

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:

Tuesday, July 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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Witness reveals...

Adama 'cuthand' ordered the amputation of civilians

By Betty Milton

In his evidence at trial chamber II of the Special Court, Prosecution witness

TF1-157 has explained that Adama 'cuthand' ordered the amputation of civilians in Freetown. The witness maintained that

when they entered Freetown on the 6th of January people were killed houses and vehicles were burnt down, it was at this point that Adama

ordered that the civilians should be amputated which made the rebels engage in massive amputation of civilians. The witness who

was testifying in Mandingo told the Court that when the rebels entered Freetown, the civilians were tormented
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Adama 'cuthand' ordered the amputation of civilians

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as they were forced to sing for the troops while some were burning the houses and after some time, some civilians were ordered to put out the fire. "The troops then went in search of Police Officers. The rebels would disguise as civilians and went in search of the Police Officers who when found, were killed together with their families and their houses burnt down. It was during this period that the Eastern Police Station was burnt down. A Government Minister was also killed at Kissy." The 20-years-old witness said that he was captured by the rebels in his village in Bonoya in the Bombali District. Some of the rebels he said were in combat

fatigues and others in civilian attire. "During this attack, six people were killed, and four houses burnt down. Those killed included my elder brother, uncle and two children of my uncle who were thrown into a fire. Mamie Adama and Momodu, were wounded. I and some other children were forced to carry loads for them." He narrated how they went through many villages whose names he could not remember and how the troops attacked Rosus where a Muslim man was stripped naked and killed by Musa through the command of

Captain Junior. He noted, "we were attacked by the ECOMOG jet which forced us to leave Rosus and went to Red Lion where we stayed for some time. While we were at Red Lion, we usually cross a river to search for food. On one occasion a man was left behind when we returned the next day we saw that his body had been chopped by the Kamajors and was placed at the junction." The troops then decided to head for Freetown going through Lunsar where houses were also burnt and civilians killed. Mamamah, Waterloo and Benguema where attacked and Saj, Musa died at Benguema, he said.

'Why No Sierra Leonean Deputy Prosecutor For Special Court?'

By Mohamed Mansaray

The founder and Executive Director of a voluntary social organisation, the Burnabas Foundation, Leonis Golley-Morgan, has expressed concern over the partial implementation of Article 3 of the Special Court agreement signed between the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

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Concern Over Appointment Of Deputy Prosecutor At Special Court

In an exclusive interview with SALONE TIMES at our 16 Upper Brook Street office recently, Golley-Morgan said that Article 3 (2) makes provision for the appointment of a Sierra Leonean as Deputy Prosecutor of the court.

The Article reads: "The government of Sierra Leone, in consultation with the Secretary-General and the Prosecutor, shall appoint a Sierra Leonean Deputy Prosecutor to assist the Prosecutor in the conduct of the investigations and prosecutions."

According to Golley-Morgan, there are competent Sierra Leoneans in and outside the country to hold the Deputy Prosecutorship and wonder why foreigners continue to be appointed to the position.

"This is the second time that Sierra Leoneans have been denied the position", he said and accused stakeholders of the court of breaching the above clause of the agreement. He however appealed for a Sierra Leonean to be appointed to the position.

On Charles Taylor, Golley-Morgan said that the exiled former Liberian President would be a serious security threat to Sierra Leone if extradited to the Special Court. "Taylor still has strong loyalties in Liberia," adding that though in exile in Nigeria, the indictee is reported to have been fermenting trouble in the West African Sub-region.

He said there are also rumours that Taylor has some kind of link with the Al Qaeda terrorist movement.

Golley-Morgan went on to say that the amount of money that has been spent on the construction and the running of the court would have helped in some way to complete the most desired Bumbuna hydro project thereby increasing economic stability of the country.

Editorial

Hinga Norman's Presidential Chances

THE issue of declaration for the leadership of the SLPP by potential presidential hopefuls is becoming very alarming. So far six political heavy weights have declared their intentions. The latest to join the fray is Dr. Njalley from the USA.

However, this number will be swelled up to seven contestants when war crimes indicted Hon. Chief Sam Norman declares on Sunday 31st July. And there is no knowing what the number of contestants will be at the close of declarations.

IF reports monitored by the *Monitor* are anything to go by then it remains to be seen how a man held in captivity for serious human crimes intends to sell his ideas. Does he believe that come 2007 he will walk out a free man? How is he going to compromise his stance for the very power he is vying for without stepping on the nerves of his chief defendant in court Charles F. Margai? That a man who is being tried for war crimes can have the audacity to stand not only as a candidate in a General Election but as a leader of the party under whose rule he was detained is a phenomenon that cannot easily be explained away by keen watchers of our political landscape. Before he became a local Chief, Hinga Norman was a soldier in our colonial army and he has the distinction of being the first Sierra Leonean who took the bold step in arresting a Governor General in Sierra Leone's first coup d'etat. His boldness in the present bid for SLPP leadership therefore cannot be surprising to members of the older generation.

IT is a well-known fact that those who were members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) who were mainly Kamajors have been clamoring for the release of Chief Hinga Norman on the grounds that he should not have been detained in the first place because he was acting in the interests of the defence of the nation. They even contended that it is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces who should have been charged. THEY no doubt constitute what War Crimes indicted Chief Hinga Norman referred to in his letter of seeking election as "all sections of the party throughout the country" whose "overwhelming calls" he says he is responding to. It is unlikely that that statement can be true judging from the fact that Chief Norman hails from the Southern Province and the fact that the Kamajor corps of the CDF was mainly drawn from the Southern and Eastern Province and tribally balanced in favour of the Mendes.

WITH this background Chief Hinga Norman is either testing his popularity or he is providing a teaser to the powers that be. And in the process he is going to throw a spanner in the works by which the "ungrateful" SLPP may split up and so lose the election. His candidacy cannot be taken lightly and it has certainly caused all would be contestants to get the jitters.

