

**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, 25 January 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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The New Citizen
Friday, 25 January 2008

“I Ate Children’s Heart” Ex Rebel Says



Milton Blahyi fought Charles Taylor’s forces in the war

Monrovia Milton Blahyi, a former feared rebel commander in Liberia’s brutal civil war, has admitted to

taking part in human sacrifices as part of traditional ceremonies intended to ensure victory in battle. Milton Blahyi fought Charles Taylor’s forces in the war. He said the sacrifices “included the killing of an innocent child and plucking out the heart, which was divided into pieces for us to eat.” There had been numerous rumours of human sacrifices during the 1979-93 conflict but this is the first time anyone has admitted publicly to the practice.

Mr Blahyi, 37, is better known in Liberia as “General Butt Naked” because he went into combat with no clothes on, to scare the enemy. He is now an Evangelist preacher, who prefers to use the name Joshua. He was speaking to the BBC, after telling Liberia’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that his forces had killed 20,000 people. Forgiveness Mr Blahyi said he had first become exposed to killings in 1982 when, at the age of 11, he was ordained “the traditional priest of my tribe.” He explained that when a rebellion broke out against President Samuel Doe, he had to go to war on behalf of

the president, as they he and his group killed were from the same Krahn over 20,000 people, certainly there should be an individual admitting that a mechanism put in place

Awoko

Friday, 25 January 2008

Heads of U N Human Right Components reports Progress

By Saidu Bah

The human rights components of the United Nations missions in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast yesterday concluded their second inter-mission meeting at UNIOSIL headquarters Mammy Yoko Hotel in Freetown.

Addressing journalists at a press briefing, the Chief of Human Rights and Rule of Law at the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), Benedict Sannoh, underscored the

60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and properly explained about their activities within the sub-region, which he said remained challenging but that the United Nation was committed to upholding, promoting and protecting the human rights of every individual adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217A (111) OF December 1948.

The human rights officer of the United Nations Missions in Liberia, Eugene Nindorire, also reported positive

developments in supporting peace building within the sub-region and specifically made mention of serious challenges facing women in Liberia as violence against women and rape were the major problems affecting women in Liberia.

He noted that police officers were being trained personally to deal with some human rights cases, and that progress had been reported in handling human rights matters, but that more needed to be done for active

participation of women in the police.

Mr Nindoriri added that they were working with NGOs and some Community Base Organisations to help reduce violence against women, and that more lawyers had been trained to dispense justice but most of them were not willing to go into the interior of the country to work.

ONUCI Human Rights Officer in the Ivory Coast, Guillaume Ngefa, disclosed that the country was struggling to get peace but human rights

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Heads of U N Human Right Components reports Progress

From Page 2

abuses continued unabated by some individuals who forcefully use children as labourers at various cocoa plantation in the Ivory Coast.

He also reported much progress on the re-integration of child soldiers to their various communities particularly

children who took part in the fighting from Liberia, were re-united with their families.

A representative from the United Nations Office in West Africa based in Dakar, Madam Karim

Hangaru, spoke about the collective efforts of the United Nations in promoting the United Nations Declarations of Human Right and promised to ensure that human rights issues were given due consideration at all levels.

The News

Friday, 25 January 2008

Prisoners are in hell

Motuba is disappointed that despite exposing the ills in the Prisons Department and Pademba Road Prisons, nothing serious has been done to address the situation and as a result, the condition of prisoners all over the country continue to worsen.

Old Motuba is particularly worried about the situation of prisoners in the Pademba Road Prisons which has the highest number of prisoners in the country. Prisoners are dying almost everyday due to neglect deplorable condition they are living in.

A worrying situation is that the prisons hospital does not have the required drugs to drugs to administer treatment on sick prisoners not to mention good food, accommodation facilities.

Also, the Prison's Department has to pay huge dept amounting to millions of Leones to contractors who had been supplying basic. Motuba will state without hesitation that senior prisons officers are operating a well organized syndicate that is embezzling millions of Leones meant for addressing the needs of prisoners.

Anyway Motuba wants government to pay attention to the Prisons Department. This is important because corruption is well entrenched in that department and also the prison should not be a death camp but a place to refine convicts. Something must be done now.

For di People
Friday, 25 January 2008

DEATH ROW SOJAS APPEAL FEBRUARY 7

THE APPEAL Court has slated February as 7 the day for the commencement of the appeal of Captain Hindolo Trye and ten others accused by the SLPP government of attempting to topple that government.

by **MALIK GIBRIEL**
About two weeks ago, the minister of Internal Affairs, Dauda Kamara and ministers visited the prisons and were appalled by its existing inhuman conditions and lack of any attempt to rehabilitate prisoners and saw that they have been dehumanised. The minister had also listened to the death row soldiers who expressed concern that they had appealed to be heard, but that no attempt was made to do so even though the

law stipulates that those condemned to die have the right of appeal.

The condemned prisoners have been languishing in prisons for the past six or more years. During the trial, they were represented by three APC lawyers. Serry Kamal, the

new Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Edward Turay, majority leader in parliament and MP Osho Williams, representing Central One constituency.

During the summing-up, Osho Williams said that there was not a shred of evidence or exhibit to show that in fact the accused were guilty of the crime. Capt Trye had ar-

rived in Freetown on a military pass and had about 300 soldiers under his command.

None of his men were part of the coup but mostly individuals he had never met before and he was arrested at his house where a rigorous search was conducted with no evidence whatsoever of complicity to overthrow the SLPP and many won-

der how an attempt to topple Kabbah must have led to an attack at the ATC compound at Wellington instead of targeting the president.

Capt Trye and some of the accused were among our fighting forces recognised for their military prowess against the rebels. The SLPP also accused

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Charles Margai the PMDC leader of attempting to kill former vice-president Solomon Berewa, former Ruf spokesman, Omrie Golley was also accused of an attempt to overthrow president Kabbah but recently released by Kamal who was his lawyer for lack of evidence.

Also, present bodyguards of president Koroma, Leatherboot Kamara and others now training in Morocco were detained at Pademba prisons after being accused of taking part in the incident at late rebel leader Foday Sankoh's house in 2001 that subsequently led to Sankoh's arrest and the death of about 18 people including a journalist,

Saoman Conteh. At another time, their set was brought from prison to the CID in handcuff for plotting a coup in prison but then exposed by the press as a hoax in an uncanny conspiratorial attempt by the powers-that-be to rope them in for the gallows. Subsequently, after spending an unjust incarceration, they were acquitted and discharged by

Justice Patrick Hamilton.

