

**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:

Thursday, 24 January 2008

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Taylor's Trial: Special Court Prosecutor Briefs UN

Feature

By Olusegun Ogundeji

The Special Court for Sierra Leone's (SCSL) prosecutor Steven Rapp Tuesday, at a press conference, briefed the United Nations UN at its headquarters on SCSL's proceedings in the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Rapp said excellent progress had been made in the trial so far and SCSL is "well on track" to conclude the presentation of prosecution and defence evidence within a 12-to-18-month time frame.

He explained that prosecutorial evidence had been brought on 7 January and seven witnesses including a key "insider" who had testified to the former Liberian leader's links to crimes committed in neighbouring Sierra Leone had appeared in the trial so far.

Mr. Taylor is charged with 11 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, notably, organizing militias known for slicing off people's limbs during Sierra Leone's civil war, which ended in 2003.

Rapp was the guest at the UN Headquarters for Tuesday January 22 though he was in the United States to meet with the Special Court's Management Committee and get involved in its fundraising efforts.

It was gathered that the Canadian Government announced a \$5 million contribution the same day - which is more than three times any of previous annual contribution from the country. It was also revealed that the United States Congress had passed an omnibus budget bill signed by the President on 26 December which included a \$12.5 million contribution.

When asked in the course of the briefing for his hope about the trial's result, he said: "Justice." In a release from UN's Department of Public Information, Rapp was paraphrased as saying that the Office of the Prosecutor hoped to show - through the presentation of evidence supporting the 11 counts of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the overarching crime of terrorism - that Mr. Taylor had been engaged in a campaign of terror against civilians. Specific crimes included murder, extermination, collective punishment, rape, sexual slavery, mutilation, amputation, pillage, the recruitment of children under the age of 15 and their use in active hostilities. The case was an historic one and to tie Mr. Taylor to such crimes was a great challenge to surmount, but the Prosecutor's Office sought to do that nonetheless.

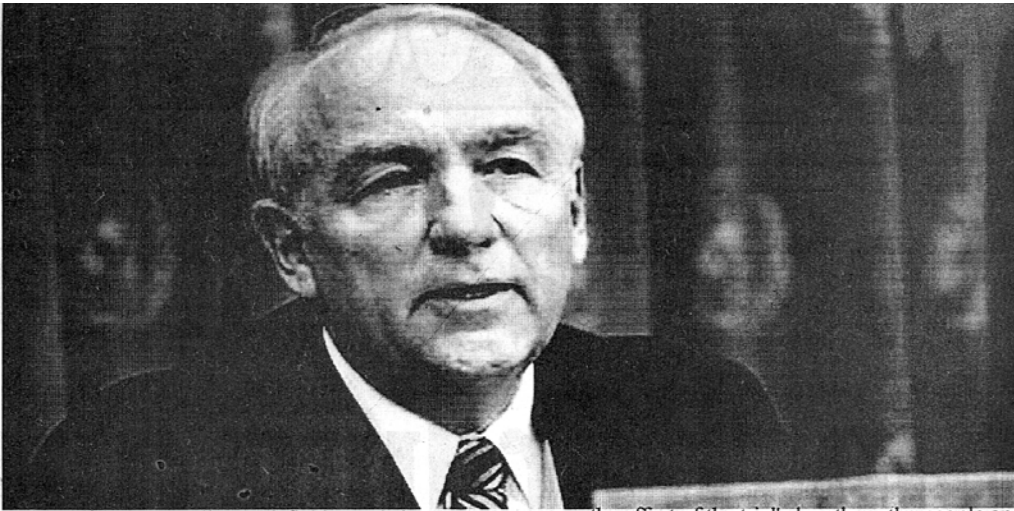
As for when a decision might be rendered, Mr. Rapp said the judges had indicated they would have a judgement at first instance by January 2010, presuming that evidence was concluded by July 2009. He said both sides had the right of appeal and the appellate court would need six months after final judgement to render a decision on any appeal.

To achieve the result, Rapp said there are challenges though which included ensuring that the trial was conducted expeditiously; that justice was done and that it was seen to be done - a factor that necessitated Mr. Taylor's transfer to The Hague from West Africa.

The role diamonds played in the decade-long civil war was also mentioned in the briefing. The Prosecutor said there was evidence that Mr. Taylor had intended to invade Sierra Leone out of a desire to control its diamond resources. That evidence was strengthened by the fact that diamonds had been instrumental in the war, and that keeping the diamond fields had become a key factor in continuing the conflict.

And regarding the significance of testimony by an expert on blood diamonds, and the possibility of corporate interests being prosecuted for complicity, he said his Office viewed diamonds as an important motivation for the continuation of the war and atrocities in Sierra Leone.

To corroborate his standpoint, he said witnesses would testify that Mr. Taylor had given orders in 1998 to seize



and hold the Kono diamond fields, and documents described the delivery of 1,800 diamonds to him on one occasion, 200-300 of which had then been used to purchase material. Whether diamonds were the primary motivation for the start of the war in 1991 was subject to debate, but they had become a major motivation for its continuation, as well as a means to prolong it, he added.

Rapp said it was very challenging to prove that someone not directly involved on the ground was responsible when asked whether people in Antwerp, for example, could be held accountable for purchasing such diamonds. He stressed that it requires proving that actual knowledge had been obtained, and that with it, action had been taken to increase the flow of diamonds mined through slave labour, for example.

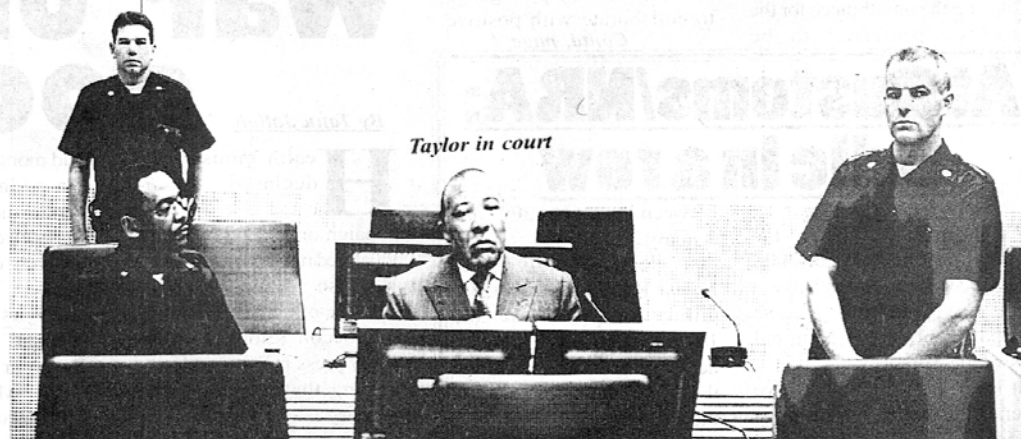
He however said that there were prospects at the national level for prosecuting those involved in the economies of Liberia and the conflict citing the case of a Dutchman who had famously been prosecuted for allegedly receiving concessionary rights to half the timber

gauge the effect of the trial's length on the people and the media, he said to date, attention is greater in Liberia judging from press accounts in both countries.

He also disclosed that an independent poll of 10,000 Sierra Leone residents last year showed that 90 per cent of them had heard about the Court's work and 80 per cent believed it was a force for stability and peace. He added that newly-elected President Ernest Bai Koroma and Justice Minister Abdul Serry Kamal understood the role that the Court had played in the peaceful transition of power in Sierra Leone.

Journalists from Liberia and Sierra Leone had been sent to The Hague under the auspices of both the BBC World Service Trust and the Search for Common Ground.

On the prosecution of those responsible for mass amputations, Rapp said the Prosecutor's Office was prepared to assist Sierra Leone in national prosecutions even though none had taken place because of the amnesty that was given in 1999. He said given that Sierra Leone was the first country to have an



and hardwoods in Liberia from Mr. Taylor, with money paid to the Government going straight to Mr. Taylor or being used in the purchase of arms.

On the perception of the people, he admits that both the prosecution and defence recognized that the outreach programme was very important for the Court's success. He also claimed that the public viewed it as a success though prosecutions had been limited to those charged with the greatest responsibility. "Everything will be done to make sure people know what's happening in this case," the Prosecutor said, detailing several historic trials stemming from Sierra Leone's war, including the trial of the three surviving leaders of the rebel Revolutionary United Front.

