

**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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# CLOSE DOWN THE SPECIAL COURT

**T**he serious business of prosecuting those Sierra Leoneans who carry the greatest responsibility of the eleven year rebel war to a large extent must be seen

AFRC leader, Johnny Paul Koroma is a totally separate matter which can be addressed in other quarters.

But what is clear is that the atmosphere of political instability

to be over. The inability by the Special Court to arrest former

represented by the presence of the Special Court in Sierra Leone should not be allowed to continue.

That close to US\$400 million, very vital funds, have been used to prosecute only about a dozen people in a country that is in a dire need of infrastructural development and reforms associated with peace remains both

*Contd. on page 11*



baffling and unjustifiable. The funds spent to run the Special Court for Sierra Leone even at the moment by far exceeds the funds used by the more pro-development UNIPSIL.

But having expressed concern about the waste of funds in trying people who are only partly punished and who live more comfortable lives than other Sierra Leoneans, we must now say it is time to take another hard look at the presence of the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The only benefit that accrues the state of Sierra Leone is the assets and records of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Many Sierra Leoneans refuse to accept the argument that the records and assets of the Special Court are owned by Sierra Leoneans because the Special Court for Sierra Leone is not part of any UN agency.

For historical purposes and for posterity, there is need for us Sierra Leoneans to own an archive that keeps the court records of the Special Court and this should not be compromised because the Special Court records belong to Sierra Leoneans and they are about Sierra Leone.

The residues of the Special Court but more importantly, the building, should be handed over to the people of Sierra Leone without any further delay. Efforts being made by some people to give the impression that the Special Court still has relevance in Sierra Leone when in fact the Special Court activities can continue in The Hague like the case of Charles Taylor without making money out of the sorrows of a country that went to war for eleven years.

Even assuming that former junta leader, Johnny Paul Koroma is alive and is arrested at a later date, he still could be tried in The Hague like Charles Taylor which further explains why the Special Court should be shut down and its assets handed over to the people of Sierra Leone.

Even the prisoners who were found guilty by the Special Court, presently serving their jail terms in Rwanda, constitute a sheer waste of vital funds that could be used in other economic endeavors.

If other Sierra Leoneans can be kept at the Pademba Road Prisons to serve their jail terms, why will the state not ask for the return of Issa Sesay and others to serve their jail terms at Pademba Road Prisons, after all, they are all Sierra Leoneans and can serve jail terms like other Sierra Leoneans at the Pademba Road Prisons.

To continue to keep a very expensive contingent of Mongolian soldiers to provide security for a Special Court that has lost its usefulness, especially since nobody actually knows the expenditure package to sustain the Mongolian soldiers is another effort at financial misdirection. Sierra Leone is a secured country which hosts a series of international conferences, a country where even strangers drive their cars at night without incidents and therefore should not be construed as a country in a state of war.

The very presence of

the Special Court that is no longer functional and holds a large number of Mongolian troops gives the wrong impression of an insecure country.