The step taken to speed-up trials by the APC has been hailed as a step in the right direction in its bid to unify, harmonise and work with everybody not only to bring about economic development but also to ensure that justice is not only done but must be perceived to be done.

Cotton Tree News

Thursday, 24 January 2008

Charles Taylor trials

Written by Ndeamoh Mansaray

Abu Keita a Liberian witness Wednesday testified in the Charles Taylor trial in The Hague. The former member of the Armed Forces of Liberia said Charles Taylor sent him to work with the RUF in Sierra Leone. He was imprisoned after a fight broke out in Camp Johnson road in Liberia. On his release from prison his boss was Mosquito.


He said RUF mined and farmed in the areas they controlled. He said civilians used to work on the farms in which they planted cocoa, and coffee. He said people caught with diamonds were hung on a tree and beaten to death.

The witness said the RUF made transactions with different nationals for the sale of their diamonds, cocoa and coffee. The trial continues

New Democrat (Liberia)
Thursday, 24 January 2008

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From Taylor To Bockarie: "Take Care Of The RUF..."



The image contains three black and white photographs arranged horizontally. The first photograph on the left shows a man with a shaved head and a beard, looking downwards. The middle photograph shows a man in a suit and glasses, with his hands clasped in front of him. The third photograph on the right shows a man wearing sunglasses and a cap, smiling slightly.

IBRAHIM BADI CHARLES TAYLOR SAM BOCKARIE

"Take Care

The Charles Taylor trial has entered the 13th day, with another prosecution witness, a former Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) soldier turned ULIMO and then NPFL, telling the court that he was sent to Sierra Leone to command a standby force

time he said he saw diamond transactions with RUF rebel leaders.

Gen. Keita's testimony, in part, is reproduced unedited:

All armed forces of Liberia (AFL) were recalled for army restructuring. As a past member of the AFL,

Samuel Doe, Johnson was ordered arrested. The SSU, a special unit formed by Taylor that was responsible at the Marsien, fought. Chuckie Taylor, the son of Charles Taylor, was responsible for it. Momoh Gibba was there. And the SSS under Benjamin

Roosevelt Johnson called former ULIMO-J and former ULIMO-K to have a ceremony together because we'd fought against each other and killed each other. He said we should be one because the war was over. This was before the fighting. That's why I was arrested, because they saw me there. I was taken to Saw Beach Prison, at the back of the BTC Barracks in Monrovia. I was kept there for one week, and I was not charged. I was just in detention. Later I was freed by one SSS director for operations, Varmaya Sheriff. He came only with his bodyguards. He took me to Musa Cisse's residence at Congo Town. Cisse said we're both Mandingos. The war is over. He said if you don't want to see Taylor's government, you're doing that for yourself. He said it's better for me to cooperate with them. At Cisse's house, Benjamin Yeaten, the SSS director, came. Yeaten said "Keita, Pa Musa has already spoken about you. You have to cooperate." I said "I have no problem with that." Papa Kuyateh and Pa Morris, the brother of Musa Cisse, were also present. They spoke to me and said I've now become a free man. From there I was taken back to my house. At that time, Musa Cisse was the protocol officer of Charles Taylor. His operations name was Gargay (ph) Charo. Cisse is a Mandingo. At that time Benjamin Yeaten was SSS Director.

A week later, I saw Marzaher, Sampson and Jungle. Marzaher's nickname was "Zigzag". He was SS, special security, assigned to the mansion of Charles Taylor. They were close to the president. Sampson and Jungle were bodyguards to Benjamin Yeaten, who was in charge of Taylor's close protection. They said we should go to Musa Cisse's house. We drove there, and from there we taken to Yeaten's residence behind Charles Taylor's residence. There was a meeting there, where I saw Sam Bockarie of the RUF, Eddie Kanneh, the war council leader of the RUF called SB Rogers, and the Adjutant of the RUF who was Rashid, and Yeaten himself. Yeaten asked me to join the RUF in Sierra Leone. I said "no problem, sir. As long as that's an instruction from you, I will go." Montgomery and Varmunya Sheriff were also there. Benjamin Yeaten was in charge of that meeting. He said he wanted a standby force to be in Sierra Leone, and that I would be the commander of that troop, to be based in Sierra Leone. He said the troop would be called the Scorpion Unit, and that I'd be the commander, to be based with Sam Bockarie in Sierra Leone. He did not give me any details of the operation plans. He said we should be based in Boedun, Kailahun District. Yeaten said the boss, Charles Taylor, had given him

the instruction to send me to Sierra Leone. Eddie Kanneh is a Sierra Leonean who was with the Sierra Leone Army. At that time the AFRC had overthrown the government, and the RUF and SLA combined we



called Scorpion Unit and provided weapons along with radio communication.

Gen. Abu Keita said he met Mr Taylor at his White Flowers residence along with key RUF leaders, amongst them the late Sam Bockarie who, he said, Taylor instructed

I reported to the BTC Barracks, at Camp Suifering, where the restructuring was taking place. I was appointed as Major. I was assigned at BTC headquarters in Monrovia. Fighting broke out on Camp Johnson Road because Roosevelt Johnson was appointed to a position

Yeaten fought. Roosevelt Johnson escaped arrest and went to the US embassy. One bodyguard for the SSU, called PYJ, arrested me and put me in detention. The SSU and SSS fought against Roosevelt Johnson to arrest him. When I was arrested, I was on the street around a cinema. I



to "take care of the RUF" and report any problem to Benjamin Yeaten. He gave details of meetings at which

in Taylor's government. When he came back from sick leave, he saw Joe Wally, a former bodyguard for

was not involved in the fighting but they said I had a meeting with Roosevelt Johnson. I did meet with him.

the People's Army. When ECOMOG pushed them, that was how I met him and Sam Bockarie at Yeaten's house. At this meeting in Yeaten's house, Eddie Kanneh said he would be the liaison officer between Sierra Leone and Liberia for the diamond business of the RUF. Dennis Mingo called "Superman" was mentioned by Sam Bockarie. Bockarie said Mingo didn't want to take instructions from him, and was giving him problems within the command. Yeaten said he would address the issue and talk with Mingo.

Bockarie had a black satellite phone in a handbag, as big as the computer screen in front of me, and it would fold out. Bockarie told me that Yeaten had given the phone to him.