Juxtaposing media from Sierra Leone and Liberia to

internationalized court, as well as a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, there was a perception that lower-level people would be dealt with in the Commission process more so as the Special Court's mandate was to go after those with the greatest responsibility.

Though the trial has been described as an eye opener for West Africans, its implications on international law and international trial process is being debated in several quarters. A peep into the central discussion forum of the website set up purposely for the trial of Charles Taylor, most of the responses submitted seem to be concerned about why other leaders in neighbouring West African countries who, allegedly assisted rebels to enter Liberia and commit crimes, are not being prosecuted.

The Pool
Thursday, 24 January 2008

SLPP MP Wants Special Court to Arrest Ghadaffi

By John Mansaray
SLPP Member of Parliament from Kenema District, Hon. Dr. Brima M. Kamanda has said that if the Special Court for Sierra Leone fails to indict the Leader of Libya's Great Jamahiriya

Colonel Muammar Ghadaffi it would have demonstrated "selective justice" and therefore called on the Court to "act fast and bring Ghadaffi to book". According to the Member of Parliament,

the indictment of people believed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone to "bear the greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity and human rights abuses in Sierra Leone "have been

selective and orchestrated by local political dynamics and western influence to target special people for special trial by the court." "A lot of Sierra Leoneans who suffered
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*President
Ghadaffi:
Friend of
Sierra Leone*

SLPP MP Wants Special Court to Arrest Ghaddafi

From Front Page

atrocities of the war including myself are still concerned this selective approach to justice by the Special Court, and would want to get clarification from the court on its position," Hon. Kamanda pointed out.

The SLPP MP was speaking last Friday, January 18 at a one-day round table discussion in Committee Room No. 1 in the House of Parliament on the implementation of the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the presence of the Special Court Registrar.

According to him, during the war in Sierra Leone which started in 1991 and only ended in 2002, it became clear to most Sierra Leoneans that the war was being fuelled not only by Charles Taylor, "but other people with wealth and perhaps influence in Africa through whom Charles Taylor operated," he charged, and mentioned President Ghaddafi as

one such people.

He further pointed out that it was also very clear to most Sierra Leoneans that some of their compatriots were recruited by President Gaddafi to study his "Green Book" only to return "as trained guerilla fighters who unleashed mayhem and terror to u n i m a g i n a b l e proportions on the innocent people of this country," Hon.

Kamanda stated, adding, "But this does not seem to interest the Special Court, even after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) had made it clear that President Gaddafi of Libya greatly supported the rebels activities in the country," Hon. Kamanda further charged.

He therefore questioned "is Gaddafi too big for the Special Court for Sierra Leone?"

Hon. Kamanda went on question the Special Court's mission of bringing to trial "those who bear the greatest responsibility" as

"ambiguous and consequential" noting that the meaning of the mission statement is opaque to the ordinary citizens because according to him, "its actions and outcome are predetermined against selected few who may not have had favour from the powers behind the formation of the Special Court for Sierra Leone." The Special Court Registrar however, did not make any comments during the session relating to the Court's activities nor in response to Hon. Kamanda's assertions.

However, Chief of Public Affairs at the Special Court for Sierra Leone Peter Andersen told Pool yesterday that the Special Court is operating on a specific mandate which according to him stresses bringing to trial "those bearing the greatest responsibility" in the war in Sierra Leone spanning from 1991 to 2002. According to him, as far as the Court is concerned it is working judiciously within that mandate.

The Globe
Saturday, 12 January 2008

Charles Taylor's war crimes trial resumes

The trial of Charles Taylor, the former President of the Republic of Liberia is reported to have resumed in the Hague, six months after it was adjourned following a chaotic opening session.

First to testify against the former Liberian president is an international expert in the trade in blood diamonds.

The 59 year old former president is accused of terrorising the people of Sierra Leone by orchestrating atrocities committed by militias known for hacking off their victims' limbs during the country's 10-year civil war that ended in 2003.

Charles Taylor faces 11 charges including murder, rape, enslavement and conscripting child soldiers. According to the prosecution, Taylor, the first African head of state to face an international tribunal,

desired to get his hands on diamonds from Sierra Leone which was one of the root causes of his alleged involvement in the war. The first witness Ian Smillie, an expert on conflict or blood diamonds, is one of 144 to be called to testify

team does not deny the atrocities happened in Sierra Leone and has argued that calling victims is an unnecessary appeal to the emotions of judges.

Chief prosecutor at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra

the victims to pre-

sent some testimony in a live sense," Rapp said, "so as not to drain the case of the human element completely."

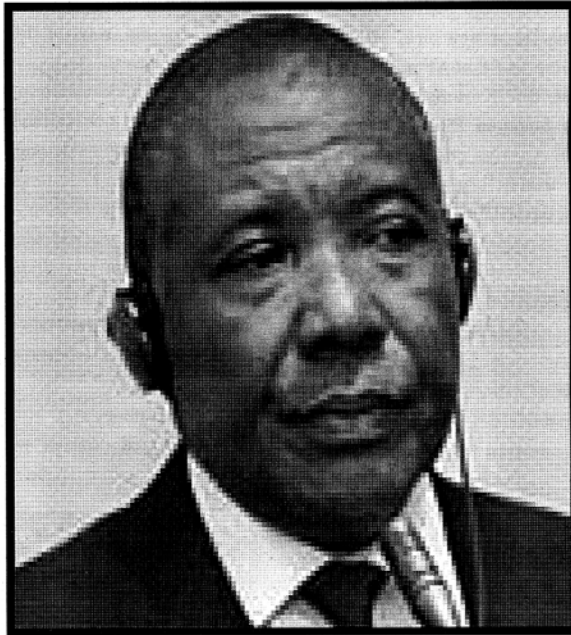
Rapp has said he summoned 77 victims or other witnesses to establish that crimes had occurred in each

A former member of Taylor's inner circle will also testify about how the former Liberian president allegedly controlled and encouraged militias in neighboring Sierra Le-

Nearly 60 witnesses will be called to draw links between Taylor and the militias and most are expected to do so anonymously for fear of reprisals by Taylor supporters. The trial is being held in The Hague for fear that staging it in the Sierra Leone capital, Freetown, could spark fresh unrest there.

However, the courtroom action is being beamed to Freetown and members of the public have been invited to watch at the court's headquarters.

Charles Taylor has denied all the allegations levied against him.



Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor in the Hague

against Charles Taylor. The second witness is slated to be a victim of the militias. Taylor's defence team

Stephen Rapp, said he has an obligation to highlight the suffering of victims. He said: "We owe it to

of several regions mentioned in the indictment. He said he expects only 10 of the victims to appear

BBC World Service Trust

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Report on Yeaten's Involvement

By Joseph Cheeseman, in The Hague

CHEESEMAN: A former major of the Armed Forces of Liberia testifying against Charles Taylor says he was the commander of a special unit constituted by Benjamin Yeaten to work with the RUF in Sierra Leone. Abu Keita said the special unit was called "Scorpion". He also identified several links between the RUF and former President Charles Taylor. Keita told the Court, after his appointment, Yeaten arranged a meeting with the then President Taylor at the White Flower in Monrovia. He said the meeting at Taylor's residence was attended by Sam Bockarie, Eddie Kanneh, the RUF diamond liaison; Musa Cisse, Benjamin Yeaten, and himself. The Prosecutor's insider witness speaks Liberian English so he's speaking through an interpreter.

KEITA: And then Charles Taylor appeared, then we all rose, then he told us to sit down. Then Sam Bockarie said, "I am on my way going, sir. I have come to pay my respects sir". Then he asked Sam Bockarie to take care of the RUF, and then Sam Bockarie said he would do everything possible, and then he said that if there was any problems, Benjamin Yeaten and Musa Cisse should be immediately contacted. So from there we walked out of the building, sir. And Sam Bockarie left, sir.

