

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Makeni schoolchildren came to see the UN helicopter but stayed to hear a presentation by the Outreach Field Officer. They respond to a question about whether they had been personally affected by the conflict.

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Monday, 26 November 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
Martin Royston-Wright  
Ext 7217

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## Standard Times

Monday, 26 November 2007

### Protecting The Social Rights of Women

The basic idea of human development is enriching the lives and freedom of the people, especially women and children. This is fundamental and is common with the concerns of the universal declaration of human rights. Therefore, the promotion of human development and the fulfillment of human rights share, in many ways, a common motivation, and reflect a fundamental commitment to promoting the freedoms, well-being and dignity of the individual in all societies.

Apparently, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women affirmed in Article (9) that states "parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or either their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife renders her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband." However, this concept is only applicable in the theoretical sense.

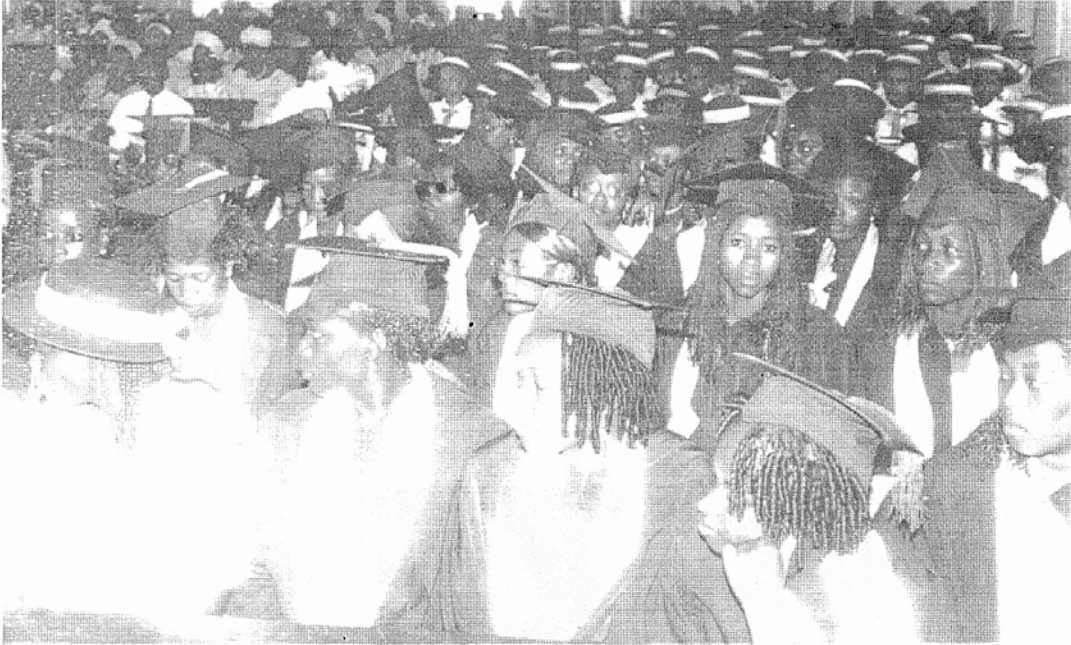
In practicality, women in Sierra Leone are being considered and treated like strangers by their male counterparts. In fact, majority of them in Sierra Leone cannot participate in the political, social, economic and cultural fields to ensure their full potentials and advancement. This particular trend has created negative impact on the lives of most women in the country. Despite the emergence of women emancipation groups recently, much has not been achieved especially with regards to the appalling social and economic status of women in the country.

Thus any attempt to address the social problem of women and their specific characteristics has been seen as a mere product of a spiritual or psychic shock by the female emancipation groups which have been linked with ulterior motives to exploiting their colleagues in order to amass wealth.

The agitation of women's liberation began in the west and it has been strengthened by most developing countries in Africa. Human Rights activists have fixed convictions that globalization has influenced human race, societies, even closed traditional and religious beliefs. However, there are only a few cultural and even religious societies which have been able to properly stand firmly against this trend.

Such societies have frequently been confronted by modernization which has been adopted under the guise of

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women's liberation movements by rejecting the old traditions. None of them has succeeded in standing and promoting the social rights of women..

Actually, the newly educated female class and the pseudo intellectuals are in the minority and they have been using some of these groups for their own

violated in work places as they are faced with the risk of sexual harassment from their supervisors or else dismissed.

Teenagers especially women who vend a source of income are faced with the risk of rape and sexual harassment perpetrated by their male counterparts. This

their code of ethics and dressing styles. It is very common to see school going children especially girls, and adults dressed almost half naked under the guise of modernity.

