

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Friday, 23 June 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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New Citizen
Friday, 23 June 2006

"32,000 Pages of Evidence Against Taylor"

- Harpinder Athwal

The Assistant to the
Prosecutor of the Spe-
cial Court for Sierra
Leone, Harpinder
Athwal disclosed at a
press conference held
at the SLENA Conference
room, Lightfoot Boston Street,

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Charles Taylor being escorted to a helicopter

From page 1

Freetown yesterday that the prosecution has compiled 32,000 pages of evidence against the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, who is now standing trial for various offences against humanity.

Harpinder Athwal informed journalists that the Chief Prosecutor had served the evidence to the defence team to allow Charles Taylor's lawyer to go through the evidence after which a date would be set for the trial to commence.

She anticipated the trial to start in January next year.

She further disclosed that witnesses needed in the Charles Taylor trial in The Hague would be there on the stipulated dates as the Special Court would ensure that all witnesses relevant to the trial are given the opportunity to testify in The Hague

Harpinder Athwal said the change in venue, after the removal of Charles Taylor from the Special Court premises in Freetown and transferred to the custody of the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands, cannot affect the trial and that Charles Taylor's rights are guaranteed and that the trial will be fair, adding that the trial will be conducted by professional judges and that jurors will not be present during the trial.

Answering to questions from journalists, Harpinder Athwal said those witnesses who would want to testify in the Charles Taylor trial would be taken to The Hague but that the Court would not be responsible for Charles Taylor's family going to The Hague.

Earlier, Peter Andersen, Acting Chief of Public Affairs and Spokesman

for the Special Court for Sierra Leone said Charles Taylor was transferred to The Hague on Tuesday by an order made by Special Court President, Justice George Gelega-King.

Peter Andersen disclosed that Mr. Taylor was taken by a UN helicopter from the Special Court compound shortly after 9:00 am on Tuesday and was flown to Lungi International Airport, where he was transferred under heavy UN security to a chartered commercial jet which took off at 9:40 am.

Also on the flight were the Special Court's Registrar, Mr. Lovemore Munlo SC, the Chief of Security and the Court's Medical Officer.

While the Taylor trial will take place in a courtroom of the International Criminal Court, it will be a trial of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, as permitted under the Special Court Rules. The headquarters of the Special Court remains in Freetown where three other trials are continuing.

The Prosecutor of the Special Court indicted Charles Taylor on 17 count charge for crimes against humanity and other serious violations of inter-

national humanitarian law.

His indictment was amended to 11 counts on 16th March, 2006. The charges are related to Charles Taylor's alleged backing of the rebel group, RUF (Revolutionary United Front) during the war in Sierra Leone.

The crimes that Charles Taylor is accused of include killings, mutilations, sexual violence, the use of child soldiers, abductions, forced labour and looting.

Since 2003, Charles Taylor had been in exile in Calabar, Nigeria, under an agreement brokered to end the war in Liberia. It was only when the new President-elect of Liberia, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf requested his transfer to Liberia that caused the Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo to agree to surrender Charles Taylor to the Liberian government on 25th March 2006.

Charles Taylor was transferred from Nigeria to Liberia on 29th March 2006 after which soldiers serving in the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL) arrested him and transferred him to Sierra Leone, where he was placed in the custody of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Concord Times
Friday, 23 June 2006

Britain considers **Taylor threat to** **peace**

British Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett after welcoming the arrival in the Netherlands of former Liberian President, Charles Taylor says

Taylor is "a real threat to peace and security in Sierra Leone and the wider region," a press release from the British High

Cont. page 3

Britain considers Taylor threat to peace

From page 1

Commission in Freetown states.

"The Special Court for Sierra Leone and the governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia asked for Taylor's trial to be transferred to The Hague because of security concerns about his continued presence in Freetown," she said adding that the UN Security Council agreed and its unanimous adoption of UN Security

Council Resolution 1688 demonstrates the international community's commitment to see Taylor face justice.

