, the fight against corruption would not be strong.
- During the hearing, the House Committee Chairman on Information Vinicious Hodges and Press Union of Liberia President Peter Quaqua maintained that the bill is not just a media bill.
- Meanwhile, the Information Ministry which couldn't deliver its presentation at the hearing due to late arrival has repeated its support to the passage of the bill.

AFL Widows Hold Monrovia Still ... Block Traffic, Impede Normal Activities

[Daily Observer, The Inquirer, The Informer, Front Page Africa]

- A group of women claiming to be widows of dead soldiers of the former Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) yesterday besieged the capital, Monrovia, obstructing normal flow of traffic and business activities.
- The women, demanding what they called "benefits of their dead husbands", seized the intersection of Broad and Johnson Streets from midday till late last evening.
- Some of them sat in the street; others lie down - giving no heed to the scorching sun while others distributed bread and water among them.
- Security officers tried in vain to disperse the protesters, but failed because they avoided use of force and violence.

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 09:00 am)*

GAC Accuses Executive Mansion of Planting Ruth Yeaher Against Auditor General

(Also reported Radio Veritas, Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Hearing Starts on Freedom of Information Act

BIN Re-arrests Six Bangladeshi Fugitives

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

UNHCR Distributes Assets to Partners

- The UN Refugee Agency, UNCHR has transferred ownership of its assets to six of its partners operating in the country.
- The partners include the Liberia Repatriation, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Commission, Gender Ministry, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, World Food Programme, School of the Blind and Star Radio.
- The items include Light Vehicles, Motorcycles, and IT equipment among others.
- UNHCR Liberia Representative, Ibrahim Coly said the gesture is in continuation of the agency's support to its partners involved in humanitarian services in Liberia.
- According to Mr. Coly, the initiative is intended to build the capacity of the institutions to intensify their activities across the country.

Gbarpolu Women Benefit from US Ambassador Self-Help Fund

- The US Embassy near Monrovia has dedicated a rice processing machine worth over US\$4,000 to the women of Madina in Gbarpolu County.
- The initiative is under the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund and was proposed by the community-based organization, Voiceless Women.
- The Vice Consul at the Embassy, Mr. Mark Naylor said the Self-Help Project is a way of helping people in Liberia reintegrate following years of civil conflict.
- Mr. Naylor assured the residents that the US Ambassador is always willing to reach out to remote communities of the country.
- The Voiceless Women led by Ms. Fatu Sarnor thanked the US Embassy for the rice processing machine which she said will enhance their farming activities.
- The Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund was established in 1964 as an experimental programme for Africa.

Labor Minister Addresses PUL Confab Today

- Labor Minister Tiawon Gongloe will today deliver the opening address at a one day conference on Media Law, Ethics and Accountability organized by the Press Union of Liberia (PUL).
- The conference is intended to enhance the skills of media practitioners amidst the number of lawsuits against the media.
- The gathering also seeks to strengthen the self-regulatory regime of unions, and its enforcement mechanisms.
- Up to seventy-five reporters and editors are expected to attend the conference being sponsored by two US-based Liberian journalists James Butty and Kwame Clement.

Man, 29, Charged With Illegal Possession of Drugs

- The Grand Bassa County detachment of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has charged and sent to court a 29 year-old man identified as Moses Saye.
- Saye was charged with illegal possession of narcotic drugs.
- Suspect Saye was arrested Tuesday at the Owens grove checkpoint with more than 7 kilograms of narcotic drugs.
- DEA Grand Bassa Officer-In-Charge Major Joseph Targendin put the street value of the drugs at 21-thousand Liberian dollars.
- Major Targendin said the arrest was part of operation dragnet launched by the DEA last year to free Grand Bassa County of dangerous drugs.

Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 09:45 am)*

Widows of Ex-Servicemen Press for Benefits, Staged Protest

- More than five hundred women claiming to be widows of fallen officers of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, Liberia National Police and the Armed Forces of Liberia, Wednesday staged a protest in Monrovia calling for the payment of their dead husband's benefits.
- The women said they were constrained to take to the streets because President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has failed to uphold her promise that they will have been paid.
- The spokeswoman of the widows, Ms. Vivian Mulbah said government owes them US\$500 each of their deceased husband's benefits.
- Mrs. Mulbah said they have been engaging the government since 2006 for the payment of the money but the government has not made any move to settle the arrears.