However, this behavioral attitude of some women in Sierra Leone is not compatible with the religious doctrines

It is incumbent on the female  
emancipation groups to put aside their  
thirst for money and power and to ensure  
that the social rights of their colleagues  
are properly regarded and up lifted

personal gains instead of seeking their interest.

What mechanism have these female liberation groups put in place to salvage the plights of the single parents? The answer is absolutely nothing as most of these vulnerable women bear the brunt of their children every day without assistance. What about the young girls who are using prostitution as a source of survival?

This is a social menace that should be addressed by the liberation groups, instead they are advocating for ministerial and other related appointments.

Lots of women in the country have been exposed to all forms of social ills at the hands of their husbands every day. The number is high. Others are

sometimes leads to unwanted pregnancy.

Therefore, if the issue of social rights is not properly addressed parity will not be achieved.

Even the grassroots women who have been neglected by some of the emancipation groups should be empowered socially and economically to become self-reliant and productive.

Research indicates that the most important factors that can assist in confronting and standing against this new phenomenon of female emancipation is to have a rich culture and history full of experience, value and ideas.

Even though globalization has impacted negatively in our culture, women of this country should adapt to

of both Islam and Christianity. Obviously, it is important to have progressive human rights and, in particular, to have perfect and complete human models in the religious history of the societies and communities. Therefore such unethical mode of dressing may likely increase the prostitution industry, drastically.

For such a menace to be curtailed and bring about the realities of life, the grassroots women should be empowered economically to overcome the social menace already swaying the entire country. It is incumbent on the female emancipation groups to put aside their thirst for money and power and to ensure that the social rights of their colleagues are properly regarded and up lifted.

Mediaforfreedom.com

Sunday, 25 November 2007

<http://www.mediaforfreedom.com/ReadArticle.asp?ArticleID=6653>

### **International Legal Standards**

In the late 1990s a strong international trend developed to raise the minimum age for military service to 18. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (Convention No. 182), adopted by the International Labour Organization in 1999—and ratified by the government of Nepal in 2002—prohibits the forced recruitment of children under age 18 for use in armed conflict as one of the worst forms of child labor.<sup>118</sup> Nepal is also a signatory to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000 and entered into force in 2002. The protocol raised the standards set in the Convention on the Rights of the Child by establishing 18 as the minimum age for any conscription or forced recruitment or direct participation in hostilities.

The protocol explicitly addresses the conduct of non-state armed forces. Article 4 states that “armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a state should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of eighteen.”<sup>119</sup>

Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which applies during non-international armed conflicts (civil wars), prohibits states and non-state armed groups from recruiting or using children under the age of 15 in armed conflict.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, such recruitment is identified as a war crime in the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court (ICC).<sup>121</sup> In July 2006, after the success of the Jana Andolan, Nepal’s parliament passed a resolution urging the government to accede to the Rome Statute, though the accession has not yet taken place.<sup>122</sup>

The prohibition on recruiting and using children as soldiers is broader than just children engaged in combat duties and includes children in combat-support and other related functions. The authoritative Cape town Principles and Best Practices define a child soldier as any person under age 18 who is “part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members. It does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.”<sup>123</sup>

The ICC statute makes clear that individual criminal liability also extends beyond the use of children as armed combatants. Under the ICC, the war crime of recruiting or using child soldiers

[c]over[s] both direct participation in combat and also active participation in military activities linked to combat such as scouting, spying, sabotage and the use of children as decoys, couriers or at military checkpoints. It would not cover activities clearly unrelated to the hostilities such as food deliveries to an airbase or the use of domestic staff in an officer’s married accommodation. However, use of children in a direct support function such as acting as bearers to take supplies to the front line, or activities at the front line itself, would be included...<sup>124</sup>

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires the government to take “all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict,” and to take “all appropriate measures” to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children who have been victim to armed conflicts.<sup>125</sup> Article 6(3) of the Optional Protocol provides that a state “shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their

jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service,” and “shall, when necessary, accord to such persons all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration.”<sup>126</sup>

As a state party to ILO Convention 182, which defines the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict as one the worst forms of child labor, the government of Nepal is obliged to “provide the necessary and appropriate direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social reintegration, ensure access to free basic education, and wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour.”<sup>127</sup> As we discuss above, the government of Nepal has failed in this important regard, even after the ceasefire.

## UN News Service (New York)

Friday, 23 November 2007

### **UN And Partners Urge Stepped-Up Efforts to Foster Reconciliation**

The United Nations and Sierra Leone's Human Rights Commission have teamed up with civil society groups to urge the country's Government and the international community to intensify efforts to carry out recommendations made by a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In a communiqué issued following a two-day consultation held in Freetown earlier this week, participants also called for the formulation of a comprehensive strategy with clear allocation of responsibilities to achieve this - and pointed out that the full support of donor countries is required for it to succeed.

The UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) said participants in the consultations encouraged civil society groups to raise public awareness about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations which "are critical for peace consolidation in Sierra Leone."

In 2004, the seven-member Commission made a number of recommendations to deal with past abuses and violations and foster reconciliation in Sierra Leone, which is consolidating peace following a brutal, 11-year conflict.

They included the payment of reparations by the Government to amputees and other wounded victims, those who were sexually violated, and the widows and children who suffered deprivation, displacement, or worse between 1991 and 2002.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 23 November 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

*There were no relevant stories on Liberia in the international media today.*

### **International Clips on West Africa**

#### **Sierra Leone plans laws to boost diamond earnings**

By Shapi Shacinda

KAMPALA, Nov 23 (Reuters) - Sierra Leone plans to introduce new laws on diamond trading to boost earnings by ensuring most of its stones are polished before being shipped out, government officials said. President Ernest Bai Koroma, who won an election in September on a promise to tackle corruption and heal divisions in the war-torn country, said the new policy would be put before parliament "as soon as possible".

#### **President Plans Infrastructure Revamp**

Nov 23, 2007 (Commonwealth News and Information Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Sierra Leone plans major development of its infrastructure and will pursue reconciliation and deepen the peace process in an effort to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), President Ernest Bai Koroma said. President Koroma told the Eastern Africa Journalism Programme in Uganda on 22 November 2007 that his government had put a generation of energy on top of its agenda to re-launch the economy and lift the lives of its people.

#### **Cote d'Ivoire's president postpones northern visit**

ABIDJAN, Nov 22, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- A visit by Cote d'Ivoire's President Laurent Gbagbo to the rebel-controlled north, initially scheduled to start from Nov. 26 to 28, has now been postponed to Nov. 28, according to reports.

"The head of state's visit in the districts of Korhogo, Ferkessedougou and Tengrela will start from Nov. 28 to 30," said an official statement quoted by media.

#### **INTERVIEW-Ivory Coast seeks to rejoin US-Africa trade scheme**

By Peter Murphy

ABIDJAN, Nov 23 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast aims to rejoin a preferential trade scheme with the United States in early 2008 as it moves towards holding elections, boosting trade and ending child labor, the head of its export promotion agency said.



## **Local Media – Newspaper**

### **Treason Suspect Craves for Speedy Trial**

*(The Inquirer)*

- Former transitional speaker George Koukou has called on the Government to have a speedy trial in his case as was done in the case of the other alleged coup plotters. In a statement issued in Monrovia recently, Mr. Koukou said that since they were arrested on July 18, 2007 for allegedly planning insurgence to unseat the democratically elected Government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, two of the suspects, former AFL General, Charles Julu and Col. Andrew Dorbor, have been indicted while his fate is still undecided.

### **Gender Minister Opts for tougher action against rapists**

*(The News, New Democrat and Daily Observer)*

- Gender and Development Minister, Vabah Gayflor, is opting for tougher actions to be taken against rapists across the Country. She said rape is 'wicked' meaning that it damages the growth and development of teenagers between the ages 3 -14 thereby making it difficult for them to contribute meaningfully to society.

## **Local Media – Radio Veritas** *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

### **Court in Buchanan Delays Pre-trial of Suspected Murderers**

- Correspondents said that the Buchanan City Court postponed the pre-trial of the 7 suspects arrested and charged with the murder of the Plantation Manager of the Liberia Agriculture Company after the State informed the court that its prime witness was sick.

### **National Collective Societies Calls for Support**

- In an interview, the National Collective Societies of Liberia called on the Government to adequately fund the Liberia Copyright Office to enable it introduce and implement a national anti-piracy program. Mr. Gboba Johnson said the piracy program would help the office fulfill its foremost statutory responsibility for which it was established.

### **Europeans Give Money for County Development Projects**

- The European Commission has approved a twenty-five million Euro 4-year County Development Programme for Liberia. An EC release says the programme is aimed at alleviating rural poverty, consolidate peace and democracy and sustaining economic growth through increasing access to basic social services.

### **Sierra Leonean Woman Flees Captivity**

- A Sierra Leonean woman who claimed to have been held in captivity in Nimba County has finally fled from her alleged capturer. Mama Francis told Star Radio she escaped without the knowledge of her capturer who later became her husband. She said during her flight from Nimba, her two children aged 10 and 12 were left behind.

*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 or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at [karpeh@un.org](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*