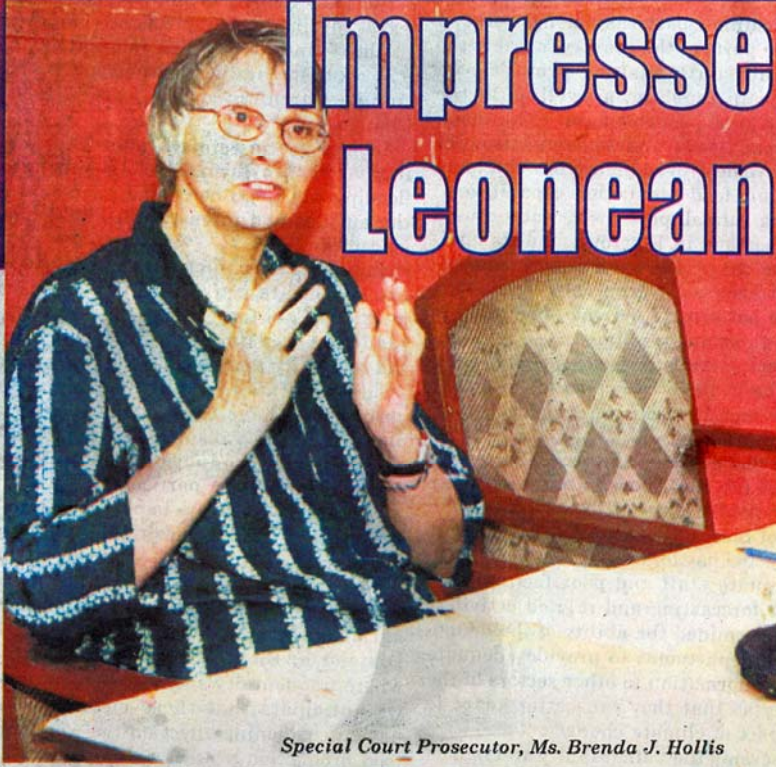
The Special Court should be shut down, the assets and documents handed over to the people of Sierra Leone and the prisoners in Rwanda be brought back to Sierra Leone to serve their jail terms like all other Sierra Leoneans at the Pademba Road Prisons. Anything short of this development only continues to give the impression that some people have discovered the Special Court as a money-making institution, especially since transparency and accountability aspects of the Special Court remain dubious.

So, shut down the Special Court and hand over the assets and legal documents to Sierra Leoneans to terminate the impression of a continued state of instability in the country.

Sierra Leone is now a stable state and needs no Special Court at all.



# Special Court Prosecutor Impressed by Sierra Leoneans' Courage



Special Court Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda J. Hollis

*By Ibrahim Tarawallie*

On her second visit to Sierra Leone as the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Ms. Brenda J. Hollis expressed pleasure in the courage displayed by Sierra Leoneans in demanding justice for the wrongs done to them during the country's decade-long civil war.

Ms. Hollis told journalists at the Sierra Leone News Agency SLENA that she was overwhelmed. "I am awed by the spirit of the Sierra Leonean people," she said. "They rightly demanded justice for the wrongs done to them and also searched their

hearts and found the power to forgive in order to move forward with life." Despite the terrible crimes perpetrated during the war and the subsequent trial process at the Special Court, courageous men, women and children took to the stand as both prosecution and defence witnesses to tell their experiences, she said.

"We are impressed by their courage. In the case of Charles Taylor trial, we are very grateful for their willingness to travel thousands of miles to bear witness. They have made justice possible," Ms. Hollis added. *Contd page 3*

## Special Court Prosecutor Impressed by Sierra Leoneans' Courage

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Speaking further on the Taylor trial, she said it has been conducted under the strictest standards of international justice and that both the prosecution and the defence teams have been able to freely and vigorously put forward their cases as part of a free and fair trial.

"We expect the end of the

evidence phase of the Taylor case later this year. A trial judgment and then appeal phase will follow over the coming year. The prosecution has confronted Charles Taylor with the full weight of our case and we are confident that international justice will succeed," she explained.

The Special Court prosecutor maintained that

the most important legacy of the court would be to show that there can be no impunity for those who abuse power to commit atrocities against fellow human beings.

Brenda J. Hollis was appointed prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone by the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon in February this year.



Awoko

Friday, 23 July 2010

# Special Court Prosecutor raps Salone press

By Poindexter Sama

In her first press briefing in Sierra Leone since being appointed the new Prosecutor for the Special Court Brenda Hollis noted with concern that during the decade long civil war the people of Sierra Leone, men, women and children suffered grossly in the hands of factional armed militia, which has created an indelible memory in the minds of every Sierra Leonean.