A very curious and historic situation is building up as an accused plans to contest against his counsel. Humanly speaking Mr. Charles Margai, counsel for Chief Norman who had earlier declared his candidacy cannot wholeheartedly seek to free a man who will stand against him and possibly reduce his votes or even defeat him at the polls. In that case Chief Norman could be unwittingly reducing his chances of acquittal or he may have made a secret pact with Mr. Margai to throw in his lot with him at the last minute. The whole confused scenario is made possible by the absence of a candidate with enough charisma or popularity to stalk the declaration process. This is the situation which may force President Tejan Kabbah to change his mind at the last minute to contest in order to prevent a disintegration of the party.

THE pending candidacy of Chief Norman is one of the liberties of Western democracy. By a fortuitous circumstance he may walk out of jail as a free man and President of the Republic of Sierra Leone but the chances of that happening are very very slim.

Christian Monitor. Tuesday July 26th 2005.

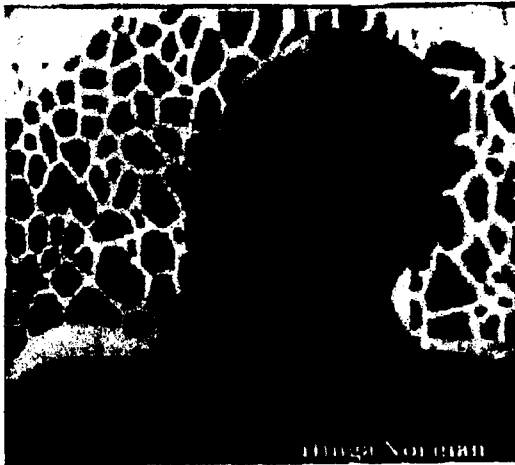
Christian Monitor. Tuesday, July 26th 2005.

Hinga Norman Declares July 31st

The current political drama unfolding in post war Sierra Leone is nearing saturation point as more political heavy weights join the fray in making their intentions clear.

The ruling SLPP party has witnessed almost six contenders for the enviable position of leading the SLPP and to subsequently become Head of State. Meanwhile, reports moni-

tored by the Monitor suggest that war crimes indicted Hon. Chief Sam Hinga Norman will declare his interest for the leadership of the party come July 31st 2005.



Announcing the Chief's political ambition at the SLPP headquarters on Friday 22, July 2005, the spokesman of the disbanded civil defense force

(CDF) Rev. Alfred Sam Foray told the gathering that a formal campaign team will soon be set up. According to him, such campaign teams will also be

formed in both the UK and the USA.

Reports further state that immediately after Rev. Sam Foray made his pronouncement a statement in respect of the SLPP leadership purported to have been made by the indicted War Crimes Chief was released.

Among many things in wooing his potential electorate, he observed that, "I am a loyal member of our party and have always remained faithful to its cause even at grave personal risk. I believe I have the qualities to ably lead the party. I also have the national stature and vision to pro-

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Hinga Norman

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while the rest of leadership has been divided our party in the recent past. As a fellow member of the party it will be a singular honour

for me to be allowed to lead our party. I hope I can count on your support".
Let's wait and see as events unravel as of Sun-

day 31st July 2005. However, the veracity of the excerpts of this information cannot be fully substantiated as we go to press.

SLPP leadership race... **Hinga Norman to declare on Sunday**

By EDWARD MARAH

Special Court indictee Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, former deputy Defense minister and national coordinator of the defunct pro-government 'Kamajor' militia currently in detention at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, has expressed his intention to contest the forth coming leadership election of the SLPP.

In a letter dated 15th July 2005, addressed to the SLPP National Chairman and Secretary General, Chief Norman requested to be allowed to use the party headquarters office at Rawdon Street on Sunday



Hinga Norman... throwing the spanner in the works
31st July 2005, to declare his intention to contest as presidential nominee and leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party. The letter stated thus:

"I hereby respectfully inform you and through you the current National Leader, National Executive Council, (NEC) other organs and the general membership of my

intention to offer myself to the free democratic choice of the party to be considered for election as presidential nominee and leader of the SLPP at the national party conference "

Chief Norman stated further in the letter that he wished to reserve his reasons for intending to offer himself for the said contest, but added that he would elaborate at the proper time and place before the appropriate body and sessions or meetings, whenever fitting modalities are put in place for the purpose

Meanwhile, it is not yet

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Hinga Norman to declare on Sunday

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clear weather Mr. Norman would be allowed to do his declaration due to security reasons. Special Court

sources intimated Standard Times. Alternative venues such as the British Council and Miatta Conference hall have been reportedly identified

awaiting approval by the registrar of the Special Court. It is hoped that the venue will be confirmed before Friday, sources speculated

c/o The Registrar,
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Jomo Kenyatta Road
FREETOWN

TO:

1. National Chairman
2. National Secretary-General

Both of: Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP)
SLPP Headquarters
29 Rawdon Street
FREETOWN

Thru: The Registrar
Special Court

Dear Sirs,

DECLARATION OF INTENT TO CONTEST AS PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE & LEADER OF THE SLPP TOWARDS THE NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 2007

I hereby respectfully inform you, and through you the current National Leader, National Executive Council (NEC), other organs, and the general membership of our great and beloved Party, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), of my intention to offer myself to the free democratic choice of the Party to be considered for election as **Presidential Nominee and Leader of the SLPP** at the National Party Conference, whenever the next opportunity for such election in the Party properly falls due within the relevant provisions of the Party Constitution 1995.

2. Please permit me to say, with the greatest diffidence and respect, that for now I wish to reserve my reasons for intending to so offer myself for the said contest, which reasons will however be amply stated and elaborated at the proper times and places before the appropriate bodies and sessions or meetings whenever fitting modalities are put in place for the purpose.

3. Meanwhile, I hereby also apply and request that you kindly grant me the use of the top-floor hall at the **Party Headquarters in Freetown as venue for making my Declaration of Intent and Launching of Campaign on SUNDAY, the 31st JULY 2005 at 2 p.m.**

4. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience, and hopefully at least a whole week before 31st July 2005, especially considering current developments within the Party and my own special circumstances at the present time.

5. And thank you for continuing to take care of the Party

Yours faithfully,

CHIEF SAM HINGA NORMAN

Christian Monitor. July 26th 2005 (Tuesday).