CHEESEMAN: Keita, the Prosecution's second insider witness, said he took up his assignment in the RUF territory with three bodyguards with arms including a pistol, AK-47, and boxes of ammunition. The accused former Liberian President Charles Taylor drank a cup of water when the Prosecution called for a photo allegedly taken in the RUF territory by the witness, Abu Keita, and another fighter and another fighter named "Jungle" and one Colonel Marza. Keita told the Court he was resident in a Sierra Leonean border town called Buedu in Kailahun District along with Issa Sesay and Sam Bockarie. He recalled that Sam Bockarie delivered some ammunitions allegedly supplied by former President Charles Taylor.

KEITA: He brought 300 boxes of ammunition. That was the first time he said he had a huge quantity. So he shot in the air, he shot in the air.

PROSECUTOR: Now you mentioned manpower. Can you explain what you mean when you said that Sam Bockarie had with him manpower?

KEITA: He came with men from Liberia. It was a mixture of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans, about 150 men. I was expecting that they were the men that Benjamin Yeaten was talking about whom he said I was going to command, but the men were later taken to Bunumbu, the RUF training camp.

PROSECUTOR: You know where the convoy started from?

KEITA: The men were taken from Camp [Nama]

PROSECUTOR: The ammunition, you know where the ammunition came from?

KEITA: They said the ammunition was from Monrovia, sir.

CHEESEMAN: Keita, the former Scorpion Unit Commander in the RUF territory mentioned an incident about 500 ECOMOG peacekeepers who were captured by the RUF on the order of Charles Taylor.

KEITA: And we saw Marza and Jungle. They came for Issa Sesay in Makeni. They drove to the border. They crossed into Liberia. When Issa Sesay came back, he brought a satellite phone. He called a meeting in Makeni at the military police headquarter. So he spoke to all of the commanders. He said Charles Taylor said we should release the peacekeepers over to him in Liberia. And then now, we never had any alternative but for us to release the peacekeepers. So we took the peacekeepers. We drove them to the border and then they were handed over Benjamin Yeatan, and then Joe [Toa] again, in Foya.

PROSECUTOR: When Issa Sesay came back from Liberia, you said he brought a satellite phone. Did he indicate where he got the satellite phone?

KEITA: He said the satellite phone was issued to him Charles Taylor. And then with the satellite phone he came with 50 boxes of ammunition again.

CHEESEMAN: Before the conclusion of his direct examination, Keita told the Court Benjamin Yeaten killed Sam Bockarie, Bockarie's wife, mother and four children. The witness said he was told by Sam Bockarie's brother that Yeaten killed Bockarie and his family in order to destroy evidence before the sitting of the Special Court of Sierra Leone.

This is Joseph Cheeseman reporting for the BBC World Service Trust and Search for Common Ground, from The Hague.

[Transcribed by the Office of Press and Public Affairs]

Print Version

A Former Major of the Armed Forces of Liberia testifying against Charles Taylor has named Benjamin Yeaten as the killer of Sam Bokarie, Bokarie's mother, wife and four children.

Abu Keita said he was told by one of Bokarie's brother that Yeaten took the action in order to destroy evidence before the sitting of the Special Court.

Keita said he was the commander of a special unit constituted by Benjamin Yeaten to work with the RUF in Sierra Leone.

Abu Keita said the special unit was called Scorpion. He also identified several links between the RUF and Former President Charles Taylor.

Keita told the court after his appointment, Yeaten arranged a meeting with the then President Taylor at the White Flower in Monrovia.

He said the meeting at Taylor's residence was attended by Sam Bokarie, Eddie Kanneh, RUF diamond liaison, Musa Cisse, Benjamin Yeaten and himself. Keita the prosecution insider witness speaks Liberian English so he's speaking through an interpreter.

Keita, the prosecution second insider witness, said he took up his assignment in the RUF territory with three body guards with some arms including a pistol, AK-47 and boxes of ammunition.

The accused Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor drank a cup of water when the prosecution called for a photograph taken by the witness, Abu Keita, another fighter named Jungle and one Colonel Marza allegedly taken in RUF Territory.

Keita told the court he was resident in a Sierra Leonean border town called Buedu, Kailahun District along with Issa Sesay and Sam Bokarie. He recalled that Sam Bokarie delivered some ammunitions allegedly supplied by Former President Taylor.

Keita, the former Scorpion Unit Commander in the RUF territory mentioned an incident where about 500 ECOMOG Peace Keepers were captured by the RUF, but later released on the orders of Charles Taylor.

He named several centers where diamonds were mined in RUF Territory. Keita quoted some of the laws which governed the RUF Territory as no one was allowed to raise chickens, and dogs, no hanging clothes outside, no one should carry foreign currency. Sierra Leonean Currency in the possession of any one should not exceed \$50-thousand Leones.

allAfrica.com

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Taylor Trial Hears Evidence of History, Child Soldiers

The Hague

The monitors of former President Charles Taylor's trial report for www.charlestaylortrial.org.

Dr. Ellis Describes the History of Conflict and Political Uprising in Liberia; Father Chema Details his Work with Child Soldiers.

Theresa Doherty, a judge from Northern Ireland, has taken over as presiding judge from Julia Sebutinde. The position of presiding judge rotates each year. Following this announcement, Defense Counsel Terry Munyard continued his cross-examination of Prosecution witness Dr. Stephen Ellis.

* Defense counsel questioned Dr. Ellis about Pan-Africanism. Dr. Ellis explained that the concept has existed as a modern political force since the 1940s. This is the notion that Africa should be unified; the concept of Pan-Africanism as a political program was advanced by former President Nkrumah of Ghana. However, many African leaders did not support Nkrumah in realizing that goal.

* Dr. Ellis testified that he has heard different accounts regarding the composition of the military training camps in Libya. There were not just people from Liberia and Sierra Leone. Dr. Ellis explained that he actually met a young man from Mauritius who was at the camps. He also recounted that Colonel Gaddafi was seen as having a revolutionary vision that led him to support a number of anti-American, anti-Western movements. As a result, many people came from around Africa to his camps in Libya. When asked, Dr. Ellis agreed that he had heard of Ali Kabbah, who some have said originally set up the RUF, being present at these camps.

* Defense counsel questioned Dr. Ellis on the NPFL incursion into Liberia in 1989. Dr. Ellis explained that there were two components: (1) the friends and supporters of Thomas Quiwonkpa who organized themselves in Libya and Burkina Fasso and (2) the political opponents of Liberian President Samuel Doe, who included members of the Liberian educated class, among them Charles Taylor. After the elections of 1985 many of the latter group left the country for the United States. Charles Taylor, an official in the Doe government, also came to the United States where he was imprisoned at the request of the Liberian government on charges of embezzlement. In 1985 he escaped from prison, which may explain the reason for his return to West-Africa.

* Dr. Ellis described the elements supporting the insurgency against Samuel Doe. In 1990, ECOWAS gathered together a military force to deploy in support of Doe in Liberia. At this stage, the NPFL consisted of a core of trained rebels and thousands of armed civilians without training. Charles Taylor claimed leadership of the NPFL. Rivals disappeared, presumably murdered. By May 1990, Samuel Doe only controlled Monrovia. The NPFL was spreading and thousands of people were massacred. By mid-1990, Charles Taylor had eliminated his chief rivals in the NPFL. As the acknowledged NPFL leader, he established the NPRAG government. His government controlled most of Liberia outside Monrovia and Charles Taylor began referring to himself president.

* Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report described the first phase of the war in Sierra Leone as lasting from 1991-1994 and being dominated by the NPFL. Dr. Ellis explained that, according to the TRC Report, the war in Sierra Leone was largely started by NPFL fighters under Charles Taylor's command. The first step in the SL war was a radio broadcast by Revolutionary United Front leader Foday Sankoh, who demanded that President Momoh quit office and establish a more democratic government.

Sankoh had been in a Sierra Leonean jail for opposing former Sierra Leonean President Siaka Stevens. He served some years in prison and was an embittered man struggling to make a living. At that time, Sierra Leone was run by the All Peoples Congress (APC). Stevens had arranged for Momoh, a General at the time, to succeed him. The APC was unpopular and Momoh was seen as a weak President.