She recorded that "thousands of women were raped, forced to be the wives of rebel soldiers and forced to

be sexual slaves. Thousands of boys and girls were taken from their families and forced to fight as child soldiers. Thousands of civilians were mutilated, killed and untold thousands enslaved and robbed of all their property"

Regardless of the terrible ordeal the people of this country went through the prosecutor said that in all the Special Court proceedings, brave men, women and children took the stand as prosecution and Defence Witnesses to highlight their experiences, and she expressed gratitude for such courageousness. While in Sierra Leone as a prosecutor, she revealed

that her responsibilities among many include bringing to book perpetrators who are top listed in serious crimes committed during the war, especially conscription of child soldiers into targeted war factions, investigate related crimes and respect the rights of the accused and witnesses.

She said that as the prosecution is presently at its climax in The Hague with witnesses testifying at Charles Taylor's trial, her presence in Sierra Leone as the Special Court Prosecutor will enable a first-hand evidence to necessitate fair trial, more especially when the people of Sierra Leone happen to be the primary client in the fight to achieve justice.

Brenda Hollis said she does not know how she was selected to be the new Prosecutor over Sierra Leonean born deputy Prosecutor Joseph Kamara. She however disclosed she and Joseph Kamara spoke when they realized that they were both going to be interviewed for the job and even after the job they have both pledged to work together to achieve the aims of the court. Madam Hollis disclosed that as Deputy Prosecutor Joseph Kamara has been involved with the day to day running of the office in Sierra Leone which they consider as their head office even as Sierra Leoneans are regarded as their clients.

The prosecutor was also very optimistic that super model Naomi Campbell will testify soon and that the evidence she will give will shed light on how after Mr Taylors trip to South Africa where he is alleged to have presented the diamond to Naomi Campbell he (Taylor) then visited Libya and Burkina Faso, after which a large consignment of arms was sent to the RUF.

Prosecutor Hollis believes the trial will end by next year.

# Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara to replace Abdul Tejan-Cole

*By Sylvia O. Blyden*

The President of the Sierra Leone Bar Association, Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara Esq. has confirmed to this writer yesterday that he had accepted the nomination of him by H.E. the President, as the next Commissioner of the Anti Corruption Commission; subject to the approval of the House of Parliament.

If approved by Parliament, Lawyer Kamara will become the automatic replacement for the erstwhile ACC Boss, Abdul Tejan-Cole Esq. who resigned from the post in the first week of May this year.

Although Tejan-Cole had stated no reasons for his resignation, some people had surmised that it could have been as a result of political interference from the Ernest Koroma led APC Government. However, last weekend at a University in Central Europe, Mr. Tejan-Cole had words of praises

for President Koroma whom he described as a courageous leader who never interfered with his work at the ACC.

It is worthwhile to note that Tejan-Cole had long since lost the confidence of the country's main opposition party, the SLPP, after several representations made by SLPP for corruption in high places to be investigated, all got rebuffed by Tejan-Cole. The SLPP Leadership has severally expressed their belief that Tejan-Cole had all along been in league with the ruling APC to give the regime an ill-deserved semblance of zero tolerance for corruption to the international donor community.

Already last evening, there has been some reservations from certain quarters that Joseph Kamara might turn out to be just another Tejan-Cole in failing to investigate and unearth the facts behind shady and corrupt deals like the Indian Rice Saga involving

the Foreign Minister Zainab Hawa Bangura or her illegal employment of several persons at the Foreign Ministry. Joseph Kamara is seen by many to be "too close" to State House and the ruling APC Party. However, it is a fact that under his leadership as President of the Bar, the Sierra Leone Bar Association has recently issued probably the strongest ever Bar Association censure of a Sierra Leone Government in the last decade. The Bar Association had slammed the Government for interfering within the Judiciary and for carrying out extra-judicial means of satisfying ill motives.

From the short telephone chat with this writer last evening, it is clear that Lawyer Joseph Kamara does not underestimate the task at hand in front of him should he get to be approved by Parliament. Whether he will prove to be up to the task, is a matter that only time will reveal.