Internal Affairs Minister Wants Local Government Official Suspended

- Internal Affairs Minister Harrison Karnwea is calling for the immediate suspension of River Gee County Assistant Superintendent for Development, Alexander Yeaher for allegedly squandering an unspecified amount of the county's development fund.
- Minister Karnwea has already made the recommendation to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
- The Internal Affairs Minister said authorities of River Gee County have already accused Mr. Yeaher of breaching the contract to undertake a project in the county.
- He said the Mr. Yeaher must be suspended to free himself from the allegation.
- He has since denied all allegations of corruption.

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Truth FM *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

"Take Serious Look at Informal and Formal Justice" Says Justice Minister

- Justice Minister Christiania Tah has stressed the need to take serious look at informal and formal justice systems in Liberia.

- Minister Tah said the two systems if introduced will create what she called easy access to justice and improve the country's criminal justice system.
- The Attorney General said the Justice Ministry is engaging various communities that will be used as mentor to review and put in place measures to address the formal and informal justice systems in the country.
- She maintained that more training will be provided to enforce the process.
- She also expressed concerns of over crowdedness of the Monrovia Central Prison, noting the appropriate measures have been put in place to address the situation.
- The Justice Minister who spoke Wednesday at the regular press briefing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia however said those detained without proper document and have stayed over two years, will be released.

International Clips on Liberia

Liberia: President Should Act on Rights Commission; Delays are Impeding Efforts to Promote and Protect Human Rights

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/05/19/liberia-president-should-act-rights-commission>

(Dakar) - President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia should demonstrate leadership in accelerating the establishment of the country's Independent National Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said in a joint letter to the president today. The 2003 Accra Peace Agreement, which brought Liberia's years of armed conflict to an end, called upon the Liberian government to create an Independent National Human Rights Commission, and in 2005, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights Act was passed into law. Five years later, the government and parliament still have not established a human rights commission in Liberia. "The government's failure to establish the Human Rights Commission has stymied progress in protecting human rights in Liberia," said Corinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. "An effective Human Rights Commission would help foster a culture of human rights in a country scarred by war, violence, and impunity." The Liberian government's failure to establish the commission undermines Liberia's post war recovery, respect for human rights, and its anti-corruption agenda, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said. While plans to establish the commission remain in limbo, the country has experienced ongoing violence and internecine conflict, striking deficiencies in judiciary, police, and corrections operations, vigilante justice, and high incidence of rape of women and girls.

Taylor Prosecutors Want Naomi Campbell to Testify

<http://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/wireStory?id=10700575>

Prosecutors trying former Liberian president Charles Taylor for war crimes at a U.N.-backed court have asked judges to subpoena supermodel Naomi Campbell as a witness. Prosecutors have filed a motion saying they want Campbell to testify about uncut diamonds Taylor allegedly gave to her in South Africa in 1997. In a motion filed Thursday, they say Campbell told prosecutors through her lawyer that she was "concerned for her safety" and "did not want to involve herself in the case." Prosecutors allege that Taylor provided arms and ammunition to brutal rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war in exchange for diamonds. He denies the allegations. The prosecution also wants actress Mia Farrow to testify about the alleged gift. Farrow says Campbell told her about the gift.

Local doctor lending his expertise in Africa

http://www.redbluffdailynews.com/ci_15125309?source=most_viewed

All kinds of medical equipment are on its way to Africa and when it arrives in Liberia, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital Director of Surgery Leon Randall will be there to meet it. My goal is to be there when its time to unpack the containers and to help train them to use the equipment, Randall said. The three-and-a-half containers with about \$350,000 worth of equipment, which is being shipped by Firestone Tires, will leave the United States on May 23. They should arrive in Liberia on June 23 where they will be about an hours transport from their final destination at Duside Hospital on the Firestone Plantation in Liberia, Randall said. I want to help where I can, Randall said. It's a small effort, but it's been a huge blessing for me and my family. Randall went on a trip to Duside Hospital in January with his brother Lynn Randall through Children's Surgery International and the impact has been far reaching, he said. It sparked something in me, Randall said. Going over there and being a part of the culture for a while my heart was touched by it. The Lord wants us to be doing things at certain times and lines things up. Randall said he tried 25 years ago to help with the surplus by sending medical equipment to Russia, however, he later found out the supplies ended up on the black market. One thing that makes this try different is the fact that he knows the people who are receiving the equipment have already promised that anything they can't use will be given

to other area hospitals. It was really cool was being able to connect directly with someone on the other side, Randall said. I know it will go where it's needed. Equipment shipped includes a variety of items such as ekg machines, bedside monitors and even a brand new infant incubator.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

