

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Friday, August 26, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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By Abu Bakarr S.
Tarawally

First accused of the former Civil Defense Forces (CDF) at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Chief Sam Hinga Norman is determined to block the SLPP national delegates conference un-

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Chief Hinga Norman

No SLPP Convention

From front page

til he becomes a free man. *The African Champion* has learnt. Chief Sam Hinga Norman, who was Deputy Minister of Defense and Minister of Internal Affairs in the present government, is among the eight stalwarts who have declared their intention to vie for the SLPP leadership. But he has dragged the party to the Supreme Court over constitutional matters.

Party sources have disclosed that Chief Sam Hinga Norman has accused President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his

Vice President of being responsible for his indictment at the Special Court despite he fought for the restoration of democracy in the country. The sources quoted Chief Hinga Norman as saying that President Kabbah's and Vice President Solomon Berewa woefully failed to ensure his protection by deliberately signing the agreement that established the Special Court and allowing security men to intimidate him on the day of his arrest at his office at Liverpool Street in Freetown.

It could be recalled that two weeks ago, Chief Hinga Norman refused to see an SLPP delegation that went to see him in order to resolve the present problem in the party behind closed doors.

The SLPP National Chairman, Dr. Sama Siam Banya, led the delegation, according to sources, and other members were the party Secretary General, Dr. Prince Harding, the Minister of Internal Affairs, George Banda - Thomas, former Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Eke Hallaway, and others.

The Exclusive. Friday August 26, 2005.



Pres. Kabbah



Dr. Sama Banya



Dr. Prince Harding



V.P. Berewa

Hinga Norman SLPP Elders

By Feday Fofana

Going by their democratic tradition, the SLPP have taken kindly and respectfully to the

constitutional injunction filed by Special Court war crimes indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman and have shifted the

date for the party's convention even when all arrangements have been made. And this court action was

greatly publicised by the party over the radio and in newspaper advertisement.

Democracy



Charles Margai



Maada Bio

'Wahala!' Step In

That the plaintiff, Chief Norman's case should reach the courts and put the SLPP sched-

ule behind is no mean achievement on the part of the indictee.

Contd. page 2

SLPP Elders Step In

From front page

The world is watching us to know how we would solve this problem.

Mediation

Several attempts have been made at meetings presided by the Head of State such as the one held at the party's headquarters recently and chaired by the leader (Kabbah) himself, to get Chief Norman to understand that his claims could be better settled out of court.

When all this had been done without success, we are now looking up to the Chief Justice, Mr. Ade Renner-Thomas who has stated categorically that he is determined not to be influenced by anything other than the law and precedents.

We equally hope that this matter will be resolved soonest, despite the monumental work load the Chief Justice inherited in our judiciary.

Even if not to save us from wastage as all candidates for the presidency in the SLPP had long booked hotels and guest houses in Makeni; including Chief Norman himself.

The end of this matter ought to come soon so that the two major political parties don't get locked up in an unending legal battle while state functions are relegated to the other day or month.

Fair Treatment

If since his arrest and detention, this is the first time ever that an SLPP delegation had called on him in prison, then this behaviour is questionable.

No matter what, Chief Norman is a force to reckon with and putting it very mildly, he has incited his followers against the present government and assuming he was a free man, he would have wielded a lot of influence.

To the credit of the SLPP as a matter of fact, there were plans to hire the best lawyers to defend Chief Norman. All is well that ends well!

Friday, August 26, 2005

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LAW & HUMAN RIGHTS

Obasanjo must surrender charles taylor for trial

By Kayode Matthew

Posted to the Web: Friday, August 26, 2005

O God, the creator of heaven and earth, you said in your word that the heart of the king is in your hand and that you turn it whichever way you like. Please touch the heart of stone of our President so that he would have no choice but to surrender Charles Taylor to face trial in the Special Court for Sierra Leone for crimes he committed against humanity..."

He started his emotional testimony with this prayer at an open air interdenominational prayer service held recently at the premises of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) on Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja. He is a Nigerian businessman in his thirties from the eastern part of the country and presided over a flourishing legitimate business in Sierra Leone. But on January 19 1999 he had his two hands chopped off on the orders of former Liberian President, Mr Charles Taylor. His only offence was that he is a Nigerian. Mr David Anyele was among hundreds of Nigerians who were slaughtered or dehumanised by rebels sponsored by Charles Taylor during the Sierra Leonean crisis.