ClickOnDetroit

Thursday, 22 July 2010

## **Naomi Campbell Set To Testify In 'Blood Diamond' War Crimes Trial**

1997 Meeting With Dictator Lands Campbell in Court

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone -- Naomi Campbell has allegedly slapped the camera in an ABC producer's hand in an outburst resulting from questions regarding "blood diamonds," according to ABC News.

It is alleged by prosecutors at the Special Court for Sierra Leone that Campbell received an uncut diamond as a gift from Charles Taylor in 1997 when Campbell, Taylor and actress Mia Farrow were at Nelson Mandela's house in South Africa.

Prosecutors want to establish whether Taylor, the former Liberian president, gave Campbell an uncut diamond as a gift.

"The diamonds made possible the continuation of the conflict but they also profoundly profited Charles Taylor," said former chief prosecutor Steven Rapp, who is now the United States Ambassador at Large for War Crimes.

Taylor, denies prosecutors' allegations that he provided arms and ammunition to brutal rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war in exchange for so-called blood diamonds.

Prosecutors have wanted Campbell to testify for the past year, but the model has publicly said she didn't want anything to do with the case. Now that Campbell has been ordered to testify, she is due in court Aug.5.

According to ABC News, when Campbell was questioned about the allegations that she had received a "blood diamond", the model said, "I didn't receive a diamond and I'm not going to speak about that."

And that's when she "stalked out of the interview and slapped the camera in a producer's hand," according to ABC News.

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Associated Press

Thursday, 22 July 2010

## **Naomi Campbell to testify Aug. 5 at Taylor trial**

By CLARENCE ROY-MACAULAY (AP)

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone — The chief prosecutor of the war crimes tribunal for Sierra Leone says Naomi Campbell will testify next month at Charles Taylor's trial.

Prosecutors want the supermodel to say whether Taylor gave her a rough, or uncut, diamond as a gift in 1997.

The court issued the order forcing Campbell to testify after she avoided prosecutors for a year and made it known she had no wish to be part of the case.

Prosecutor Brenda Hollis said Thursday that Campbell will testify on Aug. 5 instead of July 29 as previously scheduled.

Taylor, the former president of Liberia, denies prosecutors' allegations that he provided arms and ammunition to brutal rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war in exchange for so-called blood diamonds

CNN

Thursday, 22 July 2010

## **Naomi Campbell asks to postpone testimony at war crimes trial**

By the CNN Wire Staff

British supermodel Naomi Campbell has asked to postpone her testimony at the "blood diamonds" war crimes trial for the former Liberian president, the chief prosecutor's office said Thursday.

Campbell did not want to be involved in the trial but was subpoenaed on July 1 to appear at the tribunal for Charles Taylor, who faces war crimes charges over a brutal conflict in Sierra Leone that was fueled by rough diamonds, also known as blood diamonds or conflict diamonds.

Witnesses have said Taylor gave Campbell a diamond.

Campbell was scheduled to appear July 29 at the trial in The Hague, Netherlands. She has requested to postpone her testimony to August 5, the prosecutor's office said. The judge will make a decision on the request Monday.

Prosecutors had rested their case against Taylor in February 2009. They asked to reopen it specifically to call Campbell, as well as actress Mia Farrow and a witness named Carole Taylor, court papers show.

Prosecutors said they learned in June 2009 that Taylor had given the supermodel a diamond in South Africa in 1997. Farrow confirmed it, they said.

When arguing to reopen the case, prosecutors said Campbell's testimony would prove that the former president "used rough diamonds for personal enrichment and arms purchases," according to papers filed with the U.N.-backed court.

Taylor, 62, was president of Liberia from 1997 to 2003. The war crimes charges against him stem from the widespread murder, rape and mutilation that occurred during the bloody civil war in Sierra Leone. It was fought largely by teenagers who were forced to kill, given addictive drugs to provoke violent behavior, and often instructed to rape and plunder.