Nigeria Not Ready To Handover Taylor

Nigeria is yet to see anybody or country come up with evidence that Charles Taylor was meddling with the politics of Liberia, General Abdu Salami Abubakarr, former Nigerian military leader said recently in Liberia.

Abubakarr who is also the chief mediator of the Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS) in the Liberian peace process released this bombshell following desperate attempts recently by the Special Court and its partners to get Charles Taylor returned to Sierra Leone to face trial following claims that he breached the asylum pact he had with Ni-

geria by interfering in the politics of Liberia.

General Abubakarr observed, "Charles Taylor left Liberia almost two years now. What influence will he wield, how much control does he have over his lieutenants and how many telephone calls can he make to change the situation there or destabilize the country?"

Addressing his audience, the General painted a very good picture about the general stability and the unfolding political process in spite of the plethora of problems confronting the nation.

As the nation warms up for both parliamentary and presidential elections in less than three months, 30 political parties have been registered while 3.5 million electorate have also registered.

He further stated that nearly 24 months after the end of the long dictatorship of Charles Taylor, much has been achieved. For instance 30,000 war recruits were disarmed and paid off, 16,000 peacekeepers are currently stationed in Liberia whilst the sum of \$11m is being sought from donor nations for the payment of 40,000 regular soldiers. This according to him is a clear manifestation that the future is very bright for the beleaguered nation to rise up from the ashes of war. Spokesman for the UN-backed Special Court, Peter Andersen when contacted said the legal justification for sending back Charles Taylor to Sierra Leone is based on the indictment issued by the court, for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

UNAMSIL is illegal

By Mohamed T. Fofanah

Parliament Monday refused to legalise the status of the United Nations Mission In Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) when the agreement, which was signed on the 4th August 2000 was tabled before them for

ratification. The former Minister Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Sama Banya on behalf of the Sierra Leone Government, signed the formal agreement with Ambassador Oluyemi

Adeniji, ex-Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on behalf of UNAMSIL. The agreement was laid on the table of the House on

Friday 22nd July 2005 and was presented by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Alhaji Kamara. The Speaker of the House, Honourable Justice Cowan advised the Deputy Minister

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UNAMSIL is illegal

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to take back the Agreement to the Attorney General and Minister of Justice and the other people concerned to revisit the document again before coming with it to Parliament. The Speaker stated that as a lawyer he knows the "implications" the present status of UNAMSIL would present. Many Parliamentarians applauded this move by the Speaker to refuse the ratification of the SL UNAMSIL agreement. The Parliamentarians noted that if the Speaker had allowed a debate on the ratification

some of them would have stood up and thrown it out of Parliament. They also noted that the Deputy Minister in presenting the Agreement revealed the "hidden agenda" for ratification, and that is to give immunity to UNAMSIL as they are facing many charges, suits and other liabilities during their operations in the country. and ratification of the Agreement will give them immunity from prosecution or to suffer for any liability. The Parliamentarians noted that the government is rushing in with the agreement after five years

for ratification to give UNAMSIL legality and thus immunity for only four months to UNAMSIL's departure. One MP said, we would not be rubber stamping and that the government should have known that under section 118 subsection (2) of the Sierra Leone Constitution which says "an Agreement entered pursuant to sub section (1) shall be laid before parliament and shall not come into operation unless the same has been approved by a resolution of parliament." The MP pointed out that in effect UNAMSIL had been operating illegally up till now.

Cocorioko website

http://www.cocorioko.com/news_corner

Special Court revelations.

How a civilian was killed for his palm wine

Thursday July 26, 2005

Tamba Borbor reports from Freetown

During cross-examination by Mr. Kanoops - Defence lawyer for former AFRC commander Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, prosecution witness TF1-045 has stressed that he saw one civilian shot dead by an ARFC soldier for his palm wine in Tongo.

During examination in chief, the witness had stated that he saw many people killed for different reasons during the three months he was in Tongo after the overthrow of the legitimate Government. The Defence lawyer further asked him whether he was present when any of these killings were done.

The witness said he was at the scene when one civilian was shot dead by a soldier because of his palm wine. As a result one of the commanders in punishing the soldier for killing a civilian unnecessarily ordered him to stretch out his hand away from his body. The soldier was shot in the arm and he went away crying.

Another incident took place at Lamin Street, Tongo Field, where two civilians were also killed. He also narrated that civilians were beaten just to mine for the troops, if they are not lucky they would be killed. The witness who was also a member of the RUF denied knowing any of the AFRC Commanders until during a meeting held at the Wilberforce Mess where he saw the Chief of Army staff, and the Chief of Defence Staff of the Revolution.

The witness said he was present at another meeting held at the residence of Johnny Paul Koroma at Spur Road where his commander was given an appointment. At that meeting also the witness said he saw ?55', Bazy, the Chief of Staff and General Bropleh. The witness said that he only saw these Commanders but he does not know them well.

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 25 July 2005**

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

International Clips on Liberia**UN reports challenges for keeping Liberia's peace process on track**

Jun 24, 2005 UNITED NATIONS

Despite tangible signs of progress in Liberia's peace process, significant challenges still need to be urgently addressed, including dealing with ex-combatants who are now resorting to violence and threatening to disrupt upcoming elections, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a report on Friday.

International Clips on West Africa

EIU ViewsWire 25/07/2005 13:42:15

Guinea politics: Bad government, bad neighbour

Guinea's looming power vacuum endangers West Africa's recovery. Guinea has been more stable in recent years than its neighbours. But many Guineans now fear the reverse. As Sierra Leone and Liberia grope towards a semblance of order and democracy, Guinea is wobbling. The International Crisis Group, says that it "risks becoming West Africa's next failed state". That would be disastrous for Guinea--and may stymie its neighbours' faltering progress too.

Gbagbo says he's 'done his job'

24/06/2005

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo said Friday he had carried out his duties in tackling the crisis in his country, and that he was now waiting for other parties involved to follow suit. Gbagbo said he would assess the peace agreements signed on April 6 in Pretoria, South Africa, during meetings to be held there next week.

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board and would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Ms. Kadiatu Konteh at kontehk@un.org.