Taylor was on a vengeance mission. He had vowed to pay back Nigeria for using ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to stop him from riding triumphantly into the Liberian capital, Monrovia during the Liberian crisis in 1990 and overthrowing the then President Samuel Doe. He was very bitter that he was denied that glory of overrunning Monrovia with his troops and capturing Samuel Doe. Yommie Johnson, the leader of another rebel group took that glory. Although he later became an elected president of Liberia, Charles Taylor never forgave Nigeria and his ambition was therefore to take

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his pound of flesh.

But like someone who has murdered sleep and would forever have insomnia as his companion, he was soon engulfed in crisis and the level of carnage and senseless killings that were going on were such that the international community can no longer pretend to be unconcerned with the Liberian crisis. It was therefore decided that Charles Taylor was the malignant growth on the body of Liberian nation which must be surgically removed in order to restore the nation's health. However, he could not just be eased out of power and thrown into the sea, he needed to be offered a temporary asylum outside his home country. But no country wanted to have a fugitive under his roof except the giant of Africa. Charles Taylor has his biggest investments in South Africa and he built a mansion there but Thabo Mbeki, the South African President would not have Taylor in his country.

As no one was ready to take Taylor home, President Olusegun Obasanjo stepped forward to be used as an instrument to bring peace to Liberia. Charles Taylor then became a guest of the Federal Government of Nigeria and accommodated in a mansion built for him in Calabar, Cross Rivers State. But President Obasanjo's decision to grant political asylum to Charles Taylor in August 2003 was however not without opposition in the country. He was severally accused of taking a unilateral decision without seeking the consent of Nigerians through their representatives in the National Assembly.

But the Presidency believed that it was an executive matter which does not require consultations from any quarter. Suits were filed in court by some Nigerians praying for a judicial intervention to declare President Obasanjo's initiative null and void. Protests were also held and the media were awash with all the necessary noise especially by the civil society groups to compel the President to change his mind and surrender Charles Taylor for trial.

But our President has continued to turn deaf ears to all these agitations and by so doing reminding Nigerians, in case they have forgotten, that he had a pact with world leaders as well as his fellow African leaders, and not Nigerians before bringing Taylor to Nigeria in order to help restore sanity in Liberia.

Having failed so far in all their efforts to arm twist the President and make him see the light on the need to let justice take its course, the civil society groups in Nigeria decided to come together under one platform, the Nigerian Coalition on International Criminal Court and fight the cause of justice. But they have exhausted all the machineries available to man and nothing has worked. They therefore resolved to take their case to God. They argued that when all have failed God would not fail. They must have come to a definite conclusion that it will take only God to bend an unyielding President who has developed thick skin to the cries for justice and mastered the art of ignoring genuine agitations of his people. The coalition therefore resolved to seek the face of God to compel the President to surrender the acclaimed warlord who is running away from justice. An open air

interdenominational prayer session was then held a couple of weeks ago at the premises of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) on Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja.

Among the guests invited by the coalition to offer this special prayer to God were two middle aged Nigerians, Messrs David Anyele and Emma Egbuna. They engaged in legitimate businesses in Sierra Leone before the commencement of the crisis in that country and in the heat of the civil war these men and many other Nigerians became victims of a warmonger in Liberia. The two men were called upon to give testimonies of what they saw and went through in Sierra Leone. In his testimony, Mr David Anyele relieved his painful and dehumanising experience of how his two hands were gruesomely chopped off by a rebel group sponsored by Charles Taylor. He recalled how Nigerians were smoked out of their homes in Sierra Leone and herded to the slaughter camp prepared specially for Nigerians.

According to his testimony, when war broke out in Sierra Leone, the then Liberian President, Mr Charles Taylor sponsored a rebel group with one mission; to fish out every Nigerian living in that country and either kill or dismember them. The rebels were made to believe that Nigeria was actually attacking and destroying their country using ECOMOG as a cover. Nigerians were therefore to be targeted for all manner of dehumanisation so as to send a clear message to the Nigerian government. The rebels therefore moved from one house to another in Sierra Leone searching for Nigerians.

David Anyele was picked up on January 19, 1999 by a rebel group whose commander was incidentally well known to him and taken to a camp on the outskirts of Freetown where other Nigerians had been holed up close to a cemetery. Anyele was told by the commander of the rebel group that they had a standing instruction from Taylor to kill and maim Nigerians. According to him, some Nigerian pregnant women had their stomachs slashed. Some Nigerians were shot to death in the presence of their fellow countrymen and women and dragged to the cemetery close by.

Some had their limbs crudely cut off in the fashion of a butcher and handed a message to take to the Nigerian government to show how disgusted they were towards Nigeria for its role in ECOMOG.