* In 1991-1992, Liberia was relatively stable while the war in Sierra Leone got underway. ULIMO was fighting against Charles Taylor in Liberia. ECOMOG controlled Monrovia. When Charles Taylor's forces attempted to take Monrovia through "Operation Octopus" in 1992, ECOMOG replied with the means at its disposal, including targeting civilians and arming factions opposed to the NPFL. At that time, there was a transitional government in Monrovia headed by Amos Sawyer. This government was supported by Nigeria and received support from the Liberian political class. The original ECOMOG intervention in Liberia was controversial. Some ECOWAS countries opposed the intervention because they were close to the NPFL. Efforts were made to reach a compromise, but many countries did not want Charles Taylor to become president of Liberia. General Babangida of Nigeria opposed any peace accord that made Charles Taylor the president of Liberia.

* Dr. Ellis reported that, by 1993, the climate in Liberia was changing. General Babangida had left office in Nigeria and was replaced by General Abacha. General Abacha was less opposed to Charles Taylor. At that time, several West African governments realized the Liberian war was ruinous to the region and agreed that a political settlement with Charles Taylor had to be reached. The key political settlement was at Abuja in 1995, which Charles Taylor attended. After Abuja, Charles Taylor was able to enter Monrovia. From 1995-1997, there was a period when the armed factions continued to fight in the countryside, while the leaders of the factions sat together in Monrovia.

* The events of April 1996 are very important. The Liberian National Transitional Government was a unity government of warlords, including Charles Taylor. Fighting erupted in Monrovia on 6 April 1996. It was the bloodiest battle of the war. Charles Taylor and Alhaji Kromah tried to take power by force. Smaller factions banded together in self-defense. ECOMOG faced confusion and the various factions supported themselves by purchasing arms and ammunition from ECOMOG.

* After the events of April 1996, there was acceptance by governments in West Africa and the United States that Charles Taylor would win elections. He had support in some parts of the country and led the largest faction. The hope of the international community and many Liberians was that Charles Taylor would use his new position to consolidate peace. However, that did not occur. In December 1997, a close Charles Taylor associate, Sam Dokie, was murdered. Dr. Ellis testified that he was in Liberia at the time, and people thought, "If he's killing his own friends, what is he going to do with everyone else?" In September 1998 there was heavy fighting in Monrovia and opponents of Taylor were shot.

* Charles Taylor's NPRAG government included several foreigners and leaders from the different armed forces. Charles Taylor maintained a number of different armed and security units armed by rival commanders. His security included Kukoi Samboyan and Yanks Smart, both from the Gambia. They were Vice President and Ambassador to Libya, respectively. Given the important role of Libya in arming Charles Taylor's government, Smart held an important security position.

* Dr. Ellis testified that, in 1997, Charles Taylor's government lacked an efficient bureaucracy. Under Taylor, titles and government departments existed, but they were "hollow shells". For example, a Ministry of Mines existed, but all minerals were controlled by Charles Taylor. Charles Taylor also reorganized the processing of revenues received from the shipping registry. Money was diverted to purchase arms instead of going to the Liberian treasury.

* Dr. Ellis explained that according to Sierra Leone's TRC, the war can be understood in three phases, and that in the first phase, lasting until 1994, the NPFL were primary perpetrators. The TRC report does acknowledge an evolution in the relationship between the NPFL and RUF, but sees the NPFL as

remaining a key player. Defense counsel suggested that the NPFL was not involved with the RUF in Sierra Leone from 1993-1997, and Dr. Ellis disagreed. He explained that there were continuing relations between members of the NPFL and the RUF. The intensity of the relationship changed and ULIMO control of the border area made contact more difficult. This created a physical barrier but contact did not cease. There was a military wedge between the two organizations.

* Dr. Ellis also testified about diamond smuggling and enterprise in Sierra Leone. He stated that smuggling of diamonds from Sierra Leone to Liberia was not a new development, and that the control of the diamond industry in Sierra Leone became an objective for many, including Taylor. ECOMOG played a complex role in the diamond business. It is clear that members of ECOMOG developed interest in the diamond business. In 1995, this was complicated by the arrival of South African mercenaries, Executive Outcomes, who worked for the government of Sierra Leone, and other companies dealing in diamonds. Executive Outcomes and ECOMOG were on the same side. Some ECOMOG individuals smuggled diamonds for personal gain. Conversely, Executive Outcomes had a formal arrangement with diamond companies.

* Defense counsel questioned Dr. Ellis with regard to whether the program of mass amputations started as the AFRC and RUF were retreating from Freetown in 1999. Dr. Ellis disagreed and recounted his trip in May-June 1998 where he met amputees who were their victims. He reported that there was a clear plan and, from the beginning of the Freetown invasion, there were amputations. Some amputees even reported that they were amputated by people who were part of a "Cut-Hand Unit".

* In 1999, West African countries were trying to reach an agreement among themselves on a way to move forward. The agreement on cease fire in Sierra Leone was established in May 1999. The President of Sierra Leone, Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah, and U.S. envoy Jesse Jackson met with RUF leader Foday Sankoh under the auspices of President Eyadema of Togo. The most significant actors behind the July 1999 Lome Peace Accord were Charles Taylor and Rev. Jesse Jackson. As part of the arrangements for Lome, the Liberian government provided a guesthouse for the RUF leadership in a very public way. Following this agreement, Sankoh and Sam Bockarie had a falling out, as Bockarie wanted to delay disarmament.

* The ten months following the Lome Peace Accord marked the high point of Charles Taylor's strategic influence in West Africa. International political circles were shocked about RUF being given a role in government at Lome. There were also factional divisions within the RUF. By common consent, the judgment of Jesse Jackson was "lamentable". He referred to Sankoh as the Nelson Mandela of Sierra Leone. Many felt that Tejan-Kabbah was forced into the agreement. As a result of Lome, Sankoh became the top diamond official in Sierra Leone. This agreement meant that there was diplomatic confirmation of the RUF's importance in Sierra Leone. There were intense factional conflicts that Jesse Jackson and Charles Taylor were attempting to control.

* After the Lome Peace Accord of July 1999, the UK and US governments identified Charles Taylor as a key factor behind the RUF. Because the UK had expended substantial capital in stabilizing Sierra Leone, it intervened in May 2000 when UN peacekeepers were taken hostage. The US government became more involved for different reasons. The TRC concluded that from 2000 onwards, the RUF was in "terminal decline" due to the arrival of UK troops and the arrest of Foday Sankoh, both in May 2000.

Defense counsel, Terry Munyard, concluded his cross-examination of Dr. Ellis: Immediately following, Prosecutor Mohamed Bangura, commenced his re-examination of Dr. Ellis. The highlights from his re-examination are as follows:

* Liberian legislation in the 1940s allowed for forced labor in Liberia. There was a distinction made between the coastal counties and hinterlands. In 1963 and 1964, the hinterland territories were brought into the joint state. The regulations on forced labor ended then and no longer applied by the start of the

Liberian civil war. Dr. Ellis stated that he had no knowledge of such legislation on the books in Sierra Leone in 1991.

* When asked whether the well-being of civilians had improved under Charles Taylor's presidency starting in 1997, Dr. Ellis responded that it was hard to answer. Liberians had suffered greatly during the war. The population patterns changed as large numbers of rural Liberians moved to Monrovia and people fled as refugees. As a result, it is impossible to say whether the population was better off under Taylor or Doe.

* Dr. Ellis also discussed the small numbers of individuals going to Libya for ideological or military training, some sponsored by the Libyan government. These individuals include those who were involved in the start of the war in Liberia. Two documents were given to him by a senior NPFL member that included lists of people trained in Libya before 1989. By 2000, many of them were dead. The survivors were key Taylor allies, including Benjamin Yeaten who received training in Libya and was a confidante of Charles Taylor. Under Charles Taylor, he became the Director of the Special Security Services. Dr. Ellis further explained that the murder of Taylor associate Sam Dokie took place in December 1997. Dokie was last seen alive in the custody of Benjamin Yeaten, and it appeared that Yeaten was responsible for the murder.

