

**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:

Tuesday, 21 October 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News

More Victims Testify in Taylor Trial / <i>The New Citizen</i>	Page 3
“Liberia on Trial, Not Taylor” / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 4

International News

Report From The Hague / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Pages 5-6
Charles Taylor Prosecutor Lashes out at Defence Lawyers / <i>Agence France Presses</i>	Page 7
Defense Counsel Courtenay Griffiths Confirms Taylor / <i>Charlestaylortrial.org</i>	Pages 8-12
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 13-15

The New Citizen
 Tuesday, 21 October 2008

More Victims Testify

In Taylor Trial

Almost every day victims of amputation, rape and other forms of atrocities by rebels loyal to the RUF in Sierra Leone are making their way to the Dutch city of The Hague to testify against the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor. Mr Taylor is accused of sponsoring acts of terrorism meted out by the erstwhile rebel group.

In just two days the prosecution has produced seven victims of the war as witnesses. The 59th prosecution witness, an amputee, told the judges of the Special Court that the rebels amputated a six-year old girl and placed it in the mouth of a dead police officer in the northern town of Kabala. Sieh Mansaray said the rebels remarked that the hand was meant to be the policeman's last food. He quoted the rebels as saying that they started their orgy of amputation with the 6-year-old was indication that they would not spare anybody. Mansaray also testified

that in Kabala the rebels amputated several civilians including a woman who was eight months pregnant. He said a rebel commander gave instructions for the amputation of the civilians on a piece of paper.

The witness went on to say that prior to the amputation, the rebel commander had told his men to prioritise the burning of houses in Kabala decide the fate of the civilians later. "They said go, go to Kabala, say these hands that have been cut off, tell them these were the hands which you used to vote for the civilian government..."

Earlier the 58th prosecution witness had told the court that he was captured and stripped naked along with 50 other residents of Tumbudu in the eastern Kono district and forced to mine for diamonds for the rebels.

Tamba Yomba Ngekia said rebels aged six, ten and eleven years held civilians at gunpoint while they mined. He said the rebels brought another 70

civilians, with one tied in the waist. He recalled the severe flogging and shooting of one S.E Songbeh for saying that he was too weak to mine following an order by one of the rebel leaders that anybody who refused to work be shot. "Then he asked Mr. Songbeh, 'are you the one who said you were not going to work? Are you the one who said you are not going to work?' And he shot him three times. Then he fell down. We were sitting down there, wanting to cry. How could we have?" Tamba told the court.

The third witness who took the stand was a woman who said she suffered sexual violence at the hands of the rebels. 50-year-old Roko Turay said she was raped by three of the rebels. On cross-examination, she clarified that the rebels who raped her spoke in Krio, and that she did not hear any of them speaking Liberian English.

A new batch of witnesses is expected to take the stand.

Awoko

Tuesday, 21 October 2008

“Liberia On Trial, Not Taylor”

A member of former President Charles Taylor’s defense team says it is Liberia that is being put on trial and not Mr. Taylor.

In an interview at the end of a news conference organized by Taylor’s defense team at the St. Theresa Convent in Monrovia, Cllr. Supuwood said if Taylor is found guilty of the charges brought against him it would be Liberia that would likely pay reparation to the families of the victims in Sierra Leone.

He made reference to Libya paying reparation to victims or family members for a plane that was hijacked by its nationals.

Although Cllr. Supuwood said the case involving Taylor was different, he said Taylor can’t pay reparation if he is found guilty because he was president of Liberia when he was indicted by the

...Defense Lawyer Says

Special Court for Sierra Leone.

He indicated that Taylor doesn’t have money to pay reparation to victims of the Sierra Leone war.

Explaining why he joined the Taylor’s defense team, Cllr. Supuwood, a former critic of Taylor said he joined the team because he believes it was Liberia that is being tried at The Hague and not the former president.

At the same time, Cllr. Supuwood said Taylor never committed any crime in Sierra Leone and that he was not guilty of charges brought against him.