The British Foreign Secretary says by agreeing that subject to Parliament passing the necessary legislation, Britain would allow Taylor to serve his sentence there if convicted given the fact that they played a key role in helping the transfer proceed.

Beckett, however, reaffirmed Taylor will still be tried by the Special Court sitting in The Hague, "I know the Court and its supporters are committed to ensuring that the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia are kept fully informed of the progress of the trial. It is, after all, against them that Taylor is alleged to have committed the serious crimes with which he is charged."

For di People
Friday, 23 June 2006



TAYLOR: the evil that men do lives after them...losing one's soul

CHARLES TAYLOR FLIES TO THE HAGUE TRIAL

HIGH-PROFILE indictee of the UN Special Court for War Crimes, former president of the republic of Liberia, Charles Gankay Taylor was on Tuesday morning at about 9:40 am local time, flown on a chartered plane to The Hague where it is expected he will face trial.

by

SU THORONKA

The news was confirmed by the Public Affairs Unit of the Special Court for Sierra Leone but meanwhile, the trial of the Ruf indictees continues with Major Ganasse, an officer of

the UN military observer team during the disarmament process testifying as prosecution witness. He explained how the observers were abducted, tortured by the rebels and later released.

Major Ganasse said during the disarmament there were 23 military observers in the country and among them

were Lt Colonel JJP Perah Wilezynsky from UK, Lt Colonel JE Mendy from Gambia, Commander Knub Gjellespad from Norway, Major Philashby from UK, Captain Julius from Indonesia, Major Gokul from Nepal and Major

Continued Page 6

TAYLOR FLIES TO THE HAGUE

From Page 4

Salahuedin from Bangladesh. And that on the first day of the disarmament in Makeni on the 17 April 2000, a group of about 30 rebels led by Augustine Gbao entered the disarmament camp.

"These armed combatants jumped from the vehicle and stormed the camp threatening to burn down the camp," he said. Led in evidence by the prosecution counsel, that he knew Gbao during a conducted tour of the township of Makeni when a colleague of his introduced Gbao to him. And that it was reported to him that ten Ruf combatants disarmed on the 27 and 28 April 2000, but that six of the disarmed Ruf fighters reported to Melop for their allowances of \$300 and that they also promised to report the following day after they had been told that they could only receive allowances after undergoing the entire disarmament process.

He said on the following day the six Ruf fighters reported that they were loaded into a vehicle and taken to the demobilization camp but that he was later informed that Gbao had gone to attack the camp. And that on arrival at the camp, he noticed that the camp was surrounded by armed rebels numbering about 30 to 40 with assorted weapons, whilst Gbao, stood by holding a liquor bottle. And that when he approached Gbao and asked him what was the matter, Gbao demanded he should produce the five combatants who have been disarmed together with their weapons and threatening, that he will not move an inch. He said he tried to show reason with Gbao but to no avail and that when he noticed that Gbao was uncompromising, he moved away from him.

Not too long the witness continued, a pink coloured mercedes benz car suddenly arrived in the camp and that when the occupants alighted, he saw Brigadier Morris Kallon who wasted no time in punching one of the military observers, Major Salahuedin. And that Kallon shouted: "We will take you to a location, Whiteman, I will kill you!" he said, adding, that Kallon later went looking for Major Salahuedin who had taken cover and that when he did not see him, he ordered his rebel fighters to arrest him.

He said the Ruf fighters arrested him and that he was beaten and dragged out of the camp and taken to the direction where the benz was parked. That he was pushed into the rear seat of the car and that Kallon told the driver to move.

Major Ganasse said while he was in the car, Kallon held a dagger and told him that he was going to kill him and that while they were at Makump, Kallon ordered his men to open fire at a truck loaded with passengers and that he later did that to a UN Landrover and held the four occupants captives. And that they were all loaded into the benz and that when they reached at a check point towards Makeni, Kallon ordered his men to stop all UN vehicles.