Prosecutor Shyamala Alagendra introduced the next prosecution witness, José Maria Caballero, known as Father Chema. Father Chema is originally from Spain but now lives in Sierra Leone. He was sent to Sierra Leone in 1991 to work on issues of justice, peace and human rights. In April 1999 he started a program involving child soldiers with the support of UNICEF. He worked at St. Michael's Lodge from April 1999 to March 2002 and treated 3,025 children. At least 62% were child soldiers. The first group arrived in April 1999. Most of the children ranged in age from 12 to 15. Many of the children were "camp followers" and the girls had been "sex slaves," used by the fighters "as wives". The youngest girl Father Chema remembered meeting had been kidnapped at age 7 or 8, and reported being abused by an RUF commander as a "bush wife" until she became pregnant. Father Chema recalled that most of the child soldiers were Sierra Leonean and some were from Liberia. The witness also discussed a document used to register the children. This document recorded family background, the child's name, nickname as a fighter, nationality, tribe, languages, schools, last address, landmarks to identify their village location, information on relatives, wishes of the child if the family was located, where the child had been abducted, and where the fighting force moved with the child. Father Chema also described the typical history of a child soldier: Following the abduction of the child, they were forced to carry looted items from their village to the fighters' camps. They were divided among the commanders and some were selected for training as fighters. The training was called "American track" and included an obstacle course where live fire was dispensed above their heads. They learned how to use weapons and lay ambushes. The RUF told them that the government had stolen all the riches of Sierra Leone, that they were fighting for free education and a better country. At the end of the training, they were taken to the juju man where they were anointed with a liquid to make them invisible to enemies or impervious to bullets. After they killed their first victim, they returned to the juju man with something from the victim, often a body part. The children were trained to believe that these items protected them. Children were also trained to use AK-47s and RPG guns. After this training, they were sent back to their villages to kill their parents and to burn the harvest of the village. The children described their assignments to Father Chema. Father Chema explained that they were used as fighters to attack villages, for food-finding missions, as spies, and as bodyguards for the big commanders. The children were armed with AK-47s, RPGs and guns. They also reported being given drugs before attacks. These drugs came from helicopters that came to their bases along with weapons. Other children reported walking to the Liberian border to exchange looted goods and diamonds for drugs and weapons. The examination of Father Chema will resume on Monday, January 21, 2008. Court will resume at 9:30 a.m.

The NEWS (Monrovia)

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Prosecution's Witness Reveals Albert Karpeh's Death

The trial of ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor is continuing at The Hague with prosecution's witness Abu Keita revealing the killing of former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) Albert Karpeh during the regime of slain Liberian President Samuel Doe.

The witness told the prosecuting and defense attorneys that Lt. Gen. Karpeh founded the Liberians United Defense Force (LUDF) which fought against the RUF. However, Gen. Karpeh was assassinated in Kenema, Sierra Leone, the witness said.

The witness also explained the rise of Alhaji Kromah as leader of ULIMO when the LUDF collapsed.

The witness swears on the Koran to tell the truth.

Through a series of questions from Prosecutor Nick Koumjian, he relates the following:

Wit: My name is Abu Keita. I was born in Zorzor, Lofa County. I grew up in Grand Cape Mount County. I'm a Mandingo. I went to school until the first grade. I was a member of the AFL. I joined the AFL in 1990. The AFL is the Armed Forces of Liberia. I was 17 years old at the time. I was trained by the AFL in Bomi Hills, the 6th Infantry Battalion.

My first operation, they took us to Nimba County, where we attacked Ganta and Karnplay. I was fighting against the NPFL. We fought until we realized we couldn't make it, so we retreated to Sierra Leone - to Daru Barracks. This was in 1990. In Daru, we were disarmed by the Sierra Leonean army. I joined the LUDF (Liberians United Defense Force) in Sierra Leone. It was founded by our leader, Albert Karpeh, to fight against the RUF, which was attacking Sierra Leone. The LUDF received weapons from the Sierra Leonean government. We fought against the RUF in Sierra Leone. At first we attacked Gbima behind Daru Barracks. Then they took us to Golahun Tonkia near Zimmi, close to the Liberian border.

LUDF became ULIMO. Our leader was assassinated in Kenema. LUDF changed to ULIMO and Alhaji Kromah became the leader. ULIMO split into ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J. Roosevelt Johnson led ULIMO-J. Alhaji Kromah led ULIMO-K. I was a member of ULIMO-K. Members of ULIMO-K were of all tribes. The leader was Mandingo, so there were more Mandingos in ULIMO-K, but there were all tribes. I fought in a battle in Monrovia

Defense objects that it's not clear when all of this happened. Judge Doherty agrees.

Pros: When did the battle in Monrovia occur?

Wit: It was 1995. ULIMO split in 1994 in Bomi Hills. The battle in Monrovia occurred on April 6, 1995. At that time there was a transitional government. Roosevelt killed another Krahn man. Taylor and Alhaji Kromah said Roosevelt Johnson must be arrested. We fought against him. We joined forces with the NPFL. I remained a member of ULIMO-K until we were disarmed in 1996. In the ULIMO-K, I was a General, the deputy chief of staff. I was the second-in-command in the military structure. I reported to my commander who was Jungo Gibba. In the AFL, the highest rank I had was Private.

Pros: How did you advance so quickly to become a General in ULIMO-K?

Wit: I was a private soldier in the LUDF until we crossed into Liberia. When ULIMO split, I was a front-line commander. That's why I was promoted. I won battles and got promoted. I was the first to cross into Bong County. At disarmament in 1996, Alhaji Kromah ordered me to disarm - he ordered all of ULIMO to disarm. There was an interim government at the time, led by Ruth Sando Perry.

Judge Doherty adjourned the proceedings until today at which time witness Keita will continue his testimony.

Star Radio (Liberia)

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Former AFL Officer testifies against Taylor

Written by Wellington Geevon Smith

A former Major of the Armed Forces of Liberia has named Benjamin Yeaten as the killer of Sam Bokarie, Bokarie's mother, wife and four children.

Abu Keita said he was told by one of Bokarie's brother that Yeaten took the action in order to destroy evidence before the sitting of the Special Court.

Testifying against Charles Taylor, Keita said he was the commander of a special unit constituted by Benjamin Yeaten to work with the RUF in Sierra Leone.

Keita said the special unit was called Scorpion and identified several links between the RUF and former President Taylor.

Keita told the court after his appointment, Yeaten arranged a meeting with President Taylor at the White Flower in Monrovia.

He said the meeting at Taylor's residence was also attended by Sam Bokarie, Eddie Kanneh, RUF diamond liaison and Musa Cisse.

Keita said he took up his assignment in the RUF territory with three body guards with some arms including a pistol, AK-47 and boxes of ammunition.

Former President Taylor drank a cup of water when the prosecution called for a photograph taken by the witness.

On the photograph allegedly taken in the RUF Territory were Abu Keita, another fighter named Jungle and one Colonel Marza.

Keita told the court he was resident in a Sierra Leonean border town called Buedu, Kailahun District along with Issa Sesay and Sam Bokarie.

Back in Liberia, family members of the first Liberian to testify against former President Charles Taylor in The Hague have reported threat on their lives.

A brother of Vamuyan Sheriff told Star Radio unknown persons have constantly attacked their home, throwing stones and raining insults since the testimony.

According to Vamba Sheriff the latest incident occurred on Tuesday night around one to two in the morning.

Mr. Sheriff said the attackers who claimed to be supporters of Taylor threw stones and dropped a leaflet threatening to burn down their house and kill them.

He said the family is currently living in fear and has reported the incident to the police seeking protection from government and the international community.

The police public affairs office could not confirm the reports, saying it has not received the information.

Charlestaylortrial.org

Thursday, 24 January 2008

Cross-examination of prosecution witness Abu Keita continues;

Defense asserts that Keita wanted to overthrow Taylor government in 1998

Posted by Webmaster on January 24, 2008

Court is in session.

Prosecutor Nick Koumjian requests that in future, questions regarding family members of witnesses be heard in closed session. The prosecution is concerned that public testimony that identifies witnesses' family members could intimidate future witnesses. Some prosecution witnesses are concerned about this. Defense counsel Morris Anyah states: the prosecution has the option to apply for protective measures for witnesses. When these measures are waived, as they've been for Abu Keita, there should be no restrictions on questioning so that the accused's right to confront his accusers is not curtailed. Judge Doherty: that's not what prosecution is requesting - just that some relevant questions be heard in closed session. Defense says in that case it has no objection to this procedure. Judges are conferring. Presiding Judge Doherty: the court will consider each application for a private session as it arises.