“We insist that he was not responsible for the crimes committed in Sierra Leone. The charges and the trial are heavily politically motivated,” he said.

He noted that prosecution witnesses who have taken the stand were yet to say they saw Mr. Taylor in Sierra Leone.

Cllr. Supuwood said former President Taylor is being accused for what other people did in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor is on trial in The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the Sierra Leonean civil war.

Meanwhile, a legal advisor to the Taylor defense team Cllr. Lansana K. Kamara has disclosed that more Sierra Leoneans have agreed to testify for the former Liberian president.

Although Cllr. Kamara did not provide the exact number of witnesses recruited in Sierra Leone, he said they are more than the Liberians who could testify for Taylor.

Making reference to the number of Liberians who testified against Mr. Taylor, Cllr. Kamara said

many Sierra Leoneans were against the trial of the former Liberian president in view of the willingness to provide testimony in his favor.

He disclosed that Taylor’s defense team is still having difficulties in recruiting witnesses for its client due to the travel ban and asset freeze on some associates and family members of the former president.

Cllr. Kamara said although the travel ban on some Liberians willing to testify for Mr. Taylor will be suspended to allow them travel to The Hague but wonders what happens after their testimonies.

He indicated that defense team targeted three areas for recruitment of witnesses for the accused president which included Sierra Leone, the alleged crime scene, Liberia and the international community.

*Read Awoko
always your
preferred option*

BBC World Service Trust

Monday, 20 October 2008

A former Small Girl Units member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has testified in the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor on how civilians including children were trained and used as attendants by rebel commanders. The witness also testified on the killing of an aged man who complained that he was tired as they were moving along with the rebels.

As the BBC World Service Trust Mariama Khai Fornah reports, the witness explained to the judges the ordeal she went through. The witness was testifying in Krio and so she was being interpreted.

FORNAH: The 66th prosecution witness has told the court three RUF rebels raped her at age 10 on the day the rebels attacked Masingbi town in Kono District in April 1994. Miss Edna Bangura told the judges her primary school was hosting their annual athletic meeting but the attack brought it to a halt separating parents from their children and teachers from their pupils.

Miss Bangura said after she was raped, the rebels abandoned her in the bush and was later discovered by the then RUF patrol commander OC Blood who took her along with him.

She said OC Blood gave her a very heavy load, which she carried on foot for several days from Masingbi to Buedu town in the Kailahun District.

The witness testified she was trained in a camp around Buedu town in the Kailahun District. She told the Court she went through two weeks training together with 50 other civilian captives by the training Instructor Monica Pearson whom the witness alleged was speaking Liberian English.

The witness said she was trained on how to fire a gun, how to set an ambush and how to retreat from enemies.

Miss Edna explained to the court she was too young to carry her gun as she was below 11 years at that time. She vividly explained how she used to carry her gun.

WITNESS: Okay, because I was very small, the gun had a belt and at any time I wanted to use the gun I would just take the gun, put it somewhere higher than my height and then I would go underneath it and put it round me. I would put the gun somewhere that is taller than me and then I would go underneath it and put my head through the belt and then put it round me.

FORNAH: As she continues her direct examination, the witness said after her training, she was enlisted in the Small Girls Units (SGUs).

The SGUs and SBUs group comprises young girls and boys captured by the rebels between ages 10 and 13.

Miss Bangura said the rebels used the Small Boy Units as security guards who carried guns wherever their bosses went and the SGUs as house help to the wives of the rebels.

The witness explained to the Court on how the SBUs and SGUs went out on what she referred to as food finding mission. She narrated to the Court how they attacked and captured civilians during their food finding mission.

WITNESS: And when we entered the town we will not shoot. We will take pebbles and we will throw those ones on top of the houses and then we will know whether there were soldiers or Kamajors around. If they were not around, maybe the civilians would be around they would run into the bushes and then we would enter the town collect whatever we were able to see and then we would move.