He also disclosed that he was then taken to the Teko barracks where he met one Colonel Jimmy when Kallon instructed him to join Jimmy, and that Kallon immediately walked to the Communication Centre and took up a receiver and reported that the UN peacekeepers had seized all Ruf positions and also ordered all fighters to be alert. After which he said, the seven of them were locked in a small room without food and water. That four of their colleagues while looking for them were also captured and locked in the same room. He said four of them were temporarily released to be shown to two Ruf combatants who were wounded during an exchange of fire between the Ruf and the peacekeepers.

He said they were taken from one room to another and that he was taken to a location where he was ordered to undress and that his hands were tied behind his back. He also said he was later put onboard a Toyota four-runner vehicle and driven towards Matotoka, and at reaching Matotoka, his colleague whispered to him and pointed at Issa Sesay.

"We were transferred into another vehicle to be taken to the farm and Issa said he was ready for any UN attack as he was aware that more UN reinforcement had been sent to Makeni," he said, adding, that the vehicle proceeded to Masingbi where they were transferred into a big truck, and while on it's way to another location, the truck had an accident in which some of his colleagues were severely wounded but that they later arrive in a town called Small Sefadu.

BBC Online

Friday, 23 June 2006

Taylor trial may start next year

The trial of Liberian ex-President Charles Taylor could start in The Hague in January 2007, an official says.

Harpinder Athwal, from the prosecution team at a UN-backed war crimes court, told the BBC that is the date they are currently working towards.

However, she said the date may change, depending on how quickly the defence prepares its case and whether new judges are needed.

Mr Taylor denies 11 war crimes charges, related to Sierra Leone's civil war.

He was transferred to the Netherlands on Tuesday, due to fears that putting him on trial in Sierra Leone could lead to renewed conflict.

Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are trying to rebuild after a decade of interlinked wars, in which Mr Taylor played a central role.

'Creative'

Meanwhile, the chairman of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has told the BBC that he would like Mr Taylor to give "his side of the story" to their hearings.

Jerome Verdier said he did not expect Mr Taylor to appear in person but said that "creative" ways could be found.

He was speaking ahead of the formal launch of the TRC in the Liberian capital, Monrovia.

Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf set up the TRC, rather than trying to bring alleged war criminals to justice - the path chosen by Sierra Leone.

The seven-member commission does not have the power to try cases but will investigate crimes committed between 1979 and 2003, when civil war ended.

After a decade of instability, Mr Taylor launched a rebellion in 1989, before winning elections in 1997.

In February, Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf said it was important that the "truth is told".

Mutilations

Ms Athwal, special assistant for the prosecution at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, said they had handed over 32,000 pages of evidence to Mr Taylor's defence team.



Charles Taylor has pleaded not guilty to charges of war crimes

TAYLOR TIMELINE

1989: Launches rebellion
1991: RUF rebellion starts in Sierra Leone
1995: Peace deal signed
1997: Elected president
1999: Lurd starts rebellion to oust Taylor
June 2003: Arrest warrant issued
August 2003: Steps down, goes into exile in Nigeria
March 2006: Arrested, sent to Sierra Leone

She said that more judges may have to be appointed, if one of the trials currently underway does not finish this year.

If Mr Taylor is convicted, the UK has agreed to host any jail term he may serve.

The Dutch government agreed Mr Taylor's trial could take place in The Hague, as long as he is imprisoned in another country if he was convicted.

The tribunal's chief prosecutor once described Mr Taylor as the third most wanted war crimes suspect in the world.

The trial is due to take place in the facilities of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, but legal officials from the Special Court for Sierra Leone will conduct proceedings.

Mr Taylor is accused of funding Sierra Leone's former rebels, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by selling diamonds on their behalf and buying weapons for them.

The RUF were notorious for mutilating civilians, by hacking off their arms or legs with machetes.

Mr Taylor is the first African former head of state to go on trial at an international war crimes court.