Taylor is charged with five counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, sexual slavery and violence, and enslavement. He also faces five counts of war crimes, including acts of terrorism and torture, and one count of other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

He has pleaded not guilty to the charges..



# Daily Observer

Wednesday, 21 July 2010

## No Immunity for Sitting Presidents

By Edith Quabo & John K. Forkpa

Leaders who abuse their power to commit atrocities against their fellow human beings do not have immunity from prosecution, visiting chief prosecutor of the Special Court in The Hague, Brenda J. Hollis, has said.

She says the legacy of the court, which is trying former Liberian president Charles Taylor on war crime charges, would ensure that those at the highest echelon of government or authority would not be immune from justice.

The lead prosecutor, who is currently in the country providing update on the Taylor trial, spoke yesterday at a press conference at the auditorium of the B. W. Harris School in Monrovia.

She said the prosecution had built its case on the strength of over 90 witnesses, including some 50 crime base or victim witnesses who suffered atrocities themselves or were witness to them; and over 30 insider witnesses testified to the linkages between the crimes allegedly committed by Mr. Taylor.

Among witnesses who have testified for the prosecution are rape victims, former child soldiers, amputees and victims of slavery and robbery during the war in Sierra Leone. The Chief Prosecutor pointed out that the success of any judicial process depended on the willingness of such people to come forward and tell the truth about their experiences.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted the former Liberian leader on 11 counts of war crime, crimes against humanity and gun running. Mr. Taylor was formerly arrested and handcuffed upon arrival at the Roberts International Airport in Margibi County in 2006 months; following the inception of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf-led government.

Mr. Taylor is further accused of masterminding the atrocities committed by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone in collaboration with his own National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) that executed bloody civil wars involving mayhem, rape, amputation and infrastructure destruction in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. He has since denied the charges.

The Special Court, according to Brenda Hollis, had reached a critical juncture in its history as it neared the completion of its mandate to try those who carry the greatest responsibility for serious violations of the International Humanitarian Law in Sierra Leone since November 30, 1996.

The prosecution had confronted Mr. Taylor with the full weight of its case and was confident that International Justice will prevail, she said. The work of the court is almost at its concluding stage.

The Court has already completed trials involving leaders of the three main factions in Sierra Leone's civil war. The judicial part of the mandate will end when the final proceedings are completed in the case against Charles Taylor.

Responding to the question as to why she, the Chief Prosecutor, was currently visiting Liberia, she said it was the duty of the court to update every Country having citizen in the court on trial with unfolding events.

She told reporters that the preparation of a special jail house for Mr. Taylor in the United Kingdom was not prejudicial and in no way pre-empts the outcome of the trial. She also clarified that the search for the assets of Mr. Taylor was the work of the Panel of Experts of the United Nations, not the Special Court.

ICC

Thursday, 22 July 2010

## **The ICC marks the Day of International Criminal Justice with affected communities in northern Uganda**

ICC-CPI-20100722-PR563

Consistent with the Court's outreach strategy to expand its reach to the most affected communities, the International Criminal Court's (ICC) Field Outreach Unit marked the Day of International Criminal Justice with the war affected communities of Lukodi village in the Gulu district, of the Acholi sub-region of northern Uganda.

Over 180 members of the community consisting largely of women, youths and children's groups turned up to commemorate the special day on 17 July.

In 2004, over 60 Lukodi residents were attacked and killed at the centre of the village by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels. The residents of the entire village fled to live in an internally displaced people's camp (IDP) for safety. After more than six years they decided to come back to their village to start a new life.