NigeriaWorld website

<http://nigeriaworld.com/articles/2005/jul/251.html>

Sam Kargbo

WHY CHARLES TAYLOR SHOULD BE SURRENDERED TO THE UN SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE

Africa today is at crossroads. The increasingly successful campaign for more foreign aid and debt forgiveness has inspired talk of a new lease on life for the beleaguered continent. In truth, Africa is facing the choice of either hinging its future on western aid and submitting itself to a 21st century 'benign colonialism' or lifting herself up from the dung heap of humanity and taking decisive control of her own destiny.

The most compelling temptation confronting Africa is the fruit of foreign aid being waved suggestively by the west. Thanks to the efforts of campaigners such as the British duo, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, Bono and Jeffrey Sachs among others, debt relief and increased aid for Africa is now on the front burner of the international community. Many voices both at home and abroad have pointed out that corrupt and despotic leadership of which Africa has suffered an epidemic affliction for decades is as much to blame for the continent's condition as the debt burden. In fact, the debt burden arose from the mismanagement of African economies by inept governments.

The Live 8 concerts that held across the world in early July were a formidable pop music campaign to create more awareness on the condition of the world's poorest continent. Twenty years ago, similarly, some of the world's finest artistes had banded together for Africa's sake staging memorable events such as 'USA for Africa' and 'Live Aid.' 'We are the world' written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie remains the world's top selling pop charity anthem. But the question is what did 'Live Aid' and USA for Africa really accomplish in the eighties and what can their latest incarnation, Live 8, accomplish now? Observers ask, hasn't Africa, in fact, gotten worse since those campaigns? Pragmatists here and abroad have realized that bad governance can still undo western aid.

WHILST he was still President of Liberia, Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor was on March 3, 2003 indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown. The Special Court fingered him as one of those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law in the territory of Sierra Leone between November 30, 1996, and the end of that country's ten year fratricidal war. The indictment was published by the Prosecutor, Robert Crane on June 6, 2003. The publication of the Indictment coincided with a time Taylor was attending peace talks in Ghana. His Government was facing serious threats from rebels who had commandeered a better part of the country. To arrest the drift and to prevent the renewed war in Liberia spilling over to neighbouring countries, ECOWAS leaders facilitated the peace talks between his embattled government and the rebel groups.

Besides his notorious role in fuelling the barbaric civil war in Sierra Leone and destabilizing that country during her eleven year war, the seventeen count charge accused Taylor of several atrocities including exciting rebellions in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, causing mayhem, mass murders, smuggling of minerals and crimes against humanity. As it were the Prosecutor also published Taylor's Warrant of Arrest along with the indictment. The Warrant of Arrest went as far as appealing to the international community and INTERPOL to take all necessary steps to have Taylor arrested and turned over to the Special Court for Sierra Leone and to identify and locate assets owned by Taylor and adopt provisional measures to freeze such assets.

The international enthusiasm that greeted the publication of the indictment and the issuing of the Warrant of Arrest was surprisingly not complemented by the necessary political will of the leaders of the West African sub region. Ghana was the first Country to demonstrate the set mind of sub regional authorities over Charles Taylor's indictment. In utter disregard for international law and spite for the Special Court, Ghanaian authorities did not only refuse to arrest and hand over Charles Taylor to the Special Court but also considered the service of the Warrant of Arrest on them as a declaration of war against Ghana by the Special Court. In accordance with its jurisdiction and powers the Special Court had endeavoured to serve the Warrant of Arrest on the Ghanaian Government before Taylor attended the peace talks in Ghana. With Charles Taylor out of his tuff and in neutral grounds the Special Court had hoped that the Ghanaian Government would do what was right and arrest and hand over Taylor.

Instead of cooperating with the Court and the international community over the international criminal with international indictment and Warrant of Arrest, the Ghanaian Government first shamefully denied receipt of the Warrant of Arrest and then expressed disgust at the auspicious request of the Special Court. In the words of Nano Akufo-Addo the then Foreign Minister of Ghana, the Indictment and Warrant of Arrest were embarrassing to the Government of Ghana. To my mind what was embarrassing was Ghana's excuse that the peace talks were more important than the collective efforts of conscionable world to have Charles Taylor face the legitimate legal proceedings against him. Although, out of panic, Taylor left Ghana immediately, discerning observers were quick to read the hurdles that the Special Court for Sierra Leone was up against.

Reacting to Ghana's show of shame, a commentator, Joseph Tellewoayan commented as follows: "Although the timing of the publication of the indictment and the warrant of arrest may have stall the peace process, the aforementioned negative reactions to the UN tribunal's action should be viewed within a broader context---most modern African nations have little regard for the rule of law and the judicial process. For many, the judicial process is seen not as part of a societal procedure that attempts to adjudicate disputes and criminal activities, but a nuisance. When President Obasanjo of Nigeria recently visited Liberia to discuss amnesty for President Charles Taylor, his reaction toward the charges brought against Charles Taylor was, "...I will not be pressured.." an apparent reference to the fact that he was not going to be pressured by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He showed no respect for the UN/Sierra Leonean tribunal."

For some reasons, which may be quite unconnected with the national interest of Liberia and sub regional security, America that had tacitly encouraged Taylor to lord himself over hapless Liberians, issued an ultimatum to Taylor to vacate office at about the same time. In particular UN and other intelligence report had discovered Taylor's links with Al-Qaeda. Taylor was said to have hosted and provided sanctuary for Al Qaeda agents since 1998 and those that were involved in the September 11,2001 attack on America were said to have shuttled between Monrovia and Burkina Faso for a long time. Hemmed in between rebel groups that had taken over seventy per cent of the country and America's sudden expression of urgency over the call for him to leave office, Charles Taylor became panicky. Sensing that America was serious and fearful of the dire consequences of defying the policeman of the world, Charles Taylor frantically scouted for a willing country for soft landing. Part of the conditions he gave before vacating office was that he would not be handed over to the Special Court for prosecution.

Whereas there was a consensus on the need for Taylor to abdicate office, there was the thorny issue of where he should relocate to outside Liberia. France was particularly bothered about the precarious situation of having a renewed war at the borders of Cote d'Ivoire. Some observers expressed the opinion that though France was not averse to the option of exile, it was anxious to see that Taylor went to a country that could cage him. President Obasanjo's international stature coupled with Nigeria's ascendancy in West Africa made Nigeria the first choice of the negotiators and mediators. But accepting Taylor in Nigeria meant disregarding history and taunting and stretching Nigeria's magnanimity too far.