The discretion as to what manner of treatment to be given to a Nigerian whose turn it was to be dealt with was that of the commander of the rebel group. Anyele saw how a Nigerian boy bled to death after his two hands were chopped off as his elder brother was awaiting his own turn. He said: "When it was my turn to undergo the special treatment designed for Nigerians, the commander of the group asked me to lay my two hands one after the other on a slab to be chopped off. I begged them to spare me and told them I was ready to pay any amount for my hands. But the commander said if they allow me to go, another rebel group would find me and either kill or maim me and would even report the first group to Taylor for sparing me.

When I hesitated and was begging them some members of the rebel group brought out their guns saying they would blow off my brain if I don't co-operate with them immediately. Reluctantly, I first laid my left hand on the slab and they started to hack it with a cutlass. As they were cutting it I was groaning in serious pain, I was crying, I was shouting, pleading for mercy but they ignored my cries until they were done with it.

After my left hand had been severed, I offered to pay for my right hand but they would have none of it as they grabbed it and started to cut it. I was then bleeding seriously but I said to myself that I would not die. I was determined to live. I didn't know when I passed out and thinking that I was dead, they dragged me to the cemetery and left me there. An old man found me there and when he discovered that I was still alive he organised some people to carry me. I later found myself in the hands of the ECOMOG soldiers who took me to the hospital for medical attention where I met a few other lucky Nigerians like me who were not killed but mutilated."

Another Nigerian who went through the same ordeal and shared his testimony at the prayer session was one Emma Egbuna who apart from having his arms mutilated also went through the agony of watching his younger brother bled to death after the rebels cut off his two hands.

Emma Egbuna was however "lucky" as his hands were left dangling courtesy of some strands of ligament. He went through series of operations performed by ECOMOG medical doctors and he can now partially use his hands. Some video tapes were said to have been seized from Charles Taylor by the ECOMOG force under the command of former Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Victor Malu.

According to Mr Gbenga Aruleba of the African Independent Television (AIT), who also shared his experience at the prayer session, some of the video tapes which were obtained from General Malu showed gory details of how Charles Taylor mutilated and killed captured ECOMOG soldiers in the same manner in which Yommie Johnson killed Samuel Doe. The tapes, he said, would cause a serious revolt among Nigerians if they saw how their countrymen were killed by Taylor. He believed Nigerians can not watch the tapes and remain the same again.

Listening to the testimonies of these victims it would be a gross understatement to say it was a pathetic case. One cannot but be filled with hatred for the fugitive Liberian warlord who was responsible for all these. One could feel the harrowing experience these victims went through. One could imagine the trauma they were subjected to. Anyele has been permanently denied the use of his two hands without committing any crime. His wife who accompanied him to the prayer session has now become his hands. Although Anyele betrayed no emotions regarding what he went through as he spoke triumphantly like a conqueror who has overcome the pains of man's wickedness, he however expressed determination to continue in his campaign to ensure Charles Taylor is brought to trial. David Anyele is a symbol of Nigerians who went through hell on the orders of Charles Taylor. He

is a living exhibit of what Charles Taylor did to Nigerians in Sierra Leone.

Taylor has now been accused of grievous war crimes and crimes against humanity. The 17 counts charge leveled against him include killings, mutilations, rape, abduction, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence, the recruitment and use of child soldiers and abduction. The International Criminal Court had already issued an international warrant for Taylor's arrest and prosecution before the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

Apart from the series of agitations in Nigeria calling on the President to hand over Charles Taylor for trial, the international community has not relented in the campaigns to ensure that Taylor appears before the United Nations Special Court for Sierra Leone to account for all the atrocities he committed in his native country Liberia as well as in Sierra Leone. On July 28 this year, the Mano River Union which consists of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea called for a review of Taylor's temporary stay in Nigeria.

The Union in a communique issued at the end of its meeting accused Taylor of being involved in an attack on the Guinean president, gathering armed people in the forests of Liberia and making telephone calls to Liberian officials. Also, the United Nations Secretary General Mr Kofi Annan in his June 7 2005 report on Liberia stated that "Taylor is in regular contact with former business, military and political associates in Liberia and is suspected of supporting candidates in Liberia's October presidential election." The European Parliament in February this year passed a resolution calling on Nigeria to surrender Charles Taylor to face trial.

Later in May, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate passed similar resolutions.

And during a visit to West Africa last month, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour called for Taylor to appear for trial at the Special Court and for African leaders to urge President Obasanjo to hand over Taylor. The Campaign Against Impunity, a coalition made up of about 300 African and international civil society groups which was formed to ensure that Nigeria surrenders Charles Taylor to the Special Court, said President Obasanjo should no longer allow Taylor to escape prosecution.