Defense counsel Morris Anyah resumes his cross-examination of prosecution witness Abu Keita:

Def: I was reading yesterday from a set of documents. This document is your previous statement to the prosecution from June 30, 2003. You were asked by investigator Corinne Dufka what happened after the elections. You said everybody began to go back by their own way because Kromah fled to Guinea, and "some of us don't have the means to go to Guinea. I don't have the means to go to Guinea" Do you recall saying this?

Wit: No.

Def: You deny you didn't wish to go to Guinea with Alhaji Kromah after the elections?

Wit: No.

Def: Are you admitting it then that you wished to go to Guinea?

Wit: No.

Def: After the elections, you lost your appointment given under Ruth Perry?

Wit: Yes.

Def: So you had to move from Lofa to Monrovia and reside with your Uncle, Mohamed Keita?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Taylor was inaugurated as president in August 1997 and he sought to bring former adversaries into his government?

Wit: Yes.

Def: There was an atmosphere of reconciliation? Taylor was trying to form an inclusive government including ULIMO?

Wit: Yes.

Def: One of the former ULIMO-K, Varmuyan Sherif joined his government?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You were called to report to Camp Suffering?

Wit: Yes.

Def: This is a military barracks that is in the direction of Roberts International airport in Monrovia?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Are you sure the name of that camp isn't Camp Schieffelin?

Wit: That's the camp.

Def: So within a year, you went from being a major general in ULIMO-K back into the Liberian armed forces?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Your rank when you returned was Major?

Wit: Yes.

Def: It's fair to say you weren't pleased with the direction of your life at the time?

Wit: No.

Def: Despite being in the army at the rank of Major after being a Major General in ULIMO, you were satisfied with your station in life?

Wit: Yes, I was satisfied.

Def: Within a few months, you started having meetings with Roosevelt Johnson?

Wit: No, it was not an ULIMO meeting. It was for reconciliation with the Krahn.

Def: Did you meet Johnson?

Wit: I want you to specify the question. Roosevelt Johnson was a minister in Taylor's government.

Def: Did you attend meetings with Johnson.

Wit: Yes.

Def: On January 1, 1998?

Wit: Yes.

Def: At Roosevelt's house?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Other Mandingos and Krahns were there?

Wit: Yes.

Def: That was the first of a series of meetings you held in the course of 1998 with Roosevelt Johnson?

Wit: Are you talking about the January meeting or a series of meetings?

Def: You met more than once with Johnson in 1998?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Others who attended were Dolleh?

Wit: No.

Def: You deny that Dolleh attended a meeting with you and Johnson in 1998?

Wit: I don't know that person.

Def: Do you know a man named Dolleh who worked in Gyude Bryant's transitional government from 2003-2006?

Wit: Yes. That's Dolleh. He wasn't in the meeting with Johnson.

Def: Was Arma Yulu present at your meetings with Johnson?

Wit: No.

Def: Was Arma Yulu present at your meetings with Johnson in 1998?

Wit: No.

Def: Do you know someone named Madison Wion?

Wit: I know the name.

Def: He was in the meetings with Johnson?

Wit: No.

Def: Was Barbor Aruna present in your meetings with Johnson?

Wit: Yes.

Def: I put to you that the meeting you had with Johnson was to plan the overthrow of Taylor's government. True or false?

Wit: False.

Def: In July 1998 you and the others had a coup-planning meeting with Johnson. True or false?

Wit: False.

Def: In the meetings you agreed who would get which position after a coup, and that you would be commanding general of the AFL. True or false?

Wit: False.

Def: At the meeting it was decided that Dolleh would be Deputy Chief of Staff after the coup. True or false?

Wit: False.

Def: You were arrested in September 1998?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Shortly after a disturbance on Camp Johnson Road?

Wit: Yes.

Def: One reason for your arrest was that the authorities felt you were always around Roosevelt Johnson?

Wit: I told you I went to Johnson.

Def: The authorities felt you were always around Johnson?

Judge Doherty: He wouldn't know what the authorities felt. It's an unfair question.

Def: You often met with Johnson to plot the overthrow of Taylor. True or false?

Wit: False.

Def: You were told one of the reasons for your arrest is you were suspected of plotting a coup attempt with Johnson in 1998?

Wit: I never knew about a coup attempt.

Def: They thought you were part of a coup attempt?

Wit: I never heard of a coup. They arrested me because they saw me at Roosevelt Johnson's house.

Def: (Refers to a document) This is from your statement to the prosecution on June 30, 2003: After that fracas, I was arrested because they said I was with ULIMO-K and they used to see me around Johnson. I told them I had a right to visit Johnson because he was a minister. The SSU arrested me on suspicion of cooperating with that operation. You told the prosecution that you were suspected of cooperating with Johnson in fracas in September 1998?

Prosecution objects: To put "fracas" in context, more from the statement should be read to describe the incident on Camp Johnson Road. Judge Doherty agrees.

Def: What happened to Joe Wally on September 11, 1998?

Wit: It was September 18. They said Wally was with Roosevelt Johnson, so he should be arrested.

Def: When you spoke with OTP in 2003, you said this happened on September 11, 1998.

Wit: It was September 18.

Def: (reading from previous statement) You were asked by Corinne Dufka, how long you served under Col. Tarnue. You said you were in that position until September 11, 1998. Do you remember giving those responses?

Wit: That date is not correct. It was the 18th.

Def: Can you tell us why you believe you were arrested in September 1998?

Wit: They said I was visiting Roosevelt Johnson.

Def: Another reason you were arrested is because when fighting broke out, you - with the AFL - refused to fight against Roosevelt Johnson?

Wit: They never called the AFL. They called the SSU and others who could take part.

Def: You were called?

Wit: Who called me?

Def: You said people were called to undertake an operation?

Wit: I don't remember that.

Def: (referring to a document) These are notes from your statement to the prosecution on July 16-17, 2007. You said in July of last year: In September 1998, witness was arrested and accused for not fighting in a battle against CT forces. Do you recall saying this?

Wit: Yes.

Def: So one of the reasons you were arrested is you refused to fight against Roosevelt Johnson's troops?

Wit: Yes.

Def: When you were arrested, one of the people who visited you in Saw Beach Prison was Varmuyan Sherif?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Sherif said you should cooperate with the Taylor government?

Wit: Yes.

Def: This was one former ULIMO-K soldier telling another to cooperate with Taylor's government?

Wit: Yes.

Def: This was one Mandingo man telling another to cooperate?

Wit: Yes.

Def: The reason he told you to cooperate is that you didn't like the fact that Taylor was president?

Wit: No.

Def: You told us yesterday that Varmuyan Sherif released you from prison?

Wit: Yes.

Def: In the past you said it was Papay Kuyateh, didn't you?

Wit: No.

Def: (referring to document) You told the prosecution: I was brought out of prison by Papay Kuyate. He took me to Varmuyan Sherif's place. That's what you said to Ms. Dufka in 2003?

Wit: No.

Def: Yesterday you said it was Sherif who took you Musa Cisse's place?

Wit: Yes.

Def: In 2003 you told Ms. Dufka it was Papay Kuyate who took you Musa Cisse's place?

Wit: No.

Def: Papay Kuyate was one of the people who took you there?

Wit: No.

Def: (refers to same document from 2003) You said: From Congo Town, they took me to Musa Cisse. When you say "they" there, you're referring to Kuyate and Sherif?

Wit: No, only Sherif.

Def: Yesterday you said you met Yeaten at Cisse's place?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Was that the first time you met Yeaten?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Yeaten said you would be going on assignment to Sierra Leone?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Yeaten told you you would be transferred from the Ministry of Defense to the SSS?

Wit: No. He never told me I would be transferred to the SSS.

Def: (refers to document) According to prosecution notes from your February 2003 interview, you told them: A few weeks after the September 1998 attempted coup by members of ULIMO-J, Yeaten summoned Abu. During this meeting, Yeaten told Abu he was to be transferred to the SSS under Yeaten's command. That's what you told the prosecution in 2003?

Wit: No.