Nigeria did not only waste billions of naira to an ungrateful Liberia but also lost soldiers and civilians to a vengeful and malicious Charles Taylor. Against the gale of public opinion however, President Olusegun Obasanjo volunteered to host Charles Taylor and shield him from facing trial before the Special Court in Sierra Leone. The Special Court has since November 27,2003 served on Nigeria the Warrant of Arrest but President Obasanjo has remained defiant and stuck on his position that he would only hand over Taylor to a government that would be established after elections that were scheduled to hold in October 2005. The public condemnation and call for the transfer of Taylor has been rising by the day.

President Obasanjo's unconvincing argument for his obstinacy and continued defiance of the global opinion and refusal to transfer Taylor to the Special Court has been that the coming of Taylor to Nigeria was influenced by an ECOWAS/AU decision which made Nigeria, the biggest investor in the security of the sub region, to bear the brunt of hosting the fugitive Taylor. There are also views that hold that America, Britain and France were parties to the consultations and negotiations that resulted in the coming of Taylor to Nigeria. Collin Powell, America's former Secretary of State, who was a key hand in negotiating Taylor out of office, confirmed America's involvement in the decision on Taylor's exile in Nigeria. By these facts, President Obasanjo was pressured to receive Taylor by an international community that felt that Taylor was a Bull in a china shop, which required the tact and craft of an Obasanjo to handle. This actually lends

credence to the position of President Obasanjo and his advisers that it is morally wrong and an abuse of Nigeria's hospitality and sacrifice to now turn around and blame Nigeria for Taylor's delay in facing his past records in the Special Court.

It also shed light on the argument that if Nigeria capitulates and surrenders Taylor then it would lose its traditional integrity with which it has been solving many problems on the continent. Indeed, President Obasanjo might be a villain at home but he is highly regarded in international circles partly because of his honesty and dedication and loyalty to collective decisions. Since he assumed power, there had hardly been an programme of note or beneficial cause on the continent that he did not champion or contributed to immensely. The nearest person to his stature is President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. But in relation to Taylor the core issue is way beyond the credit standing of Obasanjo in the continent. Rather it is about what Nigeria stands to gain and lose in defying a resolved international community to have villains in the ilk of Taylor punished to serve as a deterrent to others that have the tendency to shame humanity with their barbarism.

Of course the moralistic arguments about the need to fulfill promises of the nature given by President Obasanjo to Taylor can be canvassed and make more sense to those who disregard the fact that international relations and politics are about securing self interest in the midst of a highly competitive world. Even those who loath real politics in international intercourse concede to the fact that sovereigns should be agents of their people in the conduct and pursuits of matters that are crucial to the interest of their countries. In this case whatever agreement that President Obasanjo had with his peers over Taylor cannot be equated to his constitutional responsibility to protect and promote the interest of Nigeria at all times.

In other words where his international commitment conflicts with his duty to his people, he cannot be hard to say that he is confused as to where his loyalty lies. President Obasanjo does not therefore have the legal and constitutional backing for his decision to host Charles Taylor. Even the moral high grounds on which he stands are weak and unsupportive of his position. There are higher moral grounds urging him to dissociate himself from Taylor and save Nigeria opprobrium of nesting such an odious character as Taylor. If the saying that by their friends we know them, it is a great disservice to this great country that has invested so much in the security of the continent to gloat over its relationship with a character that the world is anxious to put where he belongs. The outside civilized world does not have the patient to hear explanations about why a decent country like Nigeria would be the one to stand against its worthy cause.

The history of Taylor does not lend itself to the decent principles of the civilized world. Taylor personifies all the evil and oddities that have been plaguing mankind and for which mankind has exerted a lot of efforts to curb. For a world that is still struggling to save itself from the grip of wicked and devilish souls, it is imperative that no efforts are spared to educate and wean over naïve, if not mischievous persons like those that feel that Taylor is worth the bother and shame that Nigeria is faced with on account of harbouring him. With no apology to those who are turning the logic of morality upside down, I

intend to explain why it is morally and legally defensible to handover Charles Taylor to the Special Court.

The origin of war crime tribunals/courts

At the end of the World War II several individuals were found to have committed war crimes in Europe and the Far East. These individuals were tried and punished in and according to the laws of the countries where they committed the abominable deeds. There was however a certain category of war criminals described by the victorious allied forces- USA, Great Britain, France and USSR- as major criminals whose offences had no particular geographical localization. This latter group of major criminals were tried and punished by the joint authority of the governments of the victorious allies.

After reaching a collective agreement to try and punish the category of persons alleged to have borne the greatest responsibility for the totality of the atrocities committed before and during World War II, the USA, France, Great Britain and the then USSR, (the victorious allies) established an International Military Tribunal for their trial. Most of those indicted and tried were German officers and men and members of the Nazi Party who took a consenting part in atrocities and crimes that had no particular geographical location.

Article 6 of the instrument establishing that International Military Tribunal provided as follows " The Tribunal established for the trial and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis countries, whether as individuals or as members of organizations, committed any of the following crimes..

CRIMES AGAINST PEACE: namely, planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing;

WAR CRIMES: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include but not limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labour or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity;

CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war; or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated.

Leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices participating in the formulation or execution of common plan or conspiracy to commit any of the foregoing crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan."

24 Nazi leaders and six organizations-the Reich Cabinet, the leadership Corps of the Nazi Party, the military wing of the Nazis S.S. including the S.D, the Gestapo, the S.A. and the General Staff and High Command of the German armed forces were indicted and tried in the German city of Nuremberg. The trial started on November 20, 1945 and on October 1, 1945, the tribunal sentenced twelve of the accused persons to death by hanging and seven to imprisonment for terms ranging from ten to life. Three were acquitted. One of the accused persons, Robert Ley, committed suicide in prison before the commencement of the trial. Three of the six indicted organizations-the SS and its subsidiary the SD, the Gestapo and the Leadership Corps of the Nazi Party were convicted.