After the meeting, we drove to the Boulevard Hotel in Monrovia, by Sinkor. We went upstairs, to the third floor, where we met General Ibrahim Bah. It was the first time I met Ibrahim Bah. Bah is a short, fat man. He had a Gambian accent. They called him a General and said he was a former fighter of the NPFL. The discussion was how best Bah could find a buyer for the RUF diamonds, and also that Bah should help get radio communication for the RUF - an FM radio station to use for

Of The RUF..."

propaganda. In the room were Bah, Kanneh, Bockarie, Yeaten, SB Roger, Rashid, and General Ibrahim's bodyguard whom they called CR. And myself. That's where I saw the first diamond with Sam Bockarie. I saw



Bockarie show diamond to Ibrahim Bah. I did not see him give the diamond to Bah. There were more than ten diamonds.

After that meeting in the Boulevard Hotel, we went to the Kadja Hotel, where Bockarie was staying. I was there all through the day. I left them in the afternoon and returned to my house. At night, when Bockarie was returning to Sierra Leone, Benjamin Yeaten, Sam Bockarie, Yeaten, SB Rogers, Kanneh and I drove from the hotel to White Flower, where Charles Taylor was at his house. They opened the security gate, and stepped down on the left side, through a door. In the hallway of Taylor's house, there was a red carpet and large cushioned chairs. Yeaten asked us to wait there. Taylor appeared in a brown suit and we all rose. I had never seen him before, because I knew it was him because it was his residence and I'd seen pictures of him. Then Taylor told us to sit down. Bockarie said "I'm on my way going, sir. I've come to pay my respects." Taylor asked Bockarie to maintain and take care of the RUF. Bockarie said he'd do everything possible. Taylor said if there were any problems, Yeaten and Cisse should be immediately contacted. From there we walked out of the

building and Bockarie left. We went to Benjamin Yeaten's house, down the hill, because he lived behind Taylor's house. Yeaten's house was only separated by a street.

At Yeaten's house, Bockarie's bodyguards were there. He took the bodyguards and left. All of us drove to Red Light, where I got off the pickup, where Marzakar, Jungle and Sampson were. I went to my house in Monrovia. I had family there. My mother was still alive, I had a wife and children. After I got to my house, I got called back again. Marzakar, Sampson and Jungle came in a green Land Cruiser pickup, and said Yeaten said I should go to Sierra Leone. I said, "no problem". I went and told my wife I was leaving for Sierra Leone. I was issued an AK-47 and a silent pistol with eight rounds. I was issued 10 boxes of ammunition to move to Sierra Leone. They were issued to me by Yeaten, at his house. Yeaten also gave me a Yesue radio and three bodyguards with rifles. A Yesue radio uses batteries and has an antennae that can be pushed up for communication. The radio broadcasts as far as wherever another Yesue radio was. A box of ammunition was a wooden box, with two long boxes like a sardine plate, containing ammunition. Each sardine plate held ammunition packets. Each packet had 20 rounds. I don't know how many packets were in each tin. The metal was about 14cm high, and a little longer than the computer screen. I didn't know the bodyguards I was issued. There were Liberians who belonged to the former NPFL.

I was given an escort by Mazahar, Jungle, Sampson and a bodyguard of Cisse called Mike Lama, a Kpelle guy- also another bodyguard called Yellow Man. Mike Lama is a Liberian, a Kpelle with the police. We drove in one SS pickup to Voinjama and met with the police commander of Lofa County, Colonel Toma. Toma informed us that Bockarie was coming to Voinjama, and Mazahar and Sampson should wait for him. We waited in Toma's house until Bockarie came. Then Bockarie, SB Rogers, Eddie Kanneh, Rashid drove back to Monrovia. Bockarie said he was going to meet with Charles Taylor. I was given the car Bockarie had driven in, for me to drive to Sierra Leone. The ammunition was transferred into that vehicle. Toma gave us a police escort to meet the other commander in Foya, Col. Stanley. When I got to Foya, I met Issa Sesay in Foya. He complained he was waiting so long. I said the road was bad and that I wasn't the driver, so he had to bear with us, because he knew the road was so bad.

I drove with Sesay to Buedu. We

passed three checkpoints. When you leave Foya, there was a first checkpoint, then a second at Foya Tinga, then a last checkpoint at the border before you cross over to Dawa. At the border, there was security. The AFL, Liberian police

7 miles to the Liberian border. I saw construction in Buedu. Sesay took me to a site where they were building an airstrip. There was a caterpillar and manpower to dig the hill and level the ground. The length was about 3 miles. They said they ex-

I was with the RUF, they called me General Keita. In Buedu I normally ate with Issa Sesay. Mosquito's wife, Hawa, also provided food for me.

It took a couple of weeks before Bockarie returned. Mazahar, Sampson and Jungle came first. They



and customs were on the Liberian side. The RUF was in charge on the Sierra Leonean side. The three bodyguards assigned to me until we entered Buedu. Sesay instructed the military commander, Kaisoko, to make an apartment available to me, close to him and Sam Bockarie.

pected supply planes there. While they were building, a jet bombed the caterpillar at the airstrip. So we used to work in the evening on the airstrip. A caterpillar is a machine that has a bulldozer to push. The people working on the airstrip were civilians with the RUF. The MP

brought fuel, medicine, and ammunition to Sesay, then they went back. (Prosecution shows the witness and the court two photos, one color and one black-and-white; the color photo shows three individuals in front of a hut.) At left is Mazahar, the middle man is Jungle, and the one on



There is a junction in Buedu, and a road to Koindu, one to Kailahun, one to Dawa. From Buedu, it's about

commander, Kaisoko, was responsible to collect civilians to come to do the work. Nobody was paid. When

the right is myself. The picture is in Kono, Sierra Leone.

National Chronicle (Liberia)
Thursday, 24 January 2008

FORMER NPFL GEN. REVEALS TAYLOR'S QUEST TO RULE W. AFRICA



Former Pres. Charles G. Taylor

A Former NPFL general, Suah Dabbieh, alias "Gen Something the Cost", has revealed to the TRC former President Charles Taylor's plan to destabilize the West African sub-region in a quest to dominate the scene as attempted by French general Napoleon Bonaparte to conquer Europe, James Harding Gishyue reports.