At an anniversary marking Charles Taylor's two years in exile in Nigeria, the coalition stressed that Taylor's trial must take place in accordance with international law and standards for fair trial including the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond any reasonable doubt. It believed that surrendering Taylor to the Special Court is crucial not only to ensure justice is done for crimes committed during the Sierra Leone conflict, but also to ensure stability in West Africa as there are consistent reports of Taylor's interference in Liberian politics despite the terms of agreement granting him asylum which prohibits any such meddling. The Director of Organisation of

CDHR, Mr Shina Loremikan, who co-ordinated the prayer session wondered why Charles Taylor does not want to appear before the U.N. Special Court when the court has no death penalty in its statute. According to him all Taylor can always come back to his mansion in Calabar after answering the charge against him whether or not he is found guilty by the court.

However, despite all these mounting international pressures from African countries, the United Nations, the European Union and the United States for Nigeria to hand over Charles Taylor for trial, president Obasanjo has continued to shield him from prosecution insisting that handing him over for trial was not part of the agreement when he accepted to bring Taylor to Nigeria. But our president can not continue to turn deaf ears to the call to release Charles Taylor for trial. He is standing alone on this matter. The international community has spoken and they are still speaking. Nigerians have spoken and they have refused to keep quiet. Nigerian victims who have been dismembered and rendered useless are crying for justice. The blood of innocent Nigerians whose lives were snuffed out are calling for vengeance.

President Obasanjo can only resist the pressures of mere mortals, he can not stand in the way of the God of justice. Our president must find a way of being on the side of God and be an instrument in His hands to ensure Charles Taylor is brought to justice. If President Obasanjo refuses to surrender Taylor to go and contest the allegations against him justice would definitely be brought to wherever he is hiding including his collaborators.

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Charles Taylor, George Bush: Moral Questions

Daily Champion (Lagos)

OPINION

August 25, 2005

Posted to the web August 25, 2005

By Paul I. Adujie

Lagos

ARTICLES by Pamela Adegbesan and Kenneth Roth regarding the Charles Taylor asylum in Nigeria appeared in The Guardian Opinion Page of August 15, 2005. The articles were bereft of the essence of asylum, as currently enjoyed by Mr. Taylor in Nigeria and worse, they left too many questions unanswered.

Such questions, for instance, must include these: Is Nigeria entitled to grant asylum status to anyone? Must such a person be the Pope or an Angel? And what makes President Charles Taylor a war criminal, if President George W. Bush himself is not war criminal? What is the objective standard of measuring responsibility of war-waging commanders-in-chief? Notwithstanding national population size or wealth of nation that foists war atrocities, brutalities and horrors, whether as in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan or Iraq?

Both writers, also, happily ignored the diplomatic implications for President Obasanjo, and Nigeria, who granted the protective shield of asylum to the former President of Liberia, in the name of Nigeria, a point which is amply conceded by Ms. Adegbesan, to the effect that, the asylum was granted by Nigeria's president, only after extensive consultations were made, these were necessary and proper, given the circumstances, to wit, crises- ridden Liberia with nexus to the crises in Sierra Leone, and by extrapolation, the entire West African region.

Charles Taylor's removal and departure from Liberia was a sorely needed impetus, for ending decades of war, a needed respite for West Africa, in search of peace and development, Charles Taylor's surgical removal from Liberia was at the behest of Nigeria, leaders of other African countries and sundry interested parties with full knowledge of the negotiation's specifics.

What is being sought by Ms. Adegbesan, Mr. Roth and their so-called Coalition, for the "Campaign Against Impunity" and many others unseen and in disguises, is clearly unprecedented and unknown, in the annals of diplomacy, law and even common sense!

President Obasanjo, properly granted asylum to Mr. Taylor, as he took into considerations, the exigent circumstances at the time, severally, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and the entire West African sub-region. Now, all of a sudden, some local elements with perpetual axe to grind with President Obasanjo, have excelled in mixing local political resentments towards him, with their foreign cohorts, in demanding that President Obasanjo summarily abandon all time honored diplomatic finesse, conventions, treaties and known protocols, and just handover Charles Taylor?

It is quite amazing! How do Ms. Adegbesan and Mr. Roth make such arguments with a straight face? What

is and where is the legal or diplomatic precedent for seeking and demanding, that a country (Nigeria) after properly granting political asylum, in compliance with her local laws and constitution, and after adequate and extensive consultations with all concerned were made, such a country, would, volte face, turnover the asylum beneficiary to certain death? Just because NGOs and some others with agendas contrary to Nigeria's national interests chose to malign, blackmail and threaten Nigeria?