The import of the Nuremberg Trials

No doubt, the Nuremberg tribunals energized international penal jurisprudence. For the first time a group of countries collectivized efforts and jointly established a tribunal to try and punish persons accused of having violated international law before and during time of war. It established a precedent for the development of international law concerning the enforcement of international principles, morals and agreements. The primary weakness of international law is its inability to establish a functional and potent policing and sanctioning system. Unlike the municipal law that is backed by a functioning penal system, international law is largely dependent on the honour and integrity of its subjects. The Nuremberg trials brought a ray of hope to a hitherto hopeless situation. The trials catalyzed the subjection of the individual to the regime of international law. The criminal liability of individuals acting in the name of the state or under official orders was defined and the age long argument about their liability or otherwise firmly put to rest. Although the trials upheld the position that sovereign states cannot be subjected to a foreign jurisdiction without their consent, the trials rejected the same arguments in relation to individuals accused of war crimes, irrespective of their status or the compelling impetus for the commission of those crimes. It imposed illimitable duties on individuals to protect all fundamental interests recognised or established by international law.

This laudable initiative in the development of international penal jurisprudence was halted by the Cold War only to be resuscitated by the United Nations after the Rwandan massacres and the Yugoslavian tragedy.

Appreciating the extent of evil perpetuated by impetuous groups and individuals in the 20th century, the international community had since July 1,2002 established the International Criminal Court in the Hague to investigate and prosecute those groups and individuals accused of crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of war. The creation of a permanent International Criminal Court supports the precedent laid by the Nuremberg trials and emphasized in clear and unambiguous terms the determination of

the international community to hunt, prosecute and punish persons that are against the cause of civilization.

When faced with the nightmare of Rwanda and Yugoslavia, the United Nations Security Council had to quickly dust the books and records of the Nuremberg trials for precedents and directives on what functional cause to take. It did this not only to arrest the atavism but also to give a strong warning to licentious and whimsical groups and individuals who fail to realize that they owe mankind and the world community some modicum of respect and responsibility or delude themselves into thinking that as long as they can subdue or cower their municipal body politics and penal systems, they are at liberty to do just anything that they are capable of. Worse still, some of these atavists are not content with the spaces provided for them by their geopolitical boundaries and would therefore not hesitate to extend their rascality and brigandage to other countries. Strangely, people of this ilk vastly populate the world. Taylor is in this category. In one word, he is a global liability- a! n imp of the worst kind.

Whereas the Rwandan and Yugoslav experiences underscore the possibilities and capabilities of ethnic groups in a country or locality to wreck havoc on each other and thereby challenge humanity in its claim on civilization and gregarious consolidation, the Taylor metaphor eloquently and effectively dramatizes how far individuals can go to arrest the cause of civilization.

The Taylor nightmare:

Taylor, an obviously socially disoriented and a drug supported maniac, catapulted himself to infamy when he invaded his unfortunate country, Liberia, sometime in 1989 with a rebel army trained at the Mataba training center in Libya and financed by the now professed born again evil godfather Muammar al-Qaddafi of Libya. The immediate reaction of many political and international conflict analysts was cursory. Many had thought that it was just a variant of the pathetic African political phenomenon. They were wrong. The barbarian had his plans well mapped out. For logistics and supplementary backup, he had Burkina Faso's Blaise Campaore who dedicated his Po military base for the continuous training of Taylor's rebel recruits and the late Felix Houphout-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire who nested him and his murderous gang in Danane, from whence he launched his attack on Liberia. You can recall that Blaise Campaore had in October 1987 not only betrayed his charismatic and genuinely revolutionary boss and friend, Thomas Sankara and had married an Houphout-Boigny. Felix Houphout-Boigny's son in law was killed by Samuel Doe who Taylor was out to oust. The logistics were therefore reassuring for Taylor.

It was clear that his mission was to get the reigns of power in Liberia through the barrel of the gun and he was prepared to butcher all living obstacles in his way. Misguidedly, Babangida thought he could stop him. Nigeria paid very dearly for that error. Billions of dollars were not only lost but several lives including those of innocent Nigerian journalists.

By 1990 Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (quite a misnomer) had bulldozed their way to the capital, Monrovia. But Babangida stood in his way and it took him another five years to realize his ambition. When it was obvious to all parties that Taylor was unstoppable, a ceasefire was reached in Abuja after which Liberia was handed over to him in 1995 and in 1997 a make-belief election was held to solidify his hold on Liberia. He was said to have won overwhelmingly with about 75% of the electoral votes. He became the absolute emperor of Liberia.

After conquering Liberia, his next target was diamond rich Sierra Leone. It is his misdeeds in Sierra Leone that have now pitched him against the Special Court in Sierra Leone. As we have earlier stated, this article is a proclamation that he is liable to indictment and indeed the Special Court is right to have indicted him.

Our position is that Charles Taylor is the principal of all the scoundrels and the barbarous gang that warred on Sierra Leone and nobody could be guiltier than him for the atrocities committed during the 11 year war. Foday Sankoh who cowardly escaped to hell from the Special Court in Sierra Leone was a pioneer member of Taylor's so called National Patriotic Front. The original commanders of Revolutionary United Front (RUF) including Foday Sankoh were part and parcel of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. The RUF was a mere arm of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia and the RUF never had a separate personality of his own. In the words of an observer, Foday, as a messenger and Lieutenant of Taylor did what he was told to do. If RUF killed and raped, it was because it was trained and armed in Liberia before being unleashed on the people of Sierra Leone. The diamond of Sierra Leone was brought to Monrovia before being put on the international market. The same observer, Abdoulaye W. Dakule, a Liberian, had this to say, "When the international community called on Taylor to divest himself from RUF and leave Sierra Leone, few people in Liberia expected him to follow suit. The RUF was but an extension of NPFL.