FORNAH: The witness earlier testified that life was only safe for women and girls in the jungle when they have a rebel they will point at as husbands. She said women in the jungle without rebel husbands were treated badly. Miss Bangura said women never refuse the rebels from being their husbands because they needed protection at that time.

During cross-examination, Prosecution lawyer Courtenay Griffiths tried to point out some of the inconsistencies in the witness previous testimonies taken by the investigators of the Special Court and her present testimony in court.

The witness admitted on cross-examination that there were some errors in her previous interview. She testified in court that three rebels raped her, but she previously told investigators that four rebels raped her

WITNESS: I was imbalanced by then because it was my first time meeting with such people went to obtain statement from me, so like I said, that was a mistake.

GRIFFITHS: I see, so you were the one who told them four, were you?

WITNESS: Yes, I told them they were four but actually they were three. I was confused, I was not with a steady mind, because by then I have just decided that whatsoever thing that had happened to me, let it stay within me.

Edna, the former SGU member, also testified that some old people were sent to work on the farm of the rebels, but the records of the Court investigators carried that rebels used girls on their farms. She admitted that the investigators made an error.

For the BBC WST this is Mariama Khai Fornah reporting from The Hague.

Agence France Presses

Monday, 20 October 2008

Charles Taylor prosecutor lashes out at defence lawyers

FREETOWN (AFP) — Lawyers for former Liberian President Charles Taylor are causing undue hardship for some witnesses in his trial by insisting they appear in court even though their testimony is not contested, the prosecution charged Monday.

The remarks by chief prosecutor Stephen Rapp of the Special Court for Sierra Leone which is trying Taylor in The Hague come in reaction to defence accusations that the prosecution was squandering money by bringing unnecessary witnesses to the Netherlands.

"Victims of the atrocities are being forced to relive their horrors on the stand for one reason only: because, contrary to their public statements, the defence is unwilling to agree that these crimes happened," prosecutor Stephen Rapp said.

The prosecutor explained in a statement that in order to secure a conviction in the case the prosecution not only has to link Taylor to the rebel groups in Sierra Leone he is said to have controlled but it must also prove the atrocities alleged in the indictment happened.

While the defence have previously said that they do not deny crimes were committed they only dispute their client is responsible for them.

To try to speed up the process and save money prosecutors say they sought to let so-called crime base witnesses called to prove crimes were committed, testify by submitting only a written statement.

Rapp added that the prosecution initially wanted to call 72 witnesses to the stand and have another 72 submit their testimony in writing. After the defence objected and wanted to question all the witnesses the prosecution has reduced the total number of witnesses they plan to call to 96, Rapp said.

The first ex-African head of state to appear before an international tribunal, Taylor faces 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The former president, whose trial began this year, is accused of controlling rebel forces in neighbouring Sierra Leone who went on a blood diamond-fuelled rampage of killing, mutilation and rape during the 1991-2001 civil war there.

Taylor denies the charges.

Charlestaylortrial.org

Monday, 20 October 2008

Interview: Lead Defense Counsel Courtenay Griffiths Confirms Taylor Himself will Testify; South-African Ex-President Thabo Mbeki Possible Future Defense Witness

Unless expressly stated otherwise, the findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this interview are not necessarily those of OSI and OSI does not take a position on the content or accuracy of these findings, interpretations and conclusions.

This interview took place on Friday October 17, 2008

Monitor: Good morning Mr. Griffiths, thank you for giving me the opportunity to have this interview with you for charlestaylortrial.org. I first would like to ask you some questions about your personal background, where are you from?

Griffiths: I was born in Jamaica but I have lived in the United Kingdom since the early sixties. I came to the UK when I was five years old and grew up in Coventry, the Midlands.

Monitor: Where did you study law?

From school I went to the London School of Economics where I studied law and then qualified at the bar and I have been practising in the area of criminal defense since 1980.

Monitor: Where did you work before you became Lead Defense Counsel to Charles Taylor?