Unusual for an ex-fighter Dabbieh, dressed in a navy blue coat suit and vigorous in voice, explained that as an NPFL high-ranking soldier he went on a lot of missions as a mercenary, to such places as Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

He told the commission

that in the early 1990s he fought in Sierra Leone for the late Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under the instruction of the late Oliver Verney.

He revealed that the former President trained 500 men, under the leadership of Coco Dennis, to aid the late Robert Gaye in Ivory Coast, but the mission was impossible, leaving the 500 men to join the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). These, according to him, are today languishing the streets in demand for benefits.

He recalled that he and some of his colleagues were also sent as mercenaries in D.R. Congo to aid the revolution of the late Laurent Kabilla, but they soon came back home when the news

spread of their presence in that country.

Before heading for the Congo, according to the 34-year-old, the then defense minister, Daniel Chea, and the special assistant to the President, Kadiatu Finley, accompanied them at the Robert International Airport (RIA) and gave them their "envelope" for the mission.

The ex-general also spoke about some Gambians who had failed in a coup attempt in Gambia and so were incorporated into the Liberian security services as high-ranking militants.

History accounts that all attempts to conquer the sub-regions have failed even though some temporarily seemed to work.

Cont'd on Page 7

TAYLOR

Adolf Hitler and Napoleon Bonaparte are two examples. Hitler's plan to rule the whole world failed as his troops were defeated by the allied forces, and the French Napoleon Bonaparte too was defeated at the battle of Waterloo, in his attempt to conquer Europe.

Charles Taylor's plan, if the testimony of the ex-general is true, also failed finally as he is on trial at The Hague.

TRC

witness, you have the right to not answer anything that you're not clear with."

The Cllr. Comm. Bull even insisted that the witness sign on every page of the document for what she called "authenticity", even though she was not the one who requested the document be left with the commission.

When Cllr. Comm. Bull continued her hard and detailed questioning of the witness, the chairman, Cllr. Verdier, called the hearings to a halt, before resuming later.

Liberians who attended the Tuesday's hearing left the hall with mixed views. Some analyzed that there is an "inside" problem existing in the abdomen of the commission, and that what transpired indicates that. Others argued that the behavior exhibited by Cllr. Comm. Bull is "one of her articles of razzmatazz" her routine attitude.

A female, who was among those at the hearings, said that the chairman should have allowed the commissioner to have "her day", and if he wanted to warn her he should have done so behind closed doors.

Liberian Express (Liberia)

Thursday, 24 January 2008

Taylor's Verdict Expected January 2010

The UN backed Court trying former Liberian leader Charles Taylor for war crimes has announced that a judgment at first instance in the case is expected January 2010, presuming that the evidence is con-

cluded by the end of July 2009.

The court's Chief Prosecutor Stephen Rapp said given the "excellent progress" being made in the trial, he said the case could be con-

See Story on Page 10

US\$ 65,000.00 Approved For Cape Mount

The National Association of Cape Mountainians in the Americas (NACA) has approved a \$65,000.00 assistance budget for Grand Cape Mount County.

About US \$40,000 of the amount

will go towards reconstruction projects in the County and US\$26,000 will cover other expenses in the U.S.

US\$ 15,000 has been set aside for



Taylor's Verdict

cluded within 12 to 18 months.

Taylor is facing 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges against him.

The Special Court, established January 2002, is trying persons bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against community committed during the decade-long war in Sierra Leone.

BBC Online

Friday, 25 January 2008

'Death threats' over Taylor trial

The family of a key prosecution witness in the war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor say they have received death threats.

Vamba Sherif told the BBC that unknown men had entered the family home's compound in Monrovia, shouting insults and saying they would all be killed.

His brother Varmuyan Sherif has told Mr Taylor's trial that the former leader had close ties to Sierra Leone rebels.

Mr Taylor has denied charges he ordered the rebels' atrocities.

Vamba Sherif said the men fled before the police arrived.

He said that a few days later, a leaflet was left in the yard, repeating the death threats.

Rebel links

Mr Taylor's trial was moved to The Hague in the Netherlands because of fears that his trial in West Africa could lead to renewed instability in the region.

Both Liberia and Sierra Leone are slowly recovering from years of conflict.

The prosecution are trying to prove the former president's links to rebels in Sierra Leone.

Varmuyan Sherif, one of his former aides, has told the court that Mr Taylor set up a guest house for them in the Liberian capital, Monrovia.

He also said rebel fighters crossed into Liberia from Sierra Leone to aid Mr Taylor's forces when they were attacked by Liberian rebels.

Mr Taylor, 59, is the first former African leader to face a criminal trial internationally.

The ex-Liberian president is accused of responsibility for the actions of RUF rebels during the 1991-2001 civil war in Sierra Leone, which included unlawful killings, sexual slavery, use of child soldiers and looting.



Charles Taylor is accused of stoking the 1991-2001 Sierra Leone war

Charlestaylortrial.org

Friday, 25 January 2008

Day 15 of witness testimony - in closed session; indications of coordination problems between the Special Court and the International Criminal Court

The trial of Charles Taylor before Trial Chamber II of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) continues this morning in closed session. Despite indications that the judges intended the public gallery to remain open, albeit without audio of the proceedings, security staff of the International Criminal Court (ICC) did not let anyone enter. ICC guards said that court was in closed session.

The SCSL is paying the ICC for use of one of its courtrooms, as well as other facilities. (The ICC does not yet have any trials in progress, and only two indictees in custody, both in the pre-trial phase.) The confusion about access to the Taylor trial raises questions about the relationship between the SCSL and the ICC, and it is clear that there has been some friction between staff of the two institutions.

allAfrica.com

Thursday, 24 January 2008

Prosecution Witness Abu Keita Connects Taylor to RUF Abuses

The Hague

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

The Prosecution continued its examination of linkage witness Abu Keita. Keita appeared in the courtroom dressed in all white, placing him in stark contrast with the Court's staff and their black robes.

Keita provided information on key members of Taylor's inner circle, as well as information on RUF activities in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea.

The Prosecution was unable to provide precise spellings for many of the individuals Keita named during his testimony, and at one point Judge Sebutinde told the Prosecution to make its own determinations regarding which names it had to spell. Lead Defense Counsel Courtenay Griffiths chuckled and shook his head at one point when the Prosecution faced difficulties spelling names. Additional obstacles arose because Keita testified in Liberian English and used a translator throughout his examination. Keita commonly referred to individuals as "he," causing confusion for the Judges as to whom Keita was referring.