Fighters from the NPFL were the same ones fighting for the RUF and vice-versa. It was like asking the US to let go the Pentagon". Encouraged by the fact that he was making irreversible progress in Liberia, Taylor marched into Sierra Leone in March 1991. Dakule was right when he said that Taylor sought to extend his domination to Sierra Leone, control its diamond mines and put in a puppet in power. He made Sankoh who was in reality a mentally deranged idiot, the leader of the RUF. As rightly observed by the Human Rights Watch, under the leadership of Foday Sankoh a corporal in the Sierra Leone Army who had been imprisoned in 1971 for his alleged involvement in an attempted coup against the then ruling party the All Peoples Congress (APC), the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was originally made up of a mixture of middle class students with a populist platform, unemployed and alienated youths, and Liberian fighters from Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The ideological component of the movement, however, was never clearly actualized, and the rebellion quickly developed into a campaign of violence whose principal aim appeared to be simply to gain access to the country's diamond and mineral wealth.

In analyzing the UN intelligence report that linked Charles Taylor to Al-Qaeda, one commentator stated that: "One source of Taylor's enormous wealth has been his ties to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of neighboring Sierra Leone. RUF controls extensive diamond mining operations which ship the stones to Liberia where they are often sold for cash at discount to al Qaeda agents. Taylor, in exchange for his financial and military support of the RUF, receives a commission on each exchange monthly special. In a fastidiously documented expose in the July 2000 issue of New Republic, Ryan Lizza traced the ties linking Taylor and numerous al Qaeda officials beginning with Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah. His name appears in the latest European intelligence report as well. Abdullah, a top aide to Osama bin Laden, arrived in Liberia's capital of Monrovia in September, 1998 and met with one of Taylor's long time cronies, Ibrahim Bah, who is also mentioned in the documents obtained by the Post.

Just two weeks after the bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, more al Qaeda operatives arrived in Liberia and purchased RUF diamonds through Taylor intermediaries. According to Lizza, the Liberian diamond pipeline had become a vital component for survival of al Qaeda and the RUF."

Indeed the crux of the matter is and has always been Sierra Leone's diamond and mineral wealth. The impetus for Taylor's involvement in Sierra Leone as we have proved was the diamond of Sierra Leone. The sponsors and guardian devils of the NPFL needed to be paid and Taylor needed money to consolidate his hold on Liberia and promote his desire to take charge of the Sierra Leone, Guinea, Gambia and Cote D'Ivoire. He could therefore not compromise his firm grip on the diamonds of Sierra Leone. Not even Liberia could provide with a tenth of the wealth he amassed from Sierra Leone. He became richer than Liberia and it was therefore easy to tell why he became haughty and spiteful of all other persons and institutions in Liberia.

Interestingly enough, whilst he came out of the bargain richer all the other dramatic personae on the side of the RUF including the psychopathic Foday Sankoh, had nothing to show for their engagement in the war. The reason is simple. In return for the diamond, Taylor provided killers, drugs, arms and ammunition. The assignment of the NPFL fighters in the war in Sierra Leone was simple to perpetuate the worst form of atrocities and thereby scare the hell out of the civil population and ensure that the diamond is not diverted to third parties. It was therefore not surprising to experience the brutality with which the RUF/NPFL fought the war in Sierra Leone. After eleven years, the war in Sierra Leone went down in the history books as the most atrocious war of all times.

The wounds and scars of the war are still glaring. Besides the hacking of limbs and butchering of pregnant women, the RUF/NPFL in the account of credible sources, abducted women and girls for sex, recruited child soldiers who were forced to do the most abominable things that one can think of. Under the influence of drugs, these child rebels were known for their impetuosity and excessive brutality. Often to demonstrate their courage and ruthlessness, they killed their parents, uncooperative brothers and sisters. In other instances and under the command of older rebels these child rebels were forced to rape their mothers and other women old enough to be their grand mothers. In

the process husbands and fathers were forced to watch their wives and children raped. Today, Sierra Leone has a whole village for amputees whose ages at the time of the amputation of their limbs range between one month to 80 .

In all of these, Nigeria did not sit idly. She put in all efforts to arrest the carnage in Sierra Leone. Through the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Nigeria put out herself entirely to rescue Sierra Leone from the fangs of Charles Taylor and in the process Nigeria suffered untold losses in men and material resources. Like the case of Liberia, Nigerian soldiers and nationals were one of the prime targets of RUF/NPFL.

Several peace efforts were made by ECOWAS, Nigeria and at the tail end America and Britain. However, Taylor was adamant. In 1996 a peace accord was reached in Abidjan but its resolutions remained in the papers on which they were written. On May 18, 1999, the Sierra Leonean Government was arm twisted by the USA and Britain to sign a not just a cease-fire agreement in Lome, but also made to make one of the most ridiculous concessions one can ever think of. Foday Sankoh was not only foisted on Sierra Leoneans as a Vice President but was given absolute control of the diamond of Sierra Leone. A total amnesty was granted to him and his RUF and the world naively thought that peace had returned to Sierra Leone. The world was wrong. Foday Sankoh and his master wanted more. Quite expectedly, there was world wide protest against the amnesty and in response the UN revisited the accord and amended the aspect on amnesty by restricting the recognition of the amnesty to the government of Sierra Leone only.

Just about six month after the Lome Accord, the RUF/NPLF besieged Freetown and unleashed on that city, one of the most barbaric violence never experienced in human history. In the account of Human Rights Watch, as the rebels took control of street after street, they turned their weapons on the civilian population. By the end of January, both government and independent sources estimated that several thousands of civilians had been killed. The rebels dragged entire family units out of their homes, and murdered them, hacked off the hands of children and adults, burned people alive in their houses, and rounded up hundreds of young women, took them to urban rebel bases, and sexually abused them. As the ECOMOG counterattacked and the RUF retreated through the capital, the rebels set fire to neighbourhoods, leaving entire city blocks in ashes and over 51, thousand people homeless. And, while the RUF took with them almost no prisoners of war, they withdrew to the hills with thousand of abductees, mostly children and young women. In sum, before the rebels could be repelled from Freetown, they had murdered thousands of innocent civilians including a conservative count of 63 Nigerian businessmen and destroyed about 6,000 homes and residential buildings.