Sierra Leone rebels hacked of civilians' arms and legs

Anadolu News Agency , Washington

Thursday, 22 June 2006

<http://www.zaman.com/?bl=hotnews>

US Satisfied with Hague Trial of Former Liberian Leader Taylor

The United States administration released a statement welcoming the transfer of former Liberian President Charles Taylor to stand trial at the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

This action is an important step towards justice and accountability, and will contribute to stability in West Africa after decades of civil conflict, said the Deputy State Department spokesman Adam Ereli.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor has been transferred to the Netherlands after he was detained by the United Nations (UN) court on war crime charges and instigating a military coup, which led to civil war, against another coup organizer, soldier Samuel Doe.

Taylor has been charged with war crimes committed in Sierra Leone, Liberia's northwest neighbour.

Taylor, 55, has spent the last three years in exile in Nigeria.

UN News

Thursday, 22 June 2006

Justice must not be sacrificed to end conflicts, Security Council told



22 June 2006 – Justice should never be sacrificed by granting amnesty in ending conflicts, the United Nations Legal Counsel told the Security Council today, stating that ending impunity for perpetrators of crimes against humanity is one of the principal evolutions in the culture of the world community and international law over the past 15 years.

Legal Counsel
Nicolas Michel
addresses Council

“Justice and peace should be considered as complementary demands,” Nicolas Michel told an open debate on strengthening international law.

“There can be no lasting peace without justice,” he stressed. “It is not an issue of choosing between peace and justice, but of finding the best way to exercise one with regard to the other, taking into account particular circumstances, without ever sacrificing justice.”

Mr. Michel pointed out that amnesty for international crimes was now considered unacceptable in international practice, citing the recent transfer of former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the Netherlands to stand trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone on charges related to devastating civil wars in West Africa.

“It is now a matter of ensuring that this standard is respected,” the Legal Counsel added.

The question of granting impunity in an effort to restore peace and freedom to countries in conflict has become a major issue in UN human rights forums. In April, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour said the battle against impunity was a vital element for bringing true peace.

“Many continue to argue that undue concentration on human rights jeopardizes the possibility of either concluding a peace agreement in the first place, or of a peace agreement that has been concluded proving durable,” she stressed. “To the contrary, I suggest that human rights are central to and indispensable for both peace and justice.”

Like Mr. Michel today, Ms. Arbour hailed the detention of Mr. Taylor as “a powerful and welcome affirmation of this basic principle.”

The President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the supreme UN judicial body also known as the World Court, was among the approximately 30 speakers who participated in today’s debate.

The Inquirer (Monrovia)

Thursday, 22 June 2006

Ellen Welcomes Taylor's Transfer, Lifting of Sanction on Timber

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, says she welcomes the transfer of the former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor from Sierra Leone to the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

The former Liberian leader was on Tuesday transferred to the Hague from Freetown Sierra Leone, where he was placed in detention since he was extradited from Nigeria on March 29th, this year, to face prosecution on war crimes charges and charges against humanity.

President Sirleaf's Press Secretary, Mr. Cyrus Wleh Badio, who gave the President's position on the transfer of the former Liberian leader during an interview with this paper, said that the holding of the trial of the former Liberian leader in Freetown, could not only have had an adverse effect on Liberia, but Sierra Leone and other countries in the sub-region.

"This government would just want to focus its attention on the development agenda such as creating jobs for our people, creating the necessary conditions that will uplift this country. This government has always felt that a trial of that nature had the potential of distracting this government from what it wants to achieve for its people," he said.

Mr. Badio added, " transferring Mr. Taylor from Freetown to the Hague, is welcome and that this government is hoping that Mr. Taylor will be accorded the due process of law; have full representation; be given all the benefits like any other prisoners who go under those conditions is given so that we can put this whole thing behind us."

He said the general feeling of President Sirleaf is for the whole issue of Mr. Taylor to be put behind Liberians as a people and focus on the development agenda of the sub-region.

Speaking on comments attributing to President Sirleaf that her government is monitoring the security situation in the sub-region, Mr. Badio said that the President meant that there is a need to be on a watch-out because as he put it, the security situation in the region is fragile and any moment, anything could spring up.

In a related development, Mr. Badio said the President also welcome the partial lifting of the UN sanction on timber. He said the news is a welcome development because this would provide job opportunity for Liberians and boost revenue collection.