Taylor appeared interested in this witness and wore his headphones during large portions of the testimony. Taylor took off his sunglasses to put on reading glasses to inspect photographs identified during Keita's testimony. In addition, Taylor appeared to read along with the court reporter's transcription at numerous times.

Prosecution Continues its Examination of Abu Keita

Prosecutor Nick Koumjian continued his direct examination of linkage witness Abu Keita.

Keita's Involvement with the RUF

Abu Keita detailed the history of his involvement with the RUF. He described how the SSU (Special Security Unit) and SSS (Special Security Service), Taylor's forces, fought against Roosevelt Johnson, the leader of ULIMO-J, in 1998. The SSU and SSS ordered Roosevelt Johnson arrested, and subsequently arrested Keita for having met with Johnson, who urged the reunification of ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J. Keita was taken to Saw Beach Prison, where he was detained for one week without being charged. Varmuyan Sherif, a former member of Taylor's personal security force, took Keita from the jail to the house of Musa Cisse, Chief of Presidential Protocol, and indicated that Keita should cooperate. Benjamin Yeaten, Director of the SSS, arrived at Cisse's house and told Keita to cooperate. Keita agreed.

Keita had subsequent meetings leading up to his departure to Sierra Leone as a member of the RUF:

One week after Keita's meeting with Yeaten at Cisse's house, Keita met with Marzaher (aka "Zigzag"), Sampson, and Jungle (members of the Special Security and bodyguards for Yeaten), who accompanied Keita to Cisse's house. Keita then attended a meeting at Yeaten's house with Yeaten, Sam Bockarie, Eddie Kanneh (Diamond Manager for the RUF), S.B. Rogers (War Council Leader of the RUF), Mr. Rashid (Adjutant of the RUF), Montgomery, and Sherif. Yeaten asked Keita to join the RUF, to which he agreed. Keita agreed to be commander of the "Scorpion Unit," based in Buedu, Kailahun District, Sierra Leone. Yeaten said Taylor gave him instructions to send Keita to Sierra Leone.

Keita met General Ibrahim Bah (former fighter with NPFL) later that day to discuss how Bah could find a buyer for RUF diamonds and how Bah could obtain an FM radio station to use for RUF propaganda. Bah, Kanneh, Bockarie, Yeaten, Rogers, Rashid, and Bah's bodyguard were present at this meeting. Keita saw Sam Bockarie show more than ten diamonds to Bah.

Later that day, Keita met with Bockarie, Yeaten, Rogers, Kanneh, and Taylor at Taylor's residence. Taylor asked Bockarie to maintain the RUF.

Yeaten sent Keita to Sierra Leone. Yeaten issued to Keita an AK-47, a pistol with eight rounds, 10 boxes of ammunition, a Yesue radio, and three bodyguards with rifles.

Once Keita was in Buedu, Sierra Leone, Bockarie returned to Sierra Leone after a visit to Taylor. Keita drove with Issa Sesay, an RUF commander, to meet Bockarie in Foya, Lofa District, Liberia. Bockarie had two trucks, one of which was a truck allegedly given to Taylor by the Libyan government. Bockarie brought 300 boxes of ammunition and 150 Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters. Bockarie said the men were coming from Camp Nama, and that the ammunition was from Monrovia.

When Bockarie brought the 300 boxes of ammunition to Buedu, Bockarie met with the RUF and proposed a takeover of Kono and Makeni. Bockarie said Kono was strategic because the RUF needed mines to generate funds. After a parade in front of military commander Kaisoko's office, Sesay instructed troops to take over Kono and Makeni. Sesay said Taylor said to initiate this attack. It was announced on Christmas Day of 1998 that the RUF took Koidu Town, Kono District. Keita was in Segwema, Bunumbu, and other towns in Sierra Leone. Bockarie instructed him that if he faced any resistance during this offensive to burn down houses. Keita burned down seven houses in Bunumbu, as well as in other towns.

Bockarie again traveled to Monrovia following the attacks on Kono and Makeni. He returned with a Land Cruiser given to him by Taylor. Bockarie told Keita that Taylor gave him the Land Cruiser. Bockarie also said that Taylor told him to maintain control over RUF areas. According to Keita, Bockarie passed that message to Sesay and Morris Kallon.

At this time Bockarie was commander, Sesay was second in command, Dennis Mingo (aka "Superman", a Liberian) and Kallon followed, then Mike Lamin, Isaac (a Liberian), and Lawrence Wohmandia. Monica Pearson, a training commander, was a Liberian. "Rambo" was a Liberian front-line commander of the RUF. Matthew Barbue was also a Liberian front-line commander.

Keita testified that Bockarie gave him a letter of assignment confirming that Keita was commander of the "Scorpion Unit." According to Keita, Bockarie gave him an assignment paper and Yeaten later confirmed over radio that Keita received the letter. Keita lost the letter when his mother's house burned down. Taylor allegedly signed the letter in blue pen.

Supplies and Technology

At one point, Keita testified regarding construction of a three-mile airstrip in Buedu. Sesay said he expected supply planes to land on the airstrip, and Kaisoko was responsible for collecting civilians to work on the airstrip.

Keita also testified about RUF use of Yesue radios. He noted there were seven radios in Buedu and that many commanders had radios assigned to them. A chief radio operator, Zedman, monitored use of all the radio sets. Every radio had a radio operator specially assigned by Zedman who sent messages. Only Bockarie, Mingo, and Sesay spoke directly over the radios. Keita testified that transmissions from Buedu could reach Monrovia. Bockarie and Sesay also had satellite phones, and Sesay said Taylor gave him the satellite phone.

RUF Activities Outside Sierra Leone

Keita described a number of operations outside of Sierra Leone:

1. The first operation outside of Sierra Leone involved "Mosquito Spray," a LURD commander who allegedly said he was in Liberia to spray the AFL and national police and remove Charles Taylor from power. In August 1999, Bockarie, under Yeaten's instruction, contacted the RUF to move to Foya because Mosquito Spray had attacked. Bockarie was in Foya and asked Sesay and Kallon to lead the attack against the LURD rebels. The RUF, AFL (Armed Forces of Liberia), police, and ATU (Antiterrorist Unit) fought against the LURD rebels. The commander of the operation was Sam Bockarie, based in Foya, who received orders from Yeaten, who reported to Taylor.