The interactive event was embodied by an ICC presentation, speeches, and dance and play performances by members of the affected community, and concluded with questions and answers sessions. The Field Outreach Unit made a presentation on the mandate and activities of the ICC in Uganda and as a follow-up, provided feedback on the concluded Review Conference of the Rome Statute in Kampala. During May, the communities of Lukodi village had the opportunity to interact face-to-face with the President of the International Criminal Court, Judge Sang-Hyun Song. The President provided responses to their views and concerns in relation to the mandate and operations of the Court in the Uganda situation.

Local council authorities and women and youth leaders of Lukodi village gave tribute to the Court for bringing the activities of the ICC closer to residents. The LC 11 Chairman of Lukodi, Mr Kakanyero addressed the crowd stating, "The ICC is with us and has never forgotten us since we left our village. In addition to giving us information about the Court, you have today also brought the President of the ICC to meet with us directly. We are all here to mark this big day..... We shall work with you to reach others with information on the ICC", he noted.

The International Criminal Court is a permanent international court established to investigate, prosecute and try individuals accused of committing the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, namely the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In December 2003, the Government of Uganda referred the situation in northern Uganda to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. In October 2005, the Court unsealed the warrants of arrests against five top commanders of the Lord's Resistance Army for war crimes and crimes against humanity alleged to have been committed in northern Uganda: Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Dominic Ongwen and Raska Lukwiya. The proceedings against Raska Lukwiya have been terminated by Pre-Trial Chamber II following the confirmation of his death in 2007.

Warrants of arrest have been outstanding for four alleged members of the LRA in the situation in Uganda since July 2005. Since then, the four suspects have remained at large.

*For further information please contact Maria Mabinty Kamara, Field Outreach Co-ordinator for Uganda at +256-772-700655 or Maria.Kamara@icc-cpi.int*



# The Jerusalem Post

Friday, 23 July 2010

## Israel hails 'twisted' UK law change

JONNY PAUL AND HERB KEINON

Photo by: AP



Move to prevent "arrest warrants to make a political statement."

Israeli diplomatic officials applauded the new Conservative British government on Thursday for announcing plans to amend the UK's universal jurisdiction law.

The government of Prime Minister David Cameron is moving on this issue, whereas all the previous Labor government did was talk about it, the officials said.

The British government said the planned change to the law was designed to stop "possible abuse by people trying to obtain arrest warrants for grave crimes on the basis of flimsy evidence to make a political statement or to cause embarrassment."

Announcing plans to bring forward legislation, likely in the new session of Parliament in September, Justice Secretary Kenneth Clarke reiterated the government's commitment to changing the universal jurisdiction legislation while upholding international law.

"Our commitment to our international obligations and to ensuring that there is no impunity for those accused of crimes of universal jurisdiction is unwavering.

"It is important, however, that universal jurisdiction cases should be proceeded within this country only on the basis of solid evidence that is likely to lead to a successful prosecution – otherwise there is a risk of damaging our ability to help in conflict resolution or to pursue a coherent foreign policy," Clarke said.

Diplomatic officials said that Cameron, Clark and Foreign Secretary William Hague deserved credit for moving efforts to change the law from the "theoretical to the operational level."

The change in the law – which currently allows private prosecutions on charges of war crimes to be issued by magistrates in the UK even if the alleged offense was purportedly committed elsewhere and irrespective of nationality – will require the approval of Director of Public Prosecutions Keir Starmer before a warrant or summons can be issued.

"The government has concluded, after careful consideration, that it would be appropriate to require the consent of the director of public prosecutions before an arrest warrant can be issued to a private prosecutor in respect of an offence of universal jurisdiction," Clarke said.

Israeli officials pointed out that this still had to be ratified by the House of Commons, but that it was

unlikely that the government would not be able to pass the legislation since it was likely to get the support of a number of Labor MPs as well.

Still, senior diplomatic officials in Jerusalem said that it was too early to say that the new UK government has a more favorable tone toward Israel.

“Cameron is focused completely on internal issues and the economy,” the officials said. “He is really set on setting things straight economically, so the issue of foreign affairs has not yet been high on the agenda. I can’t say that I’ve seen a change,” a senior official said.

