

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Tuesday, 27 May 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News

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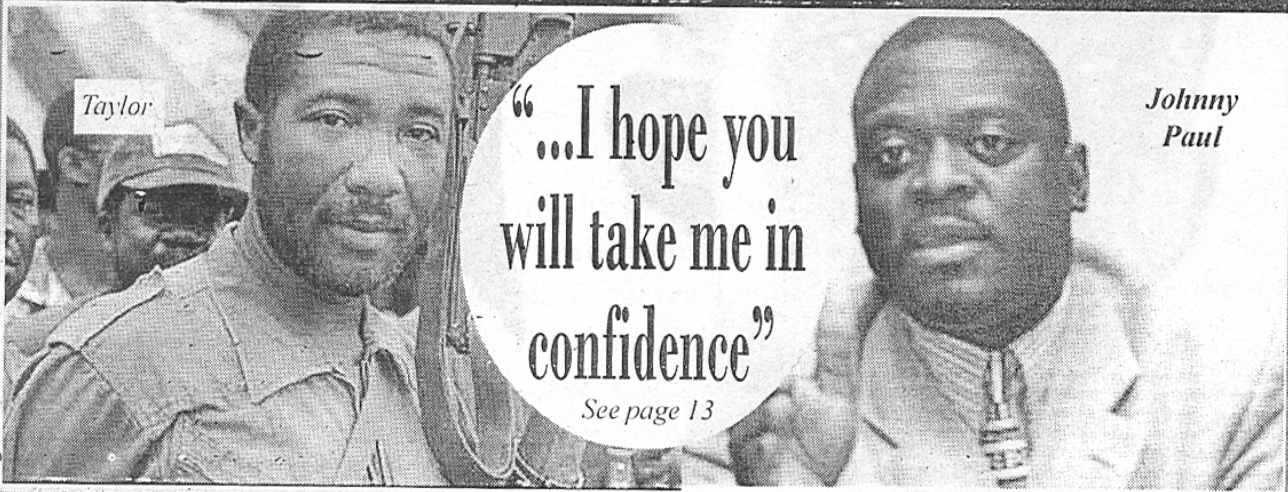
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Standard Times
Tuesday, 27 May 2008

Johnny Paul Koroma writes Charles Taylor



Taylor

Johnny Paul

“...I hope you
will take me in
confidence”

See page 13



State House
Freetown, Republic of Sierra Leone

State House
Republic of Sierra Leone
11 June, 1997

Dear Mr. Charles Taylor,

I have pleasure to inform you that I had a talk with your brother in Freetown who introduced himself to me as Mr. Charles Taylor a few days after the overthrow of former President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on 25 May, 1997 and am assuming the office of Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and Head of State of Sierra Leone.

As brothers and immediate neighbours, I decided to take advantage of his return to Liberia to brief you on the recent political developments in Sierra Leone that led to the military take over.

In addressing the nation on the coup, I made it repeatedly quite clear that the line of action we have taken against the former government was intended to prevent Sierra Leone being plunged into a blood bath of tribal war resulting from its deliberate policies aimed at:

- (a) Perpetrating the six years old rebel war which it had promised to end but without actually taking realistic moves to bring this sad chapter in our nation's history to a close.
- (b) Marginalising the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone and setting them into a fratricidal feud with the civil Defence Units; neglecting the mandatory welfare of the Armed Forces not withstanding the fact that the former Government was fully aware of the poorly equipped situation of the Armed Forces and the deplorable living conditions of service personnel and their families.

The most important gains of our revolution is that it has received the immediate and spontaneous support of our RUF brothers who have finally decided to lay down their arms and join in our efforts to stop the regicidal war in Sierra Leone and restore a lasting peace and stability in our beloved country. We are fully aware of the great strides you have recently taken to also achieve lasting peace in the sister Republic of Liberia and assure you of our unflinching support in this regard. My earnest appeal to you, dear brother is to bring your personal influence to bear in encouraging and further enhancing the present momentum wherein both the RUF and the Sierra Leone Regular Army will continue to work together with our people who have welcomed this union for the attainment of lasting peace and stability in our country.