The Guardian

Friday, 23 June 2006

Taylor's trial may begin in January 2007

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor's trial at The Hague has been tentatively fixed to commence in January next year.

A special assistant for the prosecution at the United Nations (UN)-back special court, Harpinder Athwal, made this known to a news agency on Thursday.

Athwal however said a change may occur in the date, depending on how quickly the defence prepares its cases and whether new judges are needed.

She said they had handed over 32 000 pages of evidence to the defence team of Taylor.

The member of the special court for Sierra Leone further informed that more judges may have to be appointed, if one of the trials currently underway does not finish this year.

Taylor denies 11 war crimes charges, related to Sierra Leone's civil war.

He was transferred to the Netherlands on Tuesday, due to fears that putting him on trial in Sierra Leone could lead to renewed conflict.

Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are trying to rebuild after a decade of interlinked wars, in which Taylor allegedly played a central role.

Meanwhile, the chairman of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Jeome Verdier has told a news agency that he would like the former war lord to give "his side of the story" to their hearings.

Verdier said he did not expect Taylor to appear in person but said that "creative" ways could be found.

He was speaking ahead of the formal launch of the TRC in the Liberian capital, Monrovia.

Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf set up the TRC, rather than trying to bring alleged war criminals to justice, the path chosen by Sierra Leone.

The seven-member commission does not have the power to try cases but will investigate crimes committed between 1979 and 2003, when the civil war ended.

After a decade of instability, Taylor launched a rebellion in 1989, before winning elections in 1997.

In February, Johnson-Sirleaf said it was important that the "truth is told".

If Taylor is convicted, the United Kingdom (UK) has agreed to host any jail term he may serve.

The Dutch government agreed Taylor's trial could take place in The Hague, as long as he is imprisoned in another country, if he was convicted.

The tribunal's chief prosecutor once described Taylor as the third most wanted war crimes suspect in the world.

The trial is due to take place in the facilities of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, but legal officials from the

Special Court for Sierra Leone will conduct proceedings.

Taylor is accused of funding Sierra Leone's former rebels, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by selling diamonds on their behalf and buying weapons for them.

The RUF were notorious for mutilating civilians, by hacking off their arms or legs with machetes.

Taylor is the first African former head of state to go on trial at an international war crimes court.

Meanwhile, Liberians hailed ex-warlord Taylor's transfer for trial at The Hague as offering their war-ravaged country a fresh start and serving as a warning to other African leaders to govern wisely.

Taylor was flown from a UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone on Tuesday to stand trial in The Hague on war crimes charges stemming from his role in Sierra Leone's brutal civil war after fears his presence in the region could trigger unrest.

Taylor began Liberia's bloody civil war in 1989 and fighting continued sporadically for 14 years, even after he secured election as president in 1997 with the unofficial slogan "You killed my ma, you killed my pa. I'll vote for you."

But the 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity he faces relate to neighbouring Sierra Leone's parallel 1990s civil war, in which he traded diamonds and guns with rebels whose drugged child soldiers killed, raped and sliced off the hands and feet of men, women and children.

Independent Online

Friday, 23 June 2006

Prosecutors seek life term for Rwandan chief

Arusha, Tanzania - Prosecutors at the United Nations genocide tribunal for Rwanda on Thursday sought a life sentence for a former military academy chief accused of genocide in the country's 1994 mass slaughter.

They said Tharcisse Muvunyi deserved the maximum sentence that can be handed down by the International Criminal Court for Rwanda (ICTR) for killing Tutsis in several localities in the southern town of Butare and for failing to stop rampant raping.

Prosecutor Adeboyejo Adesola asked "that the accused be convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for the remainder of his life".

"He went from commune to commune inciting people to kill Tutsis," Adesola added in his closing remarks.

Muvunyi, who was arrested in Britain in 2000, pleaded not guilty to genocide, complicity and incitement to commit genocide, rape and inhuman and degrading treatment of people when his case opened early last year.

Although the former head of the School of Military Officers (ESO) is not directly facing charges of rape, he is accused of abetting the crime.