2. The next operation with the RUF outside Sierra Leone was an attack on Guinea. Sesay said Taylor informed him that the RUF should gain ground in Guinea so that arms could be kept safely in Guinea during disarmament in Sierra Leone. The RUF ultimately retreated due to a large number of casualties.

3. The next operation included attacks against two Guinean refugee camps with Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees. Mingo Mingo led the troops from Kono into Guinea. The troops fought against the Guinean government.

4. The next operation outside of Sierra Leone was an attack against Gueckedou, Guinea. It was a joint operation of the RUF, AFL, ATU and Liberian police. Yeaten was the operation commander, Mingo was the field commander, and Keita was a commander. Operation "No Taking Side" was planned and the order signed by Yeaten, Sesay, Barbue, and Mark Gwon. The Prosecution showed an exhibit to Keita that was the signed operation order. During the operation, Sesay and Yeaten traveled from Foya to Monrovia. When they returned, they said they saw Taylor.

During these operations, Yeaten supplied ammunition directly to the RUF.

Abuses Against Peacekeeping Forces

Keita spoke of two instances involving peacekeeping forces:

1. The RUF seized 11 ECOMOG Nigerian peacekeepers after the capture of Kono. They were kept in Buedu in "dungeons," which Keita described as holes in the ground. Yeaten and Bockarie met, and Yeaten told Bockarie that Taylor said they should release the peacekeepers to him in Liberia. Yeaten again told Bockarie during a telephone call that Taylor had ordered the peacekeepers' release. Keita drove with the peacekeepers to Foya, where he met Yeaten and Joe Tuah and handed over the peacekeepers.

2. There was another incident with peacekeepers when Sesay took over from Bockarie in 2000 during which the RUF arrested 500 Kenyans and Zambians. Sesay returned from a trip to Liberia with Marzaher and Jungle with a satellite phone allegedly issued by Taylor, as well as 50 boxes of ammunition. Sesay stated that they had no option but to release the peacekeepers because Taylor had ordered their release to Liberia. Keita took the peacekeepers to Yeaten and Tuah in Foya.

Diamonds and Mining

Keita noted four common areas in Kono District for diamond mining: (1) Number 11 Plant, where mining was largely conducted with machines; (2) Kaisombo, Koidu Town; (3) Opera, where individual miners worked; and (4) Sewafe River, where Keita supervised divers. Kennedy, a Sierra Leonean, was Mining Chairman under Bockarie, and Peleto was Mining Chairman under Sesay. Sierra Leonean civilians worked the mines and were not fed or allowed to keep the diamonds they found. Keita said the workers were taken care of if they became sick.

Keita witnessed individuals punished for breaking RUF mining rules. The first instance involved Keita's bodyguard, who stole a diamond. He was beaten with rubber and was hanged from a mango tree in Sesay's compound until he confessed. The second instance involved a 30-year-old man from Kono who was arrested by Kallon for stealing a diamond. He was hanged from a mango tree and beaten to death with rubber.

Small Boy Unit

Keita noted that the RUF used SBUs (Small Boy Unit) comprised of boys between the ages of 10 and 15. During his time with the RUF, Keita had two boys who went wherever he did. Both Bockarie and Yeaten had boys as bodyguards. SBUs received training in the same place as adults and took part in combat with the RUF. There were involved in all the operations in Sierra Leone but not in Guinea. SBUs were involved in the operation against "Mosquito Spray" in Liberia.

Amputations

Keita stated that he had never seen amputations take place when he was with the RUF, but he saw amputees who suffered from amputated fingers, hands, and legs.

Combatant Deaths

"Rambo". Marzaher killed Rambo. Marzaher told Keita that Bockarie complained to Yeaten, who subsequently instructed Marzaher to kill Rambo.

Colonel Foday. Keita stated that Sesay and Bockarie shot Foday in the head and chest after he was dragged to Bockarie's house upon orders from Bockarie, Kanneh, and Rogers. Foday was killed for allegedly giving information to ECOMOG.

Dennis Mingo (aka "Superman"). According to Keita, Yeaten told Mingo that Taylor wanted to see him in Monrovia. Roland Duo (aka "Peanut Butter") later told Keita that Yeaten killed Mingo. Duo said that according to Yeaten, Superman used to go to the American Embassy in Monrovia.

Sam Bockarie. Bockarie's brother and sister stated to Keita that Yeaten killed Bockarie, his wife, his children, and his mother. Bockarie's brother said Yeaten killed Bockarie to destroy any evidence that could come before the Special Court.

Defense Begins Examination of Abu Keita

Defense Counsel Morris Anyah began the Defense team's cross-examination of Keita.

Anyah focused on the multitude of forces Keita could have fought for, including the NPFL, INPFL (Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia), and LPC (Liberian Peace Council), but he chose to fight with LUDF. Anyah also noted that both Alhaji Kromah, former leader of ULIMO-K, and Varmayun Sherif are Mandingos. Finally, Anyah began to challenge Keita's statement on direct examination that he did not support any political candidate, including Alhaji Kromah, during the 1997 elections. This line of questioning will continue tomorrow.

allAfrica.com

Friday, 25 January 2008

Defense Highlights Inconsistencies in Abu Keita's Statements to the Prosecution

The Hague

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

Defense Highlights Inconsistencies in Abu Keita's Statements to the Prosecution; Court Faces Technical Difficulties as It Enters Closed Session

Defense Counsel Morris Anyah methodically deconstructed Prosecution witness Abu Keita's statements to the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) in an attempt to attack Keita's credibility. Anyah read Keita's inconsistent statements from past interviews with the OTP into the record. These inconsistencies consisted of direct contradictions, as well as omissions. Based on Keita's inconsistent statements, Anyah asked Keita if his memory was more accurate in his earlier statements. Keita responded that his memory is better now than it was when he gave his earlier statements.

Keita faced difficulties understanding a number of the questions posed by Anyah. At one point Presiding Judge Doherty noted Anyah's potentially confusing use of double negatives. It was unclear at times whether Keita was affirming or negating a statement Anyah read into the record. The Defense placed transcriptions of Keita's prior testimonies to the Prosecution on a computer screen in front of Keita. Keita cannot read or write; therefore, he was unable to follow along as Anyah read from these transcriptions.

The Court faced difficulties when the prosecution called its next witness, TF1-371. This witness is subject to a protective order from Trial Chamber I, forcing the Court into closed session. After switching between open and closed sessions, the Court finally returned to a closed session. It is unclear whether the Court will be in closed session tomorrow or whether the witness will be protected through other measures, such as limited audio in the public gallery and shielding of the witness from public view.