Def: (reading) Yeaten said Taylor ordered Abu be sent to SL to work with Mosquito. Yeaten wanted me to work with the RUF. Did you make this statement?

Wit: That's true.

Def: Yeaten said you'd be sent as a special representative from Liberia to Sierra Leone?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You said there was another meeting at Yeaten's house later that day and that Sam Bockarie was present?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Yeaten or Bockarie said what you were going to do in SL was in the interests of the W. African sub-region, and that you were going to be given a stand-by force called the Scorpion Unit?

Wit: Yes.

Def: They said the purpose was to have a force that could come in behind an enemy if Liberia were attacked?

Wit: Yes.

Def: That was the first time you met Bockarie?

Wit: Yes.

Def: From Yeaten's house you went to the Boulevard Hotel, where you met Ibrahim Bah?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Bockarie was also there?

Wit: Yes.

Def: was that the first time you met Bah?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You heard Bockarie and Bah discussing how to buy diamonds from the RUF?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Later you went to the Kadija Hotel, where Bockarie often stayed?

Wit: Yes.

Def: He showed you diamonds there?

Wit: Not there. It was at the Boulevard Hotel.

Def: He showed you diamonds there?

Wit: I saw a diamond.

Def: You went to White Flower that same day for the first time?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You said that Yeaten, Eddie Kanneh, Musa Cisse, SB Rogers and yourself were there?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You said Taylor arrived and a meeting was held?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Was that the first time you met Taylor?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Bockarie wanted to pay his respects to Taylor, and Taylor said he would assist the RUF?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You said Taylor told Bockarie to maintain the RUF in the absence of Sankoh?

Wit: Yes.

Def: So in one day, you met for the first time Yeaten, Bockarie, Bah and Taylor?

Wit: Yes.

Def: (a series of questions and individual answers) You want us to believe that at your first meeting with Bah, he was discussing diamond transactions with the RUF? That Taylor discussed helping the RUF in your presence for the first time? Bockarie showed you diamonds on the first day you met him?

Wit: Yes (to all).

Def: They were sending you on an important mission?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You were not able to read or write?

Wit: Yes.

Def: If I told you that White Flower was not opened until Jan 1999, would I be mistaken?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You're sure that in September 1998, White Flower had been completely constructed?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Are you aware its construction started in 1997?

Wit: I don't know when they started.

Def: Are you aware in September of 1998 Taylor was living near the German embassy?

Wit: No.

Def: Are you aware of a public ceremony in Jan 1999, dedicating the opening of White Flower?

Wit: No.

Def: When you met with prosecutors in Feb 2003, at no time you mentioned to them that you met Charles Taylor on the same you met Yeaten?

Wit: The same day I saw the president is the same day I saw Bockarie and Yeaten.

Def: But you never told the OTP that you met the president of your country on that day in September 1998?

Wit: No.

Def: I put to you that when you met with the OTP in February 2003 you didn't mention meeting with the president of your country on the same day you met Yeaten.

Wit: I told them.

Def: If they didn't write it down, it would be their error?

Wit: Yes.

Def: In your meeting with OTP in June 2003, you didn't mention meeting Taylor that same day you met Bah, Yeaten and Bockarie?

Wit: I told them.

Def: In Feb 2005 when you met with the OTP, you did not say you met Taylor in September 1998.

Wit: I told them.

Def: When did you leave Monrovia for Buedu?

Wit: A couple of weeks after September 18, 1998.

Def: October 1998?

Wit: It was September 1998.

Def: How long were you in SL for before you left for Ghana?

Wit: Throughout the arrest of the peacekeepers and disarmament.

Def: I left the RUF at the end of 2002.

Wit: Which month?

Def: I can't recall.

Wit: Once you left, did you come back to Monrovia often?

Def: No.

Wit: You never came back to meet Yeaten in Monrovia?

Def: You never met him?

Wit: At the border.

Def: You're sure you never came back to Monrovia to meet with Yeaten?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Between 1998-2002, did you ever meet Yeaten in Monrovia?

Wit: No.

Def: Did you meet Taylor in Monrovia during that time?

Wit: No.

Def: (refers to a document) This is the statement from February 2003. You told the prosecution: Abu said he didn't have much to do with the transfer of diamonds, although he'd been present on three occasions in 1999 with Mosquito when he brought diamonds to Taylor. That's what you said in 2003?

Wit: No.

Def: (refers to a document) In July 2007 you told the prosecution: In 2000 the witness was at White Flower along with Joe Tuah and Yeaten to retrieve ammunition for use in Guinea. Charles Taylor spoke to the witness. This is what you told the OTP in July 2007, yes or no?

Wit: The date is not correct, but that is my statement.

Def: (refers to a document) In June 2003 you told Corinne Dufka of the OTP: I went there. Issa and Taylor sat in front of me and discussed in his house in Congo Town. That happened in 2000, after the fighting with UNAMSIL. That's what you told the OTP in June 2003?

Wit: No.

Def: When I asked whether you'd returned to Monrovia to meet with Yeaten or Taylor, you were lying?

Wit: No.

Def: I want to ask about the meetings you described yesterday before you left for Sierra Leone. You told us at Musa Cisse's place, Cisse, Sherif, Papay Kuyate, Pa Morie and Yeaten were present?

Wit: Yes.

Def: If you add yourself to that, that would make 6?

Wit: Yes.

Def: A week later at Yeaten's house, present were Yeaten, Kanneh, SBY, Rashid, Montgomery and Sherif were present?

Wit: Yes.

Def: You didn't tell us yesterday that Joe Tuah was present there?

Wit: He was present.

Def: You did not tell us yesterday?

Wit: I told you.

Def: You didn't say somebody named Foday was present?

Wit: That's Bockarie's bodyguard. I don't remember that.

Def: You didn't say a person named Jaharo was present?

Wit: No.

Def: You didn't say Papay Kuyate was present?

Wit: No.

Def: In the past, have you said Kuyate was present at Yeaten's house?

Wit: No.

Def: Was Sheku Suwape Koroma at Yeaten's house when you met?

Wit: Yes.

Def: But yesterday you didn't tell us that?

Wit: No.

Def: (refers to document) In your interview with Ms. Dufka in June 2003, you said: I only remember that Varmuyan Sherif, Papay Kuyate, Musa Cisse and Mosquito were there. Sheku Suwape Koroma was there. Yeaten was there because it was his house. Nobody else was there. On that occasion, you said there were 7 people there, including yourself.

Wit: Not correct.

Def: Yesterday you said Eddie Kanneh, SBY Rogers, Montgomery and Rashid were there?

Wit: Yes.

Def: When you spoke with the OTP in 2003 you didn't mention them?

Wit: Maybe they made an error.

Def: Was your memory of 1998 better in 2003 than it is today?

Wit: My memory is better today.

Def: Yesterday you told us when you left Liberia to go to Buedu, you left with Zigzag Mazahar, Jungle, Sampson and Mike Lama?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Zigzag was Yeaten's deputy?

Wit: Bodyguard.

Def: Sampson was the driver?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Who was Jungle?

Wit: He was also assigned to Yeaten.

Def: You said that in Voinjama you encountered Bockarie?

Wit: Yes.

Def: Have you told the OTP previously that you left Monrovia together with Bockarie?

Wit: No.

Def: Are you sure of that?

Wit: Yes.

Def: (refers to document) This is the February 2003 interview with the OTP. It says: Within the next few days, Abu left for Sierra Leone with Mosquito. Isn't it true that you told the OTP in February 2003 that you left Monrovia together with Bockarie?

Wit: No.

Judge Doherty says it is time to adjourn for the mid-morning break. The session will continue at 11:30. Our account will continue at 12:00.

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Day 14 of witness testimony

Posted by Webmaster on January 24, 2008

The trial of Charles Taylor before Trial Chamber II of the Special Court for Sierra Leone continues this morning, as defense counsel Morris Anyah continues his cross-examination of prosecution witness Abu Keita. The morning session began at 9:30, but with the half-hour delay in video and audio to the media center here at the facilities of the International Criminal Court, our account will begin at 10:00 (9:00 in Sierra Leone and Liberia). This is not a transcript. We cannot guarantee completeness or accuracy, although we endeavor to be as complete and accurate as possible.