Griffiths: I have been operating as a criminal Defense barrister in the United Kingdom for the last 28 years. I have been involved in a number of high profile cases in the United Kingdom such as the trial of Winston Silcot & others charged with the murder of police constable Blakelock during riots on Broadwater Farm in the early nineteen eighties. I have also been involved in the first Damilola Taylor trial, a number of high profile IRA trials and terrorist trials.

Monitor: Have you defended other persons who are or were tried before the Special Court?

Griffiths: No, this is really my first venture into the area of international criminal justice. I was instructed briefly, very briefly to represent a member of the RUF in the RUF trial, but I only remained with that particular client less than a week. (Note monitor: this was Morris Kallon)

Monitor: Why do you think it is important for Charles Taylor to be well represented for his defense?

Griffiths: I think that this whole area of international criminal law has suffered an image problem in the past because all of the international tribunals which have been set up, it is almost as if the defense have been an afterthought and that the concentration and the emphasis has always been on prosecution which gives the impression that these are in effect Kangaroo Courts where the verdict is a foregone conclusion. And often times if you are a Milosevic or you are a Charles Taylor, before you arrive in these Courts, the media at large have already suggested that you are guilty. And it seems to me imperative in those situations that individuals like Milosevic and like Taylor have the best defense available if the whole area of international criminal justice is to gain any kind of credibility worldwide.

Monitor: Can you tell us, in broad stroke, what we can expect to hear in terms of the lines of Taylor's defense argument?

Griffiths: The defense arguments are of course dictated by the live issues raised during the course of the prosecution case and so far as those live issues are concerned it's whether or not they can prove that Taylor either ordered,

controlled, financed, encouraged, whatever way you want to put it, what happened in Sierra Leone. That's what they have to prove and what we have to disprove and of course our lines of defense will be dictated by that.

We now have had more than 60 Prosecution Witnesses on the stand, of a total of about 100, after which the Defense will present its witnesses. Is the list of Defense witnesses already complete or are new names still being added?

Griffiths: It's rather premature for me to make any statement about the number of defense witnesses. It is something which we have constantly under review. Furthermore we will only know for sure precisely what the case is we have to meet, once the prosecution case has finished. Once we have been able to assess in its totality that case and further more once the judges have made a decision on our 98bis application to dismiss some or all of the charges. So we'll have to wait until then to come to a final decision.

Monitor: Is it possible to divide the Defense witnesses into categories, and if so, into which categories?

Griffiths: It's not really possible to divide them into any kind of categories. What I can say quite confidently, is that Mr. Taylor will give evidence. I'm sure that is what everyone will be looking forward to.

Monitor: Are you content/ satisfied with the resources, financial and otherwise, that the Special Court has assigned to the Defense?

Griffiths: I'm often led to believe that our Defense is one of the best funded there has ever been in an international tribunal. Well, if our Defense is well funded, then I can well understand why these international tribunals have developed a reputation for being Kangaroo Courts biased totally towards the Prosecution. Because, when one compares the resources that are available to us compared to the resources which are available to the Prosecution, there is no equality of arms whatsoever. Vast resources have been made available to them over several years.

Everybody knows my team has only come on board in August of last year. Some members of the Prosecution team have been working on this case for five years or more. And so that alone shows the disparity between the two teams of lawyers. We are four lawyers working for us. Last time we counted the Prosecution were deploying something like eight different lawyers in Court. And in terms of the investigative facilities they have got much more facilities than us. In the case of the amount of money they have available to pay witnesses, again they have vastly greater resources than we have. So no, I am not happy at all with the amount of resources we have.

Monitor: What does the Defense need to have a more equal balance between the Prosecution and the Defense?