The Court seemed ill-prepared for its first protected witness. When the Court first entered closed session, journalists were told the Court would not enter open session again that day and left the ICC building. ICC building staff were unaware when the Court session reopened. Court staff have expressed concern over the difficulties and seek to ensure the smooth functioning and transparency of the proceedings.

Inconsistencies in Abu Keita's Statements

Anyah referred to four documents containing transcriptions of interviews and interview notes from Keita to the OTP: (1) an interview on February 2, 2003; (2) an interview with Corinne Dufka on June 30, 2003; (3) an interview on February 13, 2005; and (4) an interview on July 16-17, 2007.

These documents were used to contradict Keita's testimony:

With regard to Keita's arrest and imprisonment at Saw Beach, Anyah questioned whether it was based on suspicion of collaboration in the coup attempt. Keita reiterated that he knew nothing about the coup attempt. Anyah also asked Keita whether his arrest was based on his refusal to follow orders to fight against Johnson's forces. Keita responded that the AFL, including himself, was not called upon to participate in that mission. After Anyah read portions of Keita's July 16-17, 2007, statement to the OTP in which he stated he was arrested for not fighting in this battle, Keita confirmed that he was arrested for refusing to fight against Johnson's troops.

Keita had previously stated that Varmayun Sherif took him out of prison when Keita was arrested and held at Saw Beach prison based on his involvement with Roosevelt Johnson. During Keita's interview with Dufka on June 30, 2003, he stated that Papay Kuyateh took him from prison to meet with Musa Cisse. Keita denied this statement in Court.

In his February 2, 2003, statement to the OTP Keita told the OTP that Yeaten recruited him to work for the SSS. Keita denied this statement in Court.

With regard to Keita's meeting at Yeaten's house before he left for Sierra Leone, Keita testified yesterday that Yeaten, Eddie Kanneh, S.B. Rogers, Rashid, Montgomery, and Sherif were present at the meeting. Anyah noted that Joe Tuah and Sheku Suwape Koroma were also present and Keita agreed. Keita did not remember if Foday, Bockarie's bodyguard, was present. Keita did not say yesterday that Jaharo or Kuyateh were present. In addition, Anyah noted that during Keita's interview with Dufka on June 30, 2003, Keita mentioned that Sherif, Kuyate, Musa Cisse, Bockarie, and Koroma attended the meeting, and that no other individuals were at the meeting. Keita said this statement was incorrect.

Yesterday Keita testified that Yeaten gave him three bodyguards before his trip to Sierra Leone. On June 30, 2003, Keita told Dufka Yeaten gave him 11 bodyguards.

Keita told Anyah that he did not leave Monrovia to travel to Sierra Leone with Bockarie, and that he only left with Marzah, Jungle, Sampson, and Mike Lama. In his February 2, 2003, interview with the OTP, Keita said he left Monrovia with Bockarie. Keita denied this statement in Court.

Keita told the OTP on February 2, 2003, that when Bockarie and Keita went to Buedu 350 men arrived within the week. Keita testified yesterday that these men arrived in two batches, the first batch in December 1998 and the second batch in January 1999.

Keita told Anyah that he never traveled to Monrovia to meet Yeaten or Taylor. Anyah referenced Keita's statement from February 2, 2003, in which Keita said that he was present on three occasions in 1999 when Bockarie met Taylor in Monrovia to deliver diamonds. Keita denied this statement in Court. In addition, Anyah referenced Keita's statement from July 16-17, 2007, in which Keita said he traveled to White Flower in 2000 to retrieve supplies for men fighting in Guinea. Keita acknowledged this statement but said the date was incorrect. Anyah also referred to Keita's statement from June 30, 2003, in which he said Issa Sesay and Taylor met and had a discussion in front of him. In the statement, Keita said, "I can't lie because I went there." Keita denied this statement in Court.

Anyah asked Keita who "the chief" and "the director" referred to, and Keita said Yeaten. Anyah asked Keita who "Pa" and "Papey" referred to, and Keita said Taylor. Anyah referenced Keita's July 16-17, 2007, statement to the OTP in which he referred to Taylor as "the chief." Keita denied this statement in Court.

Keita told the OTP on February 2, 2003, that he was based in Makeni from January 1999 until April 2001. Anyah questioned Keita about whether he was actually in Buedu when Bockarie came back to Buedu from Monrovia in January 1999. Keita testified yesterday that Bockarie had returned with a Land Cruiser from Taylor at this time. Anyah alleged that Bockarie never returned with a vehicle from Taylor, but rather returned via the same helicopter he left in. Anyah referred to a prior statement to the OTP in which Keita said Bockarie returned in the same helicopter. Keita responded that this was referring to a different time Bockarie traveled to Monrovia.

Abu Keita's Credibility

Anyah raised a number of issues that challenge Keita's credibility.

Anyah confirmed that Keita met with a number of key figures on the day Yeaten recruited him into the RUF, including Yeaten, Bockarie, and Ibrahim Bah (former fighter with the NPFL). Anyah questioned whether Bah would speak about diamond sales and whether Taylor would speak about assistance to the RUF in front of an individual they had met for the first time that day.

Anyah also noted that Taylor's residence, White Flower, was not fully constructed in January 1999 when Keita allegedly went to Taylor's house and met Taylor. Although construction began in 1997, the official opening of the residence did not occur until January 28, 1999. Prior to this time, according to Anyah, Taylor lived near the German Embassy. In addition, Anyah emphasized that the transcriptions of Keita's interviews with the OTP make no mention any meeting with Taylor during either his first interview with the OTP on February 2, 2003, his second

meeting with the OTP on June 30, 2003, or his third meeting with the OTP on February 13, 2005. Keita said that he mentioned meeting Taylor during these interviews and stated that any omission was due to OTP error.

Anyah questioned Keita about Bockarie's command over Buedu. When Keita arrived at Buedu, Bockarie took his bodyguards and radio, and said there could be only one commander on the ground. In addition, Anyah noted that Keita had no troops even though he was assigned a very important mission in the region. Anyah noted that Bockarie's alleged actions contradict orders from Taylor and Yeaten. Anyah may have been implying that Taylor never assigned Keita to his position in Buedu.

Contradictions to Abu Keita's Testimony

The Defense questioned Keita regarding individuals whose testimony could further undermine Keita's credibility.