The Analyst

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Drama at TRC

Day nine of the TRC Public Hearings was yesterday shaken with drama between the TRC Chairman, Cllr. Jerome Verdier and Commissioner Pearl Brown Bull.

The hard feelings erupted into a dramatic scene when a witness, James Paul took the stand in defense of his statement collected by the TRC statement takers prior to the on going public hearings at the Centennial Pavilion located downtown, Monrovia.



• Cllr. Jerome Verdier

During cross examination of witness James Paul by commissioners, Cllr. Pearl Brown-Bull after a briefly introducing herself, chose to publicly read a communication that was in her hand but later forwarded it to the witness to confirm whether the signature on the official statement form of the TRC, was that of the TRC Chairman, Cllr. Jerome Verdier.

Upon getting the yes answer, she requested for the statement and instructed witness Paul to proceed with answering to the cross examination of the commissioners if he chose to do so in accordance with his liberty.

With the instruction to the witness, it appeared that Chairman Verdier's action did not go down well with commissioner, Cllr. Pearl Brown-Bull. She asked in a fashion with compound-complex questions lasting for about ten minutes. She asked repeated questions including those that had earlier been asked by other commissioners.

Cllr. Bull's persistent questioning of the witness was like the approach of a court proceeding. The irritated witness finally responded angrily by saying, "the information is before you, just take it as it is".

But Cllr. Pearl Brown-Bull's continuous bombardment of the witness annoyed Cllr. Jerome Verdier, who warned her against the style and manner of questioning the witness. He termed the questioning as keeping the witness, James Paul under pressure.

According to some insiders at the Commission, the action yesterday was Brown-Bull's second offense against the Commission since the start of public hearings in Monrovia.

The female lawyer, according to the same sources, on January 15, 2008 refused to accept the pleas of the TRC Chairman Cllr. Jerome Verdier when she decided to publicly read the written statement of Joshua Milton Blayee former 'Gen. Butt Naked' especially the portion that had to do with presenting him (Butt Naked) a baby for a sacrifice.

Despite Cllr. Verdier's cautioning of commissioner Bull that the reading of the official written statement was not necessary because the witness was already seated, Cllr. Bull won public support when she said "but this is not hidden therefore nothing is wrong if I will read the statement" in very loud tone.

This tone was disappointing, especially when the noise was gradually becoming uncontrolled.

Witness Paul, who told the TRC hearings that he is a trained journalist, indicated that the NPFL was in control of almost 90% of the country, a time during which Benoni Urey and Cyril Allen committed economic atrocities to enrich themselves.

James Paul told the TRC that during the heat of NPFL rule, Urey exported rubber to neighboring countries while, Cyril Allen looted and sold thousands of gallons of fuel oil, lubricants and other materials belonging to LIMCO.

The two Charles Taylor's associates, Allen and Urey, witness James Paul noted received millions of United States dollars from both the sales of rubber and LIMCO properties, which they deposited in their own accounts.

Also taking the stand on Tuesday was Samuel B. Karnly, who said that he had lost his right foot as a result of the actions of an NPFL fighter only identified as Aaron in Kakata.

Samuel B. Karnley, 34, now a Pastor said that he was shot in his right leg during the war for which made him a disabled. He openly forgave his perpetrator but said that he will not forget because the scars still live on with him.

Karnley then recommended to the TRC to also create the condition for those who planned and financed the war to appear before the TRC and later be tried the under due process of law.

He said that when war planners and financiers are tried, the precedent will serve as deterrence to others who may want to unleash war on the Liberian state in the future.

Karnley said those who were taking the witness's stand were only people who were executing orders that were been passed down by the organizers, planners and the financiers. He said their exclusion from the process was not healthy.

Morkonmana Denies Allegations

"I Nyundueh Morkonmana hereby categorically reject all allegations levied against me yesterday by one Suah Nebleh before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," says former House Speaker Nyundueh Morkonmana in a press statement issued yesterday.

This is how the former speaker reacted to news that he requested for bucket of blood during the course of the war.

Witness Debleh told the TRC that he was part of the campaign that led to the Duport Road Massacre, and claimed that the act was masterminded by Nyundueh and others requesting for blood.

But the news has not gone down well with the former House Speaker who issued a 24 hour rebuttal, rubbishing the allegations.



"As a matter fact, I do not know the gentleman in question; neither do I remember discussing with him or any other person regarding human blood as he claimed during TRC hearings," he said. • **Nyundueh Morkonmana**

He said never in his life that he was either taken to a medicine man for healing or requesting for rituals. Instead, he expressed hope that the TRC hearings is intended to bring unity, healing, and national renewal to our people who suffered very greatly during the civil crisis.

“I don't think that going to the TRC to lie on innocent individuals for reasons best known to them is a proper way to achieve the objective of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission,” Nyundueh said in his statement.

He said during his days in Gbarnga, there was never a time that Charles Taylor and he or any other person ever discussed any ritualistic matters.

“I was not a soldier and I was never called upon to discuss any military matter least to say I discussed with any Zoe,” he noted, adding, “Even though I am not a perfect Christian, my parents brought me up in the Christian religion”.

He added: " Christianity, in my human weak ways, is what I depend on and nothing else. Thanks to Almighty for assisting me through my entire life. I am grateful to him.

He has expressed his readiness to appear before the TRC and I sincerely hope that the body will provide me the opportunity as prompt as possible in order to vindicate myself from the disinformation provided against me and my entire family.



Life goes on around a cemetery of genocide victims

Overwhelmed

Over a decade after the genocide, how is Rwanda coping with trauma?

Nick Ericsson speaks to psychiatrist Naasson Munyendamutsa in Kigali

Is mental health a serious problem in Rwanda?

Yes of course, especially considering the genocide we had in 1994. To put this in context, the country had problems prior to that time, but after those events 13 years ago mental health became a national issue.

Are there any numbers or statistics available on the problem?

No – nothing like that is available here. Judging from my work, I know that lots of people are experiencing problems, but I cannot really put a number to that nationally.

So what kind of mental health illnesses are you encountering every day?

We have cases of depression of course, but the majority of mental health cases here in Rwanda are to do with trauma. The symptoms of these cases take a lot of time to manifest themselves. Also, the clinical side of trauma has become more and more complex. Of course, there are symptoms of trauma which show themselves in Rwanda that you can read about in all the standard books, but we also have problems with, for example, people who tend to stop speaking. This is sometimes for many weeks or months. Often, the patient then develops somatic symptoms of a mental illness – in other words the body itself suffers because of

a mental condition. In these cases, we do not always have the ability to find these symptoms in our regular medical textbooks. The problem is that people are not in the habit of talking about their problems and so just keep silent, and then the body degenerates. For example, some people develop symptoms similar to epilepsy as a direct result of some kind of trauma.

So this must take a lot of time for you to treat each patient properly. Do you really feel like you are making a difference?

It is one of our biggest challenges because we have so many people who are suffering. I do not have time to see everybody who needs me. People want time, time for me to listen to them but that's difficult because we don't have the necessary human resources.

Is the government at least sympathetic to those suffering from mental illness?

I think so yes. We have had a real revolution after the genocide. For example, after 1994 the government created a school for psychiatric nurses in order to meet a pressing need. Secondly, the government has opened a department in the university here in Kigali for clinical psychology to train those who will combat mental illness in Rwanda. And we have physicians that the government has sent

out of the country to train in psychiatry – for example there are two currently studying in Geneva, two in Dakar and one in Nairobi. The government has also been working with a Swiss corporation to create an out-patient facility at our hospitals. These are all positive developments.

But surely it is not enough?

It is absolutely not enough. We don't have enough psychologists and psychiatrists. But, in the short term we have an organisation that is trying to train counsellors and we have to use them. But if one looks at how many people are estimated to be mentally ill, I can say, besides the basics being there, it is not enough.

Are you finding that Rwandans themselves are prejudiced against mental illness?

I think there has been a very big change in that area too. If before the genocide a family had had to contend with mental illness they would inevitably have problems in trying to see a consultant. But now with the trauma of April 1994 it has gone from a private concern to a public problem. The government has forced the message home (through campaigns) that everyone is now susceptible to mental illness.

Nick Ericsson is editor of BBC Focus on Africa magazine