Griffiths: Well, it would help to have more money, for example to enable our international investigators in particular to travel. And also for people like myself to travel, because there are individuals within Africa and elsewhere in the world whom I would like to go and meet. Not because my international investigators are not capable of going, but oftentimes it is the measure of respect you show to an individual who goes along to meet that individual for the first time. If for example you were Thabo Mbeki, you would be expecting Mr. Taylor's Lead Counsel to come and talk to you about his case. But because of a lack of resources 1) I can't afford the time to leave The Hague, 2) the travel costs involved would prove prohibitive given the limitations of our budget. So for a number of reasons our investigative possibilities are somewhat constrained.

Monitor: In Court you have recently informed us about the extra security measures imposed by the Dutch authorities on Mr. Taylor during transportation to and from the building of the ICC (International Criminal Court) in The Hague where this trial of the Special Court is located. As the judges have informed us, these extra security measures were not due to any misconduct or misbehaviour on the side of Mr. Taylor, but were due to reasons beyond this Court's and Mr. Taylor's control. Can you tell us if these extra security measures have been lifted yet?

Griffiths: Those measures are still in place. And it is still the case that the measures were not imposed because of anything done by Mr. Taylor. It was very much to do with other detainees within the detention facility and as far as we are led to understand those detainees weren't even from the African continent.

Monitor: Have the Dutch authorities informed the Court what it will take or what needs to be changed before these extra security measures will be lifted?

Griffiths: Well, they haven't told us and it would be difficult for them to tell us given that it wasn't because of anything done by Mr. Taylor in the first place to justify this. So consequently it is apparent that changes have to take place which have nothing whatsoever to do with Mr. Taylor and that's what will dictate when the Dutch authorities would be minded to lift these restrictions.

Monitor: What is the Registry doing for Mr. Taylor in this respect? And are they, in your opinion, doing enough?

Griffiths: Well, there could always be a greater effort. The registry have suggested to us that they are taking steps to try and solve the situation and I know for a fact that the Registrar has met with senior members of the Dutch Intelligence and Security Services to discuss the matter. But effectively now we are told that we have to take it to the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone because effectively no one has power over the Dutch authorities to compel them to change the provisions in this particular respect.

Monitor: Recently prosecution witnesses have started to testify under Rule 92bis of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the SCSL, meaning that they can give their testimony in writing, so they will not be examined by the Prosecution, however they must be prepared to be cross-examined by the Defense, and when so called for, be questioned by the judges. Can you tell us if the Defense will be cross-examining all the prosecution witnesses who testify under this rule or will the Defense only cross-examine a certain number of these witnesses? I think last Wednesday your co-counsel Terry Munyard already lifted a little tip of the veil as he did this morning in regard to witness TF1-081, stating that this prosecution witness did not need to come to The Hague to be cross-examined. Can you tell us more?

Griffiths: Basically, Rule 92bis is a measure which is employed to increase the efficiency of the proceedings and basically the position is that where a witness's evidence is not in dispute and is capable of agreement between the parties that rather than transport that individual half way across the globe to give evidence, that evidence can be accepted by the Court as read in effect. Part of the difficulty we've had over the old 92bis issue is that my experience and practise was that where a Prosecutor wanted agreement on certain core facts which would be on dispute he or she would distil that witness's evidence to its core features, which would then be presented to the other side for agreement. What has happened in this case is, the Prosecution that handed us reams of transcripts from previous proceedings where these witnesses had been cross-examined on behalf of other defendants and consequently what was being put in cross-examination was relevant to their cases and not in the case of Mr. Taylor. And effectively they wanted all of those transcripts to go in. Now that would have ended up with us agreeing not merely to the core fact "I was raped on this particular date on this particular location", but I would be agreeing to cross-examination on behalf of Issa Sesay's sake, relevant to him, which might prove, rather than being crime based evidence to being linkage evidence with Mr. Taylor. We were not prepared to do that. What I expected the Prosecution to do was to be much more discriminate and to look at the transcripts and say to us: "These are the portions of the evidence of this witness that we're interested in, you can forget the rest", but they didn't do that. And consequently we, I think quite properly, objected to this indiscriminate introduction of transcripts from previous proceedings, where hidden amongst the detail might be material which they would later turn around and say: "We rely on this as linking Mr. Taylor with what happened in Sierra Leone". And then when you turn around and object and say: "Well, this was supposed to be crime based evidence", they would turn around and say: "Well, you agreed it". And that was the danger. As a consequence, because of their refusal to be more discriminate, we have this sad spectacle of agitated individuals and rape victims, being transported to The Hague to give evidence and the core aspects of their evidence are not being challenged by us. Which is why we were able to get through something like a dozen crime base witnesses in the space of four and a half days this week. Because the core of the accounts being given by these individuals for the most part can not be challenged by us. Because Mr. Taylor was not on the spot in Makeni when a particular individual was raped. So how can Mr. Taylor tell me, "Well Mr. Griffiths, you ought to be challenging that account given by that individual". We are in no position to do that. So, all I was expecting from the Prosecutors was: "X was raped on this occasion in that location on this date in Kono". We can't dispute that.