Are these demand being made of Nigeria, because it is Nigeria this time? I strongly believe it unthinkable, that anyone would have been making these demands of another country, say the United States! The United States routinely grants asylum statuses to persons worse than Charles Taylor in many ways! Imagine anyone demanding that the US deliver an asylum beneficiary, to another country for judicial proceedings! This makes me want to ask, what exactly is the purpose of asylums? Who is entitled to asylum and why? And by who sets the parameters for politically independent countries?

President Bush and President Taylor are both warmongers! They both subscribe to the Clauswitzian theory or mantra, to the effect that war is the pursuit of public policy by other means, violent means, one might add.

War is an inherently violent activity! Whether it is in Iraq, Vietnam, Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Gettysburg, the Potomac, and or in Biafra! War is not friendly! War must therefore be avoided at all costs! But that is not what we have learnt from President George W. Bush in the preceding four years of heading America's helms of affairs.

The world has come to learn of the use of cluster bombs, bunker busting bombs, nuclear and atomic bombs, agent orange, napalm bombs, shock and awe, etc, all not from Charles Taylor and Liberia, but from George Bush's America, in which resides Dr. Rice, the Secretary of State, who preaches the use of force, as instrument of policy, with retorts like what is the use of having a strong military, if you are not willing to use it? I guess it more like, eager to use military might, as far as the Bush administration is concerned?

Here lies a mother load of contradictions! America is currently waging wars against real and imagined enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq, where thousands of uncountable civilians have been killed and continue to get killed, in what America euphemistically calls collateral damage, in order to sanitize the horrors and death being visited on civilian populations in Afghanistan and Iraq! For America and the rest of the world, this is justified as a cost of conducting the business of war? Who counts dead Iraqi civilians?

All of these, despite the fact that the false premise for the invasion, occupation and needless war by the Americans in Iraq, a war that was fraudulently concocted by the President Bush! Why then, in God's holy name, is President Bush not wanted for crimes against humanity and war crimes, etc? Where is the so-called, much vouched "international community"?

Why is it, that the organs of the United Nations that slept when Mr. Bush invaded and occupied Iraq, in complete disregard for the UN itself, and in complete disregard for international law, rules of sovereignty, territory integrity, as it invaded and occupied Iraq, now provides for the speedy trial of Charles Taylor for who is two of a kind with George Bush?

Why is the much touted "international community" only efficacious and potent, when Charles Taylor, and other issues African, are concerned? Where has the profound power of reward and punishment repost in the "international community" been, as Mr. Bush assaulted the UN, invaded and colonized a sovereign Iraq, under false prettexts? Or in the raging genocide in Darfur Sudan, or its cousin-in-horrors-genocide in Rwanda 10 years ago? Where is the all-knowing, all-powerful 'international community" when Israel built its apartheid walls against Palestinians, killed, maimed and brutalized them in high numbers, as Israel also add daily humiliations of the Arabs as bargain/sweetener?

Those demanding that President Obasanjo surrenders or delivers Charles Taylor to a UN court should similarly recommend George Bush to a UN court for trial for the death and horrors occurring in Iraq, even as I write this! As whatever befits Mr. Taylor, fits Mr. Bush perfectly, for the latter warmongering efforts!

The issues of Charles Taylor asylum, has of course assumed a proportionally bigger picture than the individual merits and lack of merits, of Mr. Taylor. This is now about whether Nigeria's political and legal systems are respected by Nigerians and others, outside our borders. Who decides our national dignity, integrity, national and international respect? And Nigeria's pride of place in the global scheme of things.

And why the double standards in ascertaining or determining who is a war criminal? Charles Taylor was a commander-in-chief, just as George Bush is a commander-in-chief, both commanding war efforts, where things do go terribly wrong, and have in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and conversely, in Abu Gharib Prisons in Iraq, as well as Afghanistan. And neither Charles Taylor nor George Bush personally participated in those foot-soldier atrocities, except that Mr. Bush, like Mr. Taylor, war mongers both, set asinine war policies, based on self-preservation of the Machivellian genre, and both, had no public good in their calculations! Then, if Charles Taylor be adjudged a war criminal, so should George Bush! Or is it one set of rules for the Africans? And special rules for others?

Some questions remain to be asked, such as; what exactly are the yardsticks or parameters for granting asylum statuses and who is so entitled? Must Nigeria be intimidated into handing over Charles Taylor, and then Nigeria loses diplomatic and international credibility, now and for ever? Neither President Obasanjo nor Nigeria should yield to any of these blackmails, threats and intimidations over Charles Taylor, he is now de-individualized, as this debate has assumed a higher magnitude in implications, more than a mere single asylum seeker called Taylor. What is Nigeria's word worth? All our weight!