"Tutsi girls were removed from Butare Hospital and were raped by ESO soldiers," Adesola said. "He could hear the cries."

The defence is expected to present its closing remarks before the judges give their verdict.

The ICTR, based in the north Tanzanian city of Arusha, was set up by the United Nations to try key suspects in the genocide.

The tribunal so far has convicted 25 people and acquitted three others since it began operations in 1997. - Sapa-AFP

Independent Online

Friday, 23 June 2006

Liberian leader hopes TRC will bring closure

By Michael Adler

Monrovia - President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf officially launched Liberia's truth commission on Thursday, saying a full accounting of atrocities committed during nearly a quarter century of conflict will set the stage for long-term peace.

Johnson-Sirleaf's inauguration in January formally ended a transitional period meant to ease Liberia toward peace after years of strife and war that began in 1979.

"No matter how successful our efforts to establish good governance, the future and the stability of our country will remain in doubt unless we face ourselves as a people, unless we tell the truth of what we did to ourselves and to our nation," she said.

More than 250 000 Liberians are believed to have died in violence marked by its extreme brutality and rampant sexual violence against women.

"There will not be lasting peace nor would there be unity and reconciliation if the truth of our crisis remains the subject of gossip, innuendos, speculations, assumptions and hearsay," she said.

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation is modelled on that launched in South Africa in 1995 after the end of apartheid, with the goal of documenting human rights abuses and removing their lingering effects. The South Africa commission investigated political crimes committed by all sides during decades of white-minority rule.

Johnson-Sirleaf invested the Liberian commission's seven heads with their powers in February and staff have already been hired, but Thursday's ceremony marked the official beginning of the council's work, officials said.

There was no word on when the first public hearings would be held or the first statements taken.

Johnson-Sirleaf said the entire process was meant to help knit the country back together and she implored Liberia's three million people to participate.

"If we fail to take this courageous step at this early period of our nation's renewal, we will only continue to create an environment for the promotion of collective guilt unfair treatment, uncorroborated accounts of the past and false impression of goodness," she warned.

The commission will not have the power to try cases.

A similar commission effort was launched in Sierra Leone, which is struggling to recover from its own decade-long civil war that began in 1991.

The commission's mandate is to "investigate gross human rights violations and violations of international laws, as well as abuses that occurred during the war, including massacres, sexual violations, murders, extra-judicial killings and economic crimes", according to the act that created

it.

In 1979, the government increased the price of rice - a staple food crop in a deeply impoverished nation - sparking massive riots in which dozens of people were killed by security forces.

The following year, President William Tolbert was ousted in a 1980 coup by illiterate Master Sergeant Samuel Doe, who ordered the country's Cabinet members tied to poles on a Monrovia beach and executed. Johnson-Sirleaf, who was finance minister at the time, was jailed but escaped death.

The 1980 coup marked the start of nearly 25 years of instability from which the country founded by freed American slaves in 1847 is struggling to recover.

Rebels led by warlord Charles Taylor invaded in 1989, plunging the country into civil war.

A total of 15 000 United Nations peacekeepers are providing security in Liberia in accordance with a 2003 peace deal that ended fighting and arranged the transitional administration succeeded by Johnson-Sirleaf's government. Taylor awaits trial in the Netherlands on war-crimes charges for allegedly supporting the Sierra Leone rebels.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 22 June 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

VOA 22 June 2006

Liberia Instates the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

By James Butty, Washington, DC

Thursday, Liberia officially inaugurates its Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which will inspect allegations of human rights abuses linked to the country's fourteen year civil war. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf described it as Liberia's hope of overcoming its traumatic past. Lawyer Jerome Verdier is head of the nine-member Commission. From the Liberian capital, Monrovia, he spoke with Voice of America English to Africa reporter James Butty about his expectations.