It was not only the vicious circle of "mutation, rape and murder" that Sierra Leone was subjected to whilst the war lasted. The constitution, political landscape as well as the entire legal system were decimated and desecrated. Whilst plundering the mineral wealth of the nation for Taylor, the RUF had its eyes firmly fixed on the presidency of Sierra Leone. From 1991 to the end of the war eleven years after, the country suffered several coups. In 1992 President Joseph Momoh who recently died in exile in Guinea, was

overthrown by a group of young military chaps who called themselves the National Provisional Ruling Council (MPRC). His deputy, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio in 1996, overthrew Captain Valentine Strasser who headed the MPRC. In the same year Maada Bio conducted an election that was won by Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's SLPP. Try as he could Alhaji Kabbah could not hold onto power for too long as he was overthrown in May 1997 by group of rascals who called themselves the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The moment it overthrew Kabbah's government, the AFRC invited the RUF to join it in forming the government. The RUF was to retain the control of the diamond and other mineral wealth of the country. It took the blessing of Nigeria and ECOMOG to flush the AFRC/RUF and restore Alhaji Kabbah to power in March 1998.

Pursuant to the Lome Accord, the Security Council established) in June 1998 the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) with the following mandate:

To cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and other parties to the Peace Agreement in the implementation of the Agreement
To assist the Government of Sierra Leone in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan
To that end, to establish a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra Leone, including at disarmament/reception centres and demobilization centres
To ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel
To monitor adherence to the ceasefire in accordance with the ceasefire agreement of May 1998 through the structures provided for therein
To encourage the parties to create confidence-building mechanisms and support their functioning
To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance
To support the operations of United Nations civilian officials, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his staff, human rights officers and civil affairs officers
To provide support, as requested, to the elections, which are to be held in accordance with the present constitution of Sierra Leone
Frustrated and perhaps bothered about the seeming prolongation of the realization of its ambition the RUF started abducting and holding the UNAMSIL peacekeeper hostage. In June 200, the RUF/NPRL held 500 UN peacekeepers hostage. It was then it dawned on the international community that the RUF /NPRL would not relinquish its grip on the diamond areas. In reaction, the British Government piloted, through the Security Council the establishment of a war crimes tribunal to prosecute the kingpins of the atrocities in Sierra Leone.

Quite ironically President Obasanjo was very pivotal in putting an end to the war in Sierra Leone. By the time he assume office in 1999, the

In summary, the crimes committed by Charles Taylor and his fellow travelers are triable by the Special Court in Sierra Leone. Definitely, Clearly Taylor is guilty in the court of public opinion and the court of all reasonable and rational human beings on the surface of

this earth. I am quite sure that hell already knows that Taylor is one of its candidates and is awaiting him. We are however to provide justification for his indictment and trial by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Under Article one of the Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Special Court has power to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since November 1996, including leaders who, in committing such crimes, have threatened the establishment of and the implementation of the peace process in Sierra Leone. In Article 6, the Statute provides as follows:

A person, who planned, instigated, ordered, committed or otherwise aided and abetted the planning, preparation or execution of a crime referred to in articles 2 to 4 of the present Statute shall be individually responsible for the crime.

The official position of any such accused, whether as Head of State or Government or as a responsible government official, shall not relieve such person of criminal responsibility nor mitigate punishment.

The crimes referred to in article 6 are crimes against humanity; Violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Convention and Additional Protocol II; and other serious violations of International Humanitarian Law.

Article 2 provides that the Special Court shall have power to prosecute persons who committed the following crimes as part of widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population:

Murder;

Extermination;

Enslavement;

Deportation;

Imprisonment;

Torture;

Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and any other form of sexual violence;

Persecution on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds;

Other inhuman acts.

Article 3 provides that the Special Court shall have power to prosecute persons who committed or ordered the commission of serious violations of article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of War Victims, AND OF Additional Protocol II thereto of 8 June 1977. These violations include:

Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment;

Collective punishments;

Taking of hostages;

Acts of terrorism;

Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;

Pillage;

The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples;

Threats to commit any of the foregoing acts.

Article 4 empowers the Special Court to prosecute persons who committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:

Intentionally directing attacks against civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;

Intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict;

Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities.

From the foregoing it is irrefutably clear that Taylor is indictable and liable to prosecution. Other Leaders in his ilk have been tried by similar tribunals. If Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia was stripped of his so called immunity and made to answer for his atrocities against his people Taylor has no hiding place.

Of course this is not the first time that Charles Taylor would be a pampered fugitive. He was once made a manager of a thriving General Services Manager by Samuel Doe. In just

about three years on the job, he ripped off the agency by stealing as much as US\$900,000. When he was to be arrested he fled to America. Authorities in America were said to have arrested and imprisoned him, but believable commentaries have it that the same authorities encourage and facilitated his escape from whence he went to Libya and acquire the training for the onslaught on his country.

Ensnared in beautiful and serene Canaan City, Taylor can continue to delude himself that he would not answer for the innocent blood of thousands of Sierra Leoneans. He can continue to evade arrest but he should be informed and tutored well enough to know that his absence would in not stall or hamper his trial. He will be tried in absentia and once convicted his punishment is imminent. Taylor should read the records of the proceedings of the Nuremberg Trials to know that the Special Court does not need to bother to arrest him for now. Out of legal niceties and etiquette, Taylor is for now an accused and Nigeria can afford to provide him shelter but once convicted I do not see the giant and custodian of the African moral risking the reproach of harbouring a convict. Taylor, the world knew what you did last summer and judgment day is here. Do not worry about your large family, Nigeria will for sure have a place for them after all there are presently thousands of displaced Liberians and Sierra Leoneans at the Oru Camp near Ijebu Ode.

For President Olusegun Obasanjo, reason is calling on you to do what is morally and legally right for you to do. Nigeria has invested too much for Sierra Leone and should not deplete the political and social returns thereby due to Nigeria for the love of Taylor. There are too many things at stake here. Donors are starving the Special Court of needed funds until Charles Taylor is brought to book. Of course the world's sympathy goes to President Kabbah who would dare not say a word in public against Nigeria's continuous hold on Taylor. Sierra Leoneans are grumbling in closed doors as they are fearful of the repercussions of publicizing their agitations. The UN is winding up activities in the country and Nigeria would remain to be the ever reliable godfather. This is one reason why even moral ethics would support the surrender of Taylor as it would amount to granting justice to the weak and voiceless.