Nigeria's honor, integrity and credibility are now at stake!



Startling Revelation! - LTE On Taylor's Connections

The Analyst (Monrovia)

NEWS

August 25, 2005

Posted to the web August 25, 2005

Liberians United for Transparent Elections, a Liberian advocacy group that has been pressing for the extradition of former president Charles Taylor says it has evidence that Taylor is still meddling in Liberian politics.

Besides, the group said in a release circulated online recently, Mr. Taylor has met, in Nigeria, with several dissident groups and made several trips outside Calabar to supervise the further destabilization of the ECOWAS subregion.

It believes there is conspiracy in high places within the Nigerian government and that because of that the Government of Nigeria and ECOWAS continue to request for evidence even though there were enough evidence available and presented to warrant Taylor's extradition to Sierra Leone to face his accusers.

The Analyst brings you, verbatim, the group's account of Taylor's connections in the ECOWAS subregion.

"For the past many months, we have closely followed the activities of Charles G. Taylor, the former Liberian dictator now living under political asylum in Calabar, Nigeria. We have gathered ample evidence that Charles Taylor is very much involved in political activities in Liberia and is still lending his support to armed dissidents in the sub-region.

"The exposure of Taylor influence is essential to bring to light those governments, institutions and individuals that are doing business with him behind the scene and publicly defending his sheltering from justice by Nigeria as a deals brokered by the United States and Nigeria to keep him beyond the reach of international justice for the heinous crimes against humanity. We have credible evidence that Charles Taylor was directly involved in the planning, financing and directing the assassination on General Lansana Conteh the President of Guinea in January 2005.

"Between December, 23 and 25, 2004, heads of several West African dissidents started to arrive in Lagos, Nigeria. On December, 27, 2004, they all met in Calabar and held meeting with Charles Taylor on December 28, 2004 at about 1:39 am.

"Those attending that meeting included Gbabo Zumman-Gee Head of the Guinean rebel movement who is presently living in a the city of Kaduna in Nigeria in a house bought by Charles Taylor, Mr. Koukoie Samba Sanyang head of the Gambian rebel group known as the Gambian Redemption Force, Jankaba Samaty a Gambian Special Forces Commando who also works for Taylor as Liberia Ambassador to Libya and he has remained a Gambian citizen, Paul Bah Monic. Others are V. Lando Military advisor to Charles Taylor.

"Also in that meeting was the head of the Sierra Leone new rebel group known as the Independent Revolutionary United Front. His name is been withhold because of an ongoing investigation in West Africa.

And Captain Mbaye Diallo a former commander from Casamance, in Senegal who was assigned to the Ivorian military ruler Robert Gaye and now a special advisor to the New Forces of Guillaume Soro.

On January 5, 2005, we went to the Nigeria Foreign Ministry in Abuja to meet the Foreign Minister. When we arrived at the ministry's main entrance, we talked to one Sergeant Mohammed Larwah, a Nigerian police officer assigned at the ministry.

"We told the sergeant that we wanted to see the minister and what was the procedure? He asked who we were and where we were coming from. I told him that we are Liberians from Ouagadougou. I asked him if Minister Oluyemi Adeniji was in office. I told the officer that we have some documents for him, "You can not see him direct; give me the documents I will give it to his assistant." I call the officer on the side and give him \$10.00 U.S.D. He told us to wait for him he will be back. He went up-stairs came back and took us with him to the minister's office and introduce us to one Mrs. Eli Ekpemuah the executive assistant in the minister's office. Mrs. Eli told us to leave everything for the minister along with our contact information and they will get back to us. We remained in Nigeria for three days without receiving the call from the minister's office. We were expecting a call from the minister to the details of the information we provided to them. Since Nigerians are very corrupt the authorities may not know about Taylor activities. That Nigeria will use the document to contact the various Governments since their nationals were mentioned in its.

"In that document we informed the minister that on December 3, 2004 Charles Taylor traveled from Calabar to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and changed plane and traveled to Benghazi, in Libya. He stayed out of Nigeria for 6 days. He traveled on an aircraft identified as # BF0034-11 AR. The color of the aircraft was dark green. Total passengers on board including Charles Taylor were seven. We told the minister that Charles Taylor was working with Guinean dissidents to assassinate the Guinean President and some of the dissidents were present here in Nigeria and other places. We give him copy of the communication sent by Charles Taylor to one General Coocoo Dennis instructing him to deliver heavy weapons to Captain Mbaye Diallo around the Liberia-Ivorian border. We included copies of the airline ticket for four of the dissidents who had meeting with Charles Taylor. We also included copies of their hotel receipts and phone numbers of other dissidents living in Calabar and other states in Nigeria. Because of the seriousness of the threat against the Guinean president, I remained in the hotel in Nigeria and contacted the Guineans Embassy in Washington. I met with Colonel Mamadou Salemu Diallo outside Washington and later spoke and met the Guinean Minister of Security Mr. Musah Aampil at the M. Plaza Hotel in Accra.