Agreed. That would have saved the poor woman having to travel all the way from Sierra Leone to relive that terrible emotional experience. Because we defend Mr. Taylor and declare him innocent of these charges, it doesn't mean that we are somehow insensitive to the suffering which actually took place in Sierra Leone. We are human too. We don't enjoy the spectacle of people breaking down on the witness stand, because they are having to relive the most horrific experiences. We don't enjoy that. It's an emotional roller coaster for us as well. And anything which could have avoided that spectacle, we were willing to agree to.

Monitor: Due to an order in a previous trial before this Court, some of these prosecution witnesses are category one witnesses, meaning that they are not listed as ABC witnesses *mutatis mutandis* entitled to protective measures. So these category one witnesses can not have protective measures unless the Defense does not object to these measures. Most of these witnesses have been prepared to testify in open court without protective measures. Some however, were only prepared to testify with certain protective measures. The Defense has objected to these measures and the witnesses, I believe so far two witnesses, later reduced to one witness (because in the end, prosecution witness TF1-215 was prepared to testify without protective measures), have not been prepared to testify in open court without protective measures. Why did the Defense object?

Griffiths: Well, on principle. Because most of these protective measures were imposed by a blanket order made, I think if memory serves, in July 2004, and basically, this was at a stage before any of the trials had begun, and in effect, the Prosecutors had gone *ex parte* to the Court and had said: "Look, Sierra Leone is a fairly small country. If these people's details come out, they could be intimidated. So effectively, the order imposed by the Court then covered the whole of Sierra Leone, without specifying any particular individual. Now the consequence of that was, that if we as the Defense, went unwittingly and spoke to someone, the Prosecution could turn around and say: "You have no right to do that. That person is covered by the blanket order made by the Court in 2004". So effectively, if the breath of that order had stood, it would mean that we couldn't talk to anyone in Sierra Leone, because we wouldn't know whether that individual was a Prosecution witness or not. That was the mischief that we were seeking to address. It was because the order was so wide that it covered everybody. It created three categories, that if a witness falls into this category, irrespective of whether the witness is identified or not, that witness was entitled to the following protective measures. So they'd had obtained this blanket order before they had even identified the people they wanted to speak to.

Monitor: So it's not just a list of names of individuals attached to an order from the Court?

Griffiths: No, in effect, they created three categories. If you are a rape victim, you fall into category A, and you are entitled to this, this and this. If you are B, you are a child soldier and you are entitled to this, this and this. And C referred to linkage witnesses. So it doesn't matter if the person isn't named. Once you fall into that category, irrespective of whether you say I need those protective measures or not, you get them automatically. Automatically we could not speak to anyone for fear of breaching an order because the order was so wide. So you couldn't go up and speak to anyone. I couldn't go up and speak to a female in Sierra Leone and say: "Were you a rape victim", because effectively, whether that person was named in the order or not, potentially she could be. So potentially I could be in breach of that order.