BBC Last Updated: Thursday, 22 June 2006, 10:55 GMT 11:55 UK

Taylor trial may start next year

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International Clips on West Africa

Sierra Leone Signs Small Arms Convention

By Abdul Karim Koroma

Freetown, Jun 21, 2006 (Concord Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --A Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms (SLANSA) release Tuesday stated that the government of Sierra Leone has finally signed the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The organization called on **Liberia** and Guinea to support the promotion of the Convention, as it is the surest way to regional peace and stability.

Local Media - Newspapers

Price On Suspected Killers' Head

(Daily Observer, The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst and Heritage)

- Acting Inspector-General of Police Al Karlay told a news conference in Monrovia yesterday that the police had launched a manhunt for armed robbers who killed 17-year-old Jestina Kekula on Sunday in Paynesville, a suburb of Monrovia notorious for armed robberies. Col. Karlay announced a reward of US\$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrators. He called for the cooperation of the public in apprehending the suspects.

University President Rejects Faculty's Claim of Corruption

(The Inquirer, Heritage and The Informer)

- Addressing a press conference in Monrovia yesterday, University of Liberia (UL) President Dr. Al Hassan Conteh dismissed the UL Faculty Association (ULFA) claim that the UL administration was corrupt. Dr. Conteh said that failure by ULFA and its President Clifford Young to substantiate their claims would cause the administration to resort to a lawsuit.

President Welcomes Predecessor's Transfer to The Hague

(The Inquirer)

- Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio told *The Inquirer* yesterday that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had welcomed the transfer of former President Charles Taylor from Sierra Leone to The Hague, Netherlands for trial. The President had feared that the holding of the trial in Sierra Leone might have caused instability in the sub-region, according to Mr. Badio.

School in Honor of UN Secretary-General Proposed

(The News and The Analyst)

- The director of Research and Development at the Senate, McCarthy Weh, has called for the government to honor UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan by establishing the Kofi Annan School of Peace and Development Studies as graduate program at the University of Liberia.
- In a letter to the committees on Peace, Education and Foreign Relations in both Houses of the National Legislature, Mr. Weh said his call comes against the background of Mr. Annan's leadership ability and his tremendous contribution to efforts in Liberia and the world at large.

Human Rights Watch Says Taylor's Trial Must Be Accessible to West Africans

(Daily Observer)

- With the transfer of former President Taylor to The Hague, the Special Court for Sierra Leone and its donors must ensure that his trial remains accessible to the people of West Africa, the international group, Human Rights Watch said yesterday.
- Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program Director Richard Dicker said that with Taylor in The Hague, there is a real risk that his trial will feel less meaningful to the people most affected by the crimes.

U.S. Government to Terminate Liberian Refugee Program

(The News)

- The U.S. Department of State has reportedly said that it will terminate the resettlement program for Liberian refugees on 30 September.
- The report said the decision was based on the recent democratic elections held in Liberia and President Johnson-Sirleaf's plea to other Liberians to return home and help in rebuilding the country.

Truth Commission to Be Launched Today

(The Informer and Liberian Express)

- The official launching of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is scheduled to take place in Monrovia today.

Former UN Envoy Advocates for War Crimes Court in Liberia

(The Monitor)

- Speaking in a BBC news program this week, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Liberia Jacques Paul Klein reiterated the need to establish a war crimes court in Liberia. He stressed that justice is needed in Liberia and there has to be a court set up in the country to prosecute those who committed atrocities against Liberians.

Ex-Fighters Request Control of Rubber Plantation for Two Years

(Liberian Express)

- Ex-combatants occupying the Guthrie Rubber Plantation in Bomi County are proposing to control the plantation for two years before turning it over to the government.
- Leaders of the ex-combatant told *Liberian Express* that the request forms part of a deal which they intend to put forward for their peaceful departure from the plantation. The ex-combatants indicated that the government's approval of their request would compensate for their suffering during the civil crisis.