"On January 12, 2005, I called the Guinean minister of security and told him that several dissidents have moved inside Guinea and they along with some active members of the army may attack the president. I also called Mrs. Eli and told her that Charles Taylor's people were attempting to create chaos in the region.

She promised to pass on my message to Minister Adeniji. I never got a call back. I started to become suspicious of Nigeria authorities. On January 19, 2005 the president was attacked and the investigation began. Some of the suspects arrested had direct link to Charles including two of those that attended the Calabar meeting. For verification reason I am giving your news organization the phone # of the Former Minister of Security of Guinea, Mr. Sampil cell +224-260-749 and the present Minister of Security Mr.

Osuman Camara +224-291-06 During the investigation I asked Mr. Musah Sampil why the Guinean Government was not going public that Charles Taylor was behind the assassination of their president? He said the Nigerian Government has asked them not to go public, that the Nigerian president and foreign minister have both spoken with the Guinean President and the prime minister. That they will resolve the issue in ECOWAS not in the press.

After the January incident, the Guinean intelligence and our organization started to monitor Charles Taylor activities in Calabar Nigeria and Ouagadougou Burkina Faso separately. On February 16, 2005 Charles Taylor arrived in Ouagadougou and remained in his own house in the Badua District in the capital. He met lots of people including politicians from Liberia that were there to receive money to help with their party campaigns. This was the second time on record Taylor has traveled out of Nigeria. We did not observe him

traveling to Libya this time.

Party Funding.

"Regarding Charles Taylor meddling in Liberian electoral process, we have proof that he continues to pay money to several Liberian politicians. On Feb. 26 one of Charles Taylor's emissaries paid US \$150, 000 (One Hundred & Fifty Thousand dollars). In a email sent to the emissary, Mr. Taylor said: "You must do as directed, time is not on our side, in difficult time we look up to our friends. Let me know. Thanks."

"President Obasanjo persistent requests for new evidences to turned Charles Taylor over to the UN tribunal is a front to deny ECOWAS, AU, UN, the international community and the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone the opportunity to bring criminals to justice. Charles Taylor's presence in Nigeria has undermined the credibility of Nigerian foreign and security policies and deal a collateral damage to the image and influence of Nigeria as an African power.

"Now we know that the presence of Charles Taylor in Nigeria is reduced to personnel and business interests between President Obasanjo and his Foreign Minister Adeniji."

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The Inquirer

August 22, 2005 Monday

Four Presidential Candidates Outline Visions

Appearing in the first of a series of debates organized under the European Commission Electoral Program in Liberia and carried live on four local radio stations, four presidential candidates expounded on their respective platforms, which were coincidentally similar.

-SNIP-

They also expressed similar views on the issue of former President Charles Taylor, noting that if the Liberian people express the wish to have him turned over to the Special Court in Sierra Leone, such will be done.

They concurred that if it is proven that he has violated the deal that took him (former president Taylor) into exile in Nigeria, then, he must be turned over.

-SNIP-

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22 in race for presidency

Katherine Houreld | Monrovia

25 August 2005 11:59

Out by Monrovia's crumbling airport is a ramshackle settlement known by the Liberian people as Smell-no-taste. The older people still remember when United States soldiers were stationed there during World War II, tantalising hungry locals with the smell of their rations cooking.

More than 50 years later, the people are still hungry and there is still no electricity, but there is a different smell in the air. After decades of brutal dictatorships punctuated by even more brutal civil wars, Liberia is about to hold elections.

The election commission has cleared 22 presidential hopefuls for the contest, including Roland Massaquoi, seen as a protégé of the disgraced Charles Taylor; former rebel leader Sekou Conneh; and two lawyers -- US-educated Charles Brumskine and corporate high-flier Varney Sherman, who is close to the transitional government.



Liberians are upbeat about the upcoming elections (Photograph): AP

However, the two faces most frequently seen peering from cracked taxi windows and plastered on to walls are those of George Weah -- former world footballer of the year who played for Chelsea and AC Milan -- and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard-educated former World Bank official and political veteran. If elected, 70-year-old Johnson-Sirleaf would be Africa's first female president.