Guinea army chief promises smooth running of elections

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/10130160.stm>

Guinea's army chief has promised the military will ensure that the 27 June elections proceed smoothly. Colonel Nouhou Thiam, who heads a military task force set up to oversee the polls, said the army would "defend the territory of Guinea." He also promised the army would remain neutral during the elections. A junta has ruled Guinea since the death of long-time leader Lansana Conte in December 2008, and the polls will return the country to civilian rule. Col Thiam said during a meeting with leaders of Guinea's political parties that politicians should educate their supporters so that they behave in a civilised way. "Campaigning does not mean breaking the other man's car, campaigning does not mean destroying the opponent's shop, campaigning does not mean throwing stones at each other or uttering foul language," he said. The political leaders, in turn, promised to abide by the rules. Col Thiam was speaking 24 hours after being named head of a 16,000-strong joint military and paramilitary task force for the elections by interim junta leader General Sekouba Konate.

Ivory Coast

UNOCI donates documentation and archives centre to Odienne

ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire/African Press Organization (APO)/ — The United Nations Operations in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), on Tuesday, 18 May 2010, donated a documentation and archives centre to the district of Odienné 713 km north of Abidjan, as part of its Quick Impact Project programme. The Centre, estimated at 10 million FCFA, comprises a documentation hall and a block of five toilets. UNOCI focal point and Human Rights Officer in Odienné, Paul Jatho, said the donation was part of the Mission's support to help Côte d'Ivoire emerge from its crisis. He said UNOCI's gesture would contribute to improving the well-being and working condition of civil servants in Odienné. "We would like to create an environment of social cohesion that is favourable to the crisis-resolution process," said Mr. Ildelphonse Nduwimana of UNOCI's Civil Affairs section. Speaking on behalf of the Mayor of Odienné, the third assistant Mayor, Cisse Drissa, said that the numerous programmes undertaken by UNOCI for the benefit of the Ivorian people in general and the inhabitants of Denguele in particular, contribute to the emergence of a new Côte d'Ivoire. For his part, the executive secretary of the National Committee for the Redeployment of the Administration (CNPRA), Mr. Ebenezer Guebo Dja recalled that UNOCI had made many efforts to help the CNPRA create a favourable environment for the redeployment of administrative services in the Centre- North-West zones, as well as the rehabilitation and furnishing of public buildings.

Peace process high on agenda in meeting between presidents of Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon

YAOUNDE, May 20 (Xinhua) -- President of Cote d'Ivoire Laurent Gbagbo who is here to take part in the celebrations marking Cameroon's 50th anniversary of independence, is expected to take the opportunity to speak with his Cameroonian counterpart Paul Biya about the peace process that is underway in his country, his office has confirmed. "The president is happy to join his counterpart Paul Biya in the 50th celebrations for Cameroon. This will give them an opportunity to discuss Cote d'Ivoire's peace process," his communication advisor Silvere Nebout told Xinhua. Gbagbo returns to Cameroon 5 years after his last visit during the Africa-France summit that was organized in Yaounde in the year 2001. Just like Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire is among 17 other African countries that are celebrating their 50 years of independence this year.

Sierra Leone

Police in Sierra Leone free kidnapped Irish businessman

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/frontpage/2010/0520/1224270713336.html?via=mr>

An Irish businessman has been freed by police in Sierra Leone after being kidnapped by armed men in an incident believed to be linked to a major gold-mining venture. The man, a long-standing investor in Sierra Leone, was seized by a group of men outside his hotel in the capital, Freetown, on Monday afternoon. They bundled him into a 4x4 vehicle and handcuffed him before driving from the scene. A short time later, however, a police unit intercepted the

jeep at Lumley Beach in the west of the city and arrested three men. Strieby Logan, chief of operations at an organised crime unit attached to the national police, told The Irish Times last night that two of the arrested men were members of Sierra Leone's presidential guard. It is understood the victim, who is unharmed and due to return to Ireland today, had agreed with another foreign business partner last year to get involved in a joint gold-mining venture with a number of Sierra Leoneans. According to local sources, he realised he had been defrauded and returned to Sierra Leone this week to pursue his former associates through legal channels. When the attack happened, he had just returned to his hotel to collect documents requested by local detectives to build their case.