Local Media – Radio Veritas

University President to Submit to Audit

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Senate Staffer Wants UN Secretary-General Honored

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Human Rights Group Says Taylor's Trial Must Be Accessible to West Africans

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Advocate for War Crimes Court for Liberia to Petition Kofi Annan

- A local group, the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crimes Court in Liberia said that it would petition UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to support its call for such a war crimes court in Liberia. The group said that its members would parade through the streets of Monrovia wearing black T-shirts and carrying 15 caskets representing the 15 counties of Liberia and symbolizing funeral rites for victims of the Liberian civil war.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Government and UNMIL Search for Talented Liberians

- In Monrovia yesterday, the Government of Liberia and UNMIL, in Monrovia yesterday, launched a national talent hunt to spotlight singers and comedians who are under the age of 20 years. UNMIL Community Outreach Officer Kingsley Ighobor said that the competition, code-named "A Star Is Born", would attract talented Liberian singers and comedians.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

UNHCR Chief Calls for Donor Support to Reduce Poverty in Liberia

- Speaking at the launch of a global campaign to assist Liberian children in Sinje, Grand Cape Mount County, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres called on donor countries to support programs which would strengthen the peace in post-conflict countries.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Police Call on Public to Set Up Community Watch Teams

- Liberia National Police Acting Inspector-General Al Karlay has stressed the need for the public to establish community watch teams to help reduce the growing crime rate. In an interview yesterday, Col. Karlay also called for harsher sentences for convicted criminals.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Lawmakers Ready to Petition UN Secretary-General

- Speaking to Radio Veritas yesterday, Representative Thomas Fallah said that lawmakers were planning to petition UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to lift the travel ban on House of Representatives Speaker Edwin Snowe. Representative Fallah said that when the ban is lifted, Speaker Snowe would engage in productive activities to enhance the work of the National Legislature.

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Taylor's Defence Counsel Protests His Transfer to The Hague

- Detained former President Charles Taylor's defence counsel, Karim Kahn, has protested the manner in which his client was transferred to The Hague, noting that he only heard of the transfer on CNN. Mr. Kahn told a Star Radio correspondent in Freetown that authorities of the Special Court for Sierra Leone did not inform him that the transfer of Mr. Taylor had been planned for Tuesday

Special Court Supplement

BBC Focus on Africa – Interview with Special Court Registrar Lovemore Munlo, SC
Wednesday, 21 June 2006

A tape of the interview was provided by the BBC. The first question was not included. Photo: (SCSL) The Registrar boards the special flight for The Hague on Tuesday.

MR MUNLO: We cannot dictate on them that they should start now. The law gives them the right to have sufficient time to prepare for their defence. The ball is in the court of the Defence to say when they will finish studying the case the Prosecutor has against them. Because you see, when you are in this Court the element of surprise is not allowed. The accused must know what case he has to answer.



Well what you're saying indirectly is the Defence can stall the trial indefinitely.

MR MUNLO: They cannot stall the trial in any way. That they can put their legitimate concerns which are [recommended] by law, to be met – and the Prosecutor has to meet them.

Now that the trial has been moved to The Hague, isn't it going to be very expensive? I mean, you're going to have to be bringing witnesses back and forth from Sierra Leone, maybe to Liberia, to The Hague and then back to those countries.

MR MUNLO: We will prepare a budget for the case on how much we think it will cost. Obviously it will not be the same amount we would have used if the case was in Freetown.

And do you have any idea how much this is going to cost?

MR MUNLO: Roughly, I think it would cost about \$23 million

\$23 million. Who's going to pay for it?

MR MUNLO: Well, the group of interested states and the [all] member states who make voluntary contributions to the operations of the Court. You know we are funded on voluntary contributions.

What about the Defence fees? Who pays for them?

MR MUNLO: The Defence fees, first of all, the defendant has a right to choose which lawyer he wants to defend him. He must have the money to do that. But where he has no money to do it, we have a list of Defence counsel who have contracts with us. He can choose from the list someone who can defend him, in which case we will pay ourselves.

We know that while Mr Taylor was being held in Sierra Leone he had access to visitors, and he was also watching the World Cup in Sierra Leone. Will he be allowed to watch the World Cup in The Hague?

MR MUNLO: He was not the only one who was watching the World Cup. All the detainees are allowed recreation. You must remember that they are not guilty yet. They are presumed innocent until the case is proved against them.