Surrounded by jostling fans and youths in dark "security" T-shirts and police-style vests at the formal launch of his campaign this Tuesday, Weah shouted: "I have a dream to call you Monrovia city. I have a dream to educate your children. I have a dream to make you all like George Manneh Weah. When I came from the ghetto, they said I would never make it. They told me it was impossible. I say this because you are in my shoes."

Earlier he promised, "I don't need political experience to give you schools. I don't need political experience to give you lights and water, or to see that the roads are bad. I know where you come from."

In a country where there has been no electricity for 14 years and literacy only just tops 50%, the footballer's popular message and lack of formal education only enhance his popularity. Born one of 13 children in a shanty town outside of Monrovia, and raised by his grandmother, Weah is now a multimillionaire, and has ploughed much of his money into charity work and Liberia's national soccer team. Supporters say that his current wealth proves he is not seeking to plunder the national coffers, the traditional pastime of leaders.

But, other candidates have seized on his lack of political experience or university education. "This is not the time for someone to learn on the job," Johnson-Sirleaf insisted in an interview with the Mail & Guardian.

While Weah's speeches are eloquent in identifying the problems facing Liberia, Johnson-Sirleaf articulates solutions -- pruning a bloated civil service, labour-intensive infrastructure repairs, and a mandatory code of conduct for public officials. Johnson-Sirleaf, who supported Taylor in the early years of his presidency but later ran against him, acknowledged that Weah had a record untainted by corruption but said his inexperience meant "you have to look at those around him, and that's where

the questions come, because you see a lot of shady characters”.

Mike McGovern, the West Africa director of the International Crisis Group, echoed that warning. “Every single candidate in these elections is surrounded by people who want to enrich themselves. There’s definitely room for caution, real caution, in his [Weah’s] case and all the other candidates,” he said. “Personality is often emphasised in politics but what Liberia needs is widespread institutional reform in the security forces, judiciary and economy.”

Weah is learning the political game, however, and has been nicknamed “African pride” by Nelson Mandela. He kicks off his speeches with the clenched fist salute and shouts of Amandla!

Whoever wins October’s contest, the next head of state can hardly do worse than their predecessors. The previous president, Taylor, is indicted for war crimes and in exile in Nigeria; Samuel Doe, who came before, had his ears chopped off while being tortured to death; he had succeeded William Tolbert, who was bayoneted and disemboweled in his bed.

The elections are required by the peace deal, signed in August 2003, which pushed Taylor into exile. Altogether, 15 000 United Nations soldiers, the world’s largest peacekeeping force, currently patrol the country. Liberia, founded by freed American slaves more than 150 years ago, has been governed in the intervening two years by a transitional administration led by Gyude Bryant, a popular entrepreneur who is not allowed to stand.

The capital, Monrovia, is still badly scarred from years of a civil war in which heavily armed children -- often dressed in bizarre wigs and dresses -- slaughtered one another. At least a quarter of a million died in the conflict. Weah’s own family house was burned down in 1996 and Johnson-Sirleaf was twice imprisoned by the Doe regime.

After a scuffle with Johnson-Sirleaf supporters on the first day of campaigning, some observers are worried that Weah’s popularity has attracted opportunists and youths with a history of violence. It is a charge emphatically rejected by the footballer, who told supporters “even if someone slaps you on your right jaw, turn your left jaw and do not engage in violent acts”.

Yet, in a country with an unemployment rate of 85%, which has seen its national budget fall from \$500-million to \$80-million in 25 years, and where no candidate is entirely free from tainted loyalties or allegations of shady allegiances, electioneering has been surprisingly peaceful. The international community is feeling upbeat. Democracy seems close -- so close the Liberians can nearly taste it.

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Top UN envoy calls on Sierra Leone to address gender disparities

25 August 2005 – Serious gender disparities, if not addressed, could frustrate sustainable development in Sierra Leone as it recovers from its long civil war, a top United Nations envoy to the West African country said yesterday.

Speaking in Aberdeen at a workshop on Security Council Resolution 1325, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Victor Angelo also called on the Government and on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to give top priority attention to the political and economic empowerment of women in their independent programmes and projects.

Resolution 1325 calls on all Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels.

Mr. Angelo, who is also UN Development Programme (UNDA) Resident Representative for Sierra Leone, advocated the promotion of national ownership, which he defined as the ability to decide what should be on the agenda, what should be the priorities and where money should be invested.

He told participants that Sierra Leone would not experience any sustainable development if it could not combine its own national resources with resources coming from donor countries. One of the ways of attracting money from the donor community was to show more commitment to resource mobilization as well as to its judicious use, he also said.