Monitor: Are you familiar with our site charlestaylortrial.org and do you ever visit the site?

Griffiths: I am familiar with the site and I have visited it on more than one occasion and initially at least, the site was very anti Charles Taylor. I think the reports more recently have become have become a bit more balanced and I hope things remain that way.

Monitor: how recent?

Griffiths: Well, I think over the last couple of months or so it's become a lot more balanced in its coverage of the trial.

Monitor: The goal of our site is to provide access to information about the trial for West-African journalists and journalists in general and anyone who is interested in the trial, especially in West-Africa. Do you think this site contributes to that goal?

Griffiths: Well, I hope so. Any information which manages to reach the people of West-Africa about this trial is to be welcomed because it is the first African head of state to be put on trial. And I think this trial has ramifications for all of Africa and the third world.

Monitor: Do you have any suggestions to improve our site or are there areas you would like to see covered by the site?

Griffiths: Well, I would like to see you speak more to people on the ground in West Africa to get their views on what they think about the trial. They are in the best position to say: "What am I learning from this experience? To what extent is it relevant to my life? To what extent are the millions spent on setting up a Special Court justified?" When we had an amputee come to Court yesterday (October 16, 2008) and say: "What is being done for us on the streets of Freetown? We are having to beg to survive." We know this Court is costing millions to maintain. And if I were a Sierra Leonean I'd like to be in a position to voice a view about that. So that's why I think it would be good if you could connect with people on the ground. And I think one of the ways in which this site could be improved would be to speak to some of these witnesses after they have given their evidence, because there could be no suggesting at that point that you would be seeking to interfere with the course of justice in any way or perverting their account, because they have already given evidence. And many of them now have agreed to give evidence without protective measures. So I think it would be good for some of them to be given the opportunity to voice their wider concerns to a much wider audience. Given the example of the amputee yesterday, who movingly told us how little is being done for them and their plight within Sierra Leone. I would like to see that get out to a much wider audience than just a few people who were in the Court room that afternoon. He deserves a platform to have his voice heard. And I think you ought to approach the Prosecution and the WVS and say to them: "Would you be willing to say to these witnesses once they have given their evidence: would you be prepared to speak to a wider audience about the experiences you have had?", and see what they have to say.

Monitor: Interesting suggestion... Thank you for this interview!

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
20 October 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Deputy UN Envoy Commissions New School Building

(The Informer)

- Deputy UN Envoy for the Rule of Law says girls' education must be prioritized because it is critical to the revival of Liberia. Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu made the statement when she commissioned a newly-constructed school in the Soul Clinic community, located in the densely populated Monrovia suburb of Paynesville.
- The construction project was undertaken by departing UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Nigerian peacekeepers NIBATT – 17 as part of their peace-building support activities in Liberia and will accommodate about 250 school children. Ms. Mensa-Bonsu praised the Nigerian peacekeepers for their support in reviving the educational system of Liberia by boosting the nation's free and compulsory primary educational programme.

Liberia Rated High among Nations hardest hit by Hunger

(The Inquirer)

- Liberia has been rated as one of the nations hardest hit by hunger, the 2008 Global Hunger Index (GHI) reports says. According to the index, sub-Saharan African countries have the highest level of hunger in the world, with Niger, Sierra Leone and Liberia experiencing "extremely alarming levels of hunger," according to the index.
- It also said that this is still an improvement over 1990 levels of some of the nations. The report, which was released on October 14 this year by the anti-hunger non-profits organization of the US-based International Food Policy Research Institute, Ireland's Concern Worldwide and Germany's Welthungerhilfe, compiled the most recent country data available from 2006.
- According to the index, the rankings were calculated based on the percentage of malnourished people, under-five underweight children, and under-five child mortality for 120 countries where hunger is a concern. The study further indicated that the hunger snapshot "offers a picture of the past, not the present," because of the two-year data gap.