Anyah questioned Keita regarding his relationship with Roosevelt Johnson, leader of ULIMO-J. Anyah pressed Keita about meetings with Johnson in which someone named Dolleh, a member of the transitional government of Liberia of Gyude Bryant, who may have been present. Keita denied that Dolleh, Arma Yulu, or Madison Wion were at any meetings Keita had with Johnson (but noted that Barbor Aruna was at the meeting), and Keita denied Anyah's questions that the meetings involved planning an overthrow of Taylor's government. Keita stated he never knew about the coup attempt.

Anyah suggested an alternative explanation as to why Keita went to Buedu. He asked Keita a series of questions implying that Keita went into hiding in Monrovia after he was arrested and that Sheku Suwape Koroma asked Keita and another man to go to Buedu to help recruit soldiers from Liberia into the RUF. Anyah's questions implied that Koroma gave Keita 500 USD and the other man 400 USD to work for him in Buedu. Anyah's questions further implied that Koroma took Keita and the other man to Buedu to work for Bockarie. According to Anyah, at some point Sam Gboley arrested Keita's partner and Keita was afraid to return to Liberia, at which point Keita stayed in Buedu and joined the RUF. Anyah's final question alleged that Keita was no more than a logistics officer for the RUF in Buedu.

Anyah referenced a meeting between Keita and the OTP in Freetown from November 22-27, 2007. According to Anyah, after this meeting Nancy Bounducca, Mary, and Akim Bombola heard Keita tell Idrissa "Churchill" Kargbo that Keita mentioned Kargbo's name to the OTP and that Keita wanted Kargbo to go along with Keita's statements. Keita allegedly told Kargbo that Kargbo and his family would receive asylum and be relocated if he cooperated with the OTP.

Prosecution Re-examines Abu Keita

Prosecutor Nick Koumjian briefly re-examined Keita. In response to Anyah's questions regarding the OTP's disbursements to Keita, Koumjian noted that the disbursements related to hotel, travel, and other transportation costs. Koumjian questioned Keita regarding radio communications with Yeaten. Keita stated that he spoke directly to Yeaten on a radio about his letter of appointment given to Bockarie to give to Keita.

Prosecution Calls TF1-371

The Court entered into closed session for Prosecution witness TF1-371, who will testify in English, because this witness received protected status in an order on June 14, 2006, from Trial Chamber I in a prior Special Court case against the RUF.

Lead Defense Counsel Courtenay Griffiths objected to this ruling and argued that this particular Trial Chamber must issue an order calling for protective measures. According to Griffiths, a failure to do so would deprive the accused of his ability to challenge the substance or basis of the ruling.

Presiding Judge Doherty noted that the order granting protective status to TF1-371 mandated that testimony of that witness be heard entirely in closed session. Rule 75(F) of the Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence states that once protective orders have been given, they shall continue in effect in any other proceedings before the Court. A party seeking to rescind protective measures ordered in the first proceeding must apply to the Trial Chamber seized of the second proceeding. The Court (by majority decision) ruled that having not received a motion to rescind the order, the order shall stand before Trial Chamber II.

The Court then entered closed session, but reopened to discuss alternatives to completely closed sessions. Presiding Judge Doherty ruled that there would be a modified closed session during which the two side curtains in the public gallery would remain open and the middle curtain would be closed to block public view of the witness. The Court also rejected a Prosecution motion to admit the witness's evidence from the RUF trial.

The Court adjourned to explain these procedures to the witness. When the proceedings resumed, there was a problem with the witness and the Court again entered closed session.

The trial will resume tomorrow morning at 9:30 a.m. and will end early at 1:30 p.m.

Hirondelle News Agency (Lausanne)

Wednesday, 23 January 2008

Violence, Death And Justice

The Hague

The Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) is closely observing recent post-election Kenyan violence, according to reports from The Hague, the court's seat.

Two Kenyan opponents, President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), threatened separately Tuesday to appeal to ICC, but apparently being unaware of the rules of referral.

Asked over the issue, a member of the office of the prosecutor told the Hirondelle News Agency, that "Kenya is a state party of ICC and the Office of the Prosecutor follows all allegations of crimes within its jurisdiction. ".

The statute of the ICC enables it to exercise its jurisdiction if a situation is submitted to the Prosecutor by a State Party or by the Security Council of the UN but it also allows it (Art 15) to exercise its jurisdiction under the terms of an investigation opened by the Prosecutor by his own initiative.

Kenya has been for the past three weeks in a political turmoil that has degenerated into inter-ethnic violence resulting into hundreds of deaths.

Diplomatic initiatives have been launched to resolve the conflict, but until now no tangible solution was in sight.

International humanitarian law is above all else intended to protect civil populations. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY), ICC, the Special Tribunal for Cambodia (STC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) reinforced the concepts of imputability and justice for the victims.

But that did not prevent violence against civilian populations from being repeated throughout Africa.

Instability in the Great Lakes region continues to spread, not to mention of the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

Violence erupted in Kenya immediately after the December 27 election results were announced, which officially gave victory to the incumbent President Mwai Kibaki.

The results were rejected by the leader of the opposition Odinga, who claimed electoral fraud.

The violence involves Kenya's two largest ethnic groups --Kikuyus, tribe of President Kibaki, and Luos, belonging to Mr Odinga.

The violence has resulted in more than 400 deaths, according to the Kenyan government although observers estimate that this figure was closer to a thousand.

The UN has also reported that the violence has displaced about 250 000 people.

The catholic bishop of Eldoret, western Kenya, Rev Cornelius Korir, claimed that the attacks targeted specific ethnic groups and were thoroughly prepared and organized.

This is what a judicial enquiry could determine although to date nothing seems to have been initiated.

However, if there is any ICC intervention than it was subject to four conditions.

The first is that the permanent Court only has a subsidiary jurisdiction, complementary to national criminal jurisdictions.

It cannot intervene if the case which is referred to it is already the subject of an investigation by national jurisdictions or if the State decided not to prosecute (Article 17), unless the State does not have the will or that is in the incapacity to do so.

Only the most serious crimes (genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression) are ascribable and they must have been committed after 2002 (date of entry into force of its Statute).

Kenya signed the Statute in August 1999 and filed its instrument of ratification in March 2005, the attacks, if they were prepared and perpetrated against precise ethnic groups, could constitute a beginning of qualification of crimes against humanity.