Israeli Ambassador Ron Prosor characterized the move as a “step in the right direction. He said that this was not a British-Israeli issue, and that the abuse of Britain’s universal law was eroding the judicial system in the UK.

“This decision will put the common sense back into the common law,” he said.

Prosor said that the universal jurisdiction did not only prove problematic for Israelis, but also for British and American officers fighting in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

“This is important, and I hope it will help Britain’s involvement in the peace process,” Prosor said.

In a joint statement, Vivian Wineman, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and Mick Davis, chairman of the Jewish Leadership Council’s executive committee, welcomed the decision.

“We welcome this significant step towards the correction of a legal anomaly that has been exploited for the purpose of specific political agendas. The proposed remedy will rightly protect both the principle and practice of universal jurisdiction in serious international crimes, which is something that our community has always supported.

“We look forward to the rapid publication of specific legislation and further details of the legislative vehicle that the government intends to use to deliver its commitment to bring the matter before Parliament at the first opportunity,” the statement read.

On Tuesday, Clarke had said the government was “urgently” considering how to proceed. It is “unsatisfactory” that an arrest warrant can be issued “on the application of a private prosecutor on the basis of evidence that would be insufficient to sustain a prosecution,” the justice secretary said.

Clarke was responding to a question by Conservative MP for Hendon, Matthew Offord, who asked when the law would be changed.

Offord asked how Britain could play a leading role in the diplomatic world if foreign politicians cannot visit the UK without fear of arrest.

“Of course we must enforce properly in respect of war crimes and other matters of universal jurisdiction where proper cases arise, but I agree that it is not in any sense in this country’s interests that people can be arrested upon arrival on a level of evidence that would not remotely sustain a prosecution, which is why we intend to address this matter and to make an announcement in the very near future,” Clarke said.

Pro-Palestinian activists have been eager to exploit the International Criminal Court Act of 2001 and the Criminal Justice Act of 1988 to arrest Israeli officials visiting the UK on charges of war crimes.

Last December, an arrest warrant was issued for opposition leader Tzipi Livni, who was scheduled to speak at a Jewish charity event in London, over her involvement in Operation Cast Lead, when she was foreign minister. She canceled her trip.



In September 2009, an arrest warrant was issued to Defense Minister Ehud Barak, who was in the UK to speak at the Labor Party conference.

In 2006, Gaza Division commander Brig.-Gen. Aviv Kochavi, who was scheduled to study at the Royal College of Defense Studies in London, was warned by an IDF judge that he could be arrested on arrival. He also canceled his trip. Former Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) chief Avi Dichter also canceled a trip in 2007 (when he was public security minister) out of concern that a warrant might be issued for his arrest.

In 2005, Doron Almog, former OC Southern Command, avoided arrest at Heathrow Airport after being warned not to disembark from his EL AL flight as British detectives were waiting to arrest him for allegedly ordering the demolition of Palestinian homes in Gaza in 2002.

Before May's general elections, the Conservatives said they would act speedily to change the law if elected.

After the elections, Hague said he was committed to changing the law, as it was "completely unacceptable" that Israeli officials felt they could not visit.

"This is a country that wants to play a strong role in the Middle East peace process, and for that Israeli leaders and others have to be able to visit the UK. So be in no doubt that we will take action on this, but as part of a coalition, we must discuss with our colleagues how to best to do it," he said then.

Britain's outgoing envoy to Israel, Tom Phillips, spoke with Livni on Thursday and updated her on the developments.

Livni welcomed the move.

"This amendment will bring an end to the horrible and twisted [law] that allows individual political activists to cynically take advantage of the legal system to fight the international struggle against terror," she said.

"The free world must differentiate between real war criminals, who must be brought to justice, and those who fight terrorism against civilians, including the officers and soldiers of the IDF. This is an important step in the right direction."

*Gil Hoffman contributed to this report.*