President Sirleaf Mediates in Kru Town Dispute

(The Inquirer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf over the weekend led a Liberian government delegation to the Borough of New Kru Town, where she mediated in a long-standing dispute between the Governor of the area and the Eight Nominative District. The 'Eight Nominative District' has the statutory right to conduct an election for a governor and submit the name to the President for her subsequent endorsement. According to them, the confusion between the two sides has undermined the progress and development of the Borough. During a meeting held in the main administrative building of the Borough attended by a cross section of citizens, officials of government among others, a spokesman of the 'eight nominative district' informed the President that since the appointment of Governor Tobii, they have not seen any substantial change in the Borough something Governor Tobii expressed shock and dismay about.

President Sirleaf in the U.S. to Hold Talks with President Bush

(The News, The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The Informer, Daily Observer, Liberian Express)

- The media quotes an Executive Mansion release as saying that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and U.S. President George Bush are scheduled to meet Wednesday in Washington. During the discussions, the two leaders will review the status of United States support for Liberia's development agenda. The meeting will also provide an opportunity for the two leaders to discuss ongoing areas of U.S. - Liberian cooperation, including efforts to reform Liberia's security sector, combat malaria, and improve the quality of education.
- During the five-day official visit, the Liberian President will also make a presentation at an International Development Summit scheduled to be held in Washington, D.C. and will address the Summit on the Importance of Country Ownership and Governance.

Relatives of Timour Massacre Victims want Junior Minister Extradited

(National Chronicle)

- Relatives and friends of the Timour massacre victims want government to extradite Charles Bennie to help with the process in bringing to justice those who allegedly murdered their relatives in Margibi County. At a news conference at the weekend, the Slipway residents said Mr. Bennie was important in the trial because he hired the victims to work on his farm and in the process met their death.
- They expressed disappointment over the manner in which he left the country while the murder case was still ongoing. The residents called for a speedy adjudication in the case saying they want a verdict to be rendered in the case as early as November to bring the perpetrators to justice. Meanwhile, the residents have threatened to stage a protest march if there is further delay in the case.

PUL President Condemns Membership Roster

(New Vision, National Chronicle)

- The membership committee of the Press Union of Liberia Friday submitted the new membership roster to the PUL elections Commission. In a letter to the commission the Chairman of the membership committee, James Kpargoi said pursuant to its mandate to screen and accredited members the final roster of 278 full members of the union has been completed. The over two hundred journalists will constitute eligible voters for the November 8 polls for journalists to elect a new corps of officers to lead the union for a two-year term.
- Meanwhile, PUL President, George Barpeen has termed as "criminal" the list sent to the elections commission saying the union will not honour the new membership roster.

TRC to Hear from More Political Actors this Week

(The Inquirer, Heritage, National Chronicle)

- Grand Kru County Senator Blamo Nelson and LPRC managing director Harry Greaves are amongst several prominent Liberians to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) this week. Senator Nelson will testify today before commissioners of the TRC to be followed Tuesday by Mr. Jackson E. Doe, Minister of Transport and brother of the late President Samuel Kanyon Doe. Mr. Greaves will take the witness stand Wednesday and on Thursday prominent politician Tonia King will testify.
- University lecturer and Vice standard bearer of the New Deal Movement, Professor Alaric Tokpah will climax the hearings for this week with his appearance on Friday. Their appearance is part of the ongoing "Contemporary History of the Conflict (1979-2003)" Institutional and Thematic Inquiry Hearings of the Commission.

Radio Summary

Star Radio (News culled today from website at 9:00 pm)

President Sirleaf in U.S. to discuss with President Bush

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

Victims' families recommend Extradition for junior minister

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

PUL President Discards Membership Roster

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

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)***TRC to Lines up More Political Actors****New Anti-Graft Website to be Launch Today**

- A new website in the fight against corruption will today be launched by the Centre for Transparency and Accountability (CENTAL).
- The website will catalogue stories of corruption taken from media houses with the hope of providing easy access to individuals on corruption stories and government's fight against the act.