Another area where you can be of great assistance to us is to give every support to our present efforts to forestall the threat of an imminent Nigerian-led ECOMOG intervention forces in our country as this would only further endanger the peace and stability we are at present trying to restore. Furthermore, we need your support in deploring the present military build up of ECOMOG Forces in Sierra Leone in flagrant violation of our sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Finally, I hope you will take me in confidence as your brother and give what ever counsel you can that would bring about a peaceful settlement of this crisis which to me is purely an internal matter which ECOMOG wants to blow out of proportions.

Yours truly,
MAJOR JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
CHAIRMAN, ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY
COUNCIL (AFRC) AND HEAD OF STATE

Your truly

Legalbrief Africa

Monday, 26 May 2008

Taylor trial a model for war crimes

Published in: Legalbrief Africa

Date: Mon 26 May 2008

Category: Liberia

Issue No: 282

Charles Taylor's war crimes trial has recovered from a shaky start to become a model for bringing a former ruler before an international court and has helped send a message that the days of impunity are over.

The Daily Nation notes that the relatively smooth running of the former Liberian President's trial, on charges of inciting murder, rape and terror, has been in marked contrast to the delays and theatrics at trials for former Yugoslav and Iraqi leaders. Although the mandate of the court trying Taylor, who has pleaded not guilty, is limited to crimes committed in Sierra Leone, the UN-backed Special Court serves as an example to other tribunals that might try former rulers such as the International Criminal Court. The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up to try those with the greatest responsibility for war crimes in the country.

Full Daily Nation report

Cocorioko website

Tuesday, 27 April 2008

Press Release (Excerpt)

Of course I am the only Press Secretary in town

Written by Sheka Tarawallie : State House Press Secretary

THE EDITOR
NEW VISION
FREETOWN

26 May 2008

Dear Sir, OF COURSE, I AM THE ONLY PRESS SECRETARY IN TOWN

-SNIP-

When your SLPP tampered with the peace process by courting one side of the RUF as against another (you know what I am talking about – Fayia Musa, Dean Jalloh etc) invoking ethnic loyalty while at the same time raising the profile of the mainly regional kamajor militia against the national army to the extent that kamajors could arrest, detain, and place curfews on soldiers, the scheme backfired in their faces, resulting to a military coup. Certainly, I am no lover of military coups, but the SLPP lacked the finesse to rule so much that there couldn't have possibly been another way.

-SNIP-

I was never a member of the AFRC/RUF. All I did was call for a peaceful resolution of the conflict involving the AFRC/RUF, which was done by the SLPP subsequently after killing thousands of people and leaving our country in tatters. Former President Kabbah's recent testimony at the Special Court in favour of former RUF leader Issa Sesay as against his refusal to do the same in favour of late Hinga Norman (leader of the kamajors) speaks volumes of the shenanigans of the war. Of course there were very strong allegations, in fact usually reliable reports, about some kamajors having engaged in human sacrifice and/or cannibalism.

-SNIP-

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
26 May 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Third Autopsy Performed on Body of Murder Victim

(The News, New Democrat)

- For the third time, an autopsy has been performed on the body of the late Angel Togba
- Three foreign pathologists flown in by the lead defense counsel in the Angel Togba murder case exhumed the body on Saturday for the autopsy to be performed after which she was later reburied on Sunday. The teenager was buried in March following months of controversy over her death. Her guardian, Hans Williams and his fiancée, who are currently being charged with murder, had reported that Angel committed suicide but information provided by examination proved otherwise.
- A second autopsy conducted by a licensed pathologist established that little Angel was strangled to death just after she was sexually abused. That report contradicted an earlier autopsy report which indicated that she died by hanging and that there was no foul play. The third autopsy was prompted by a request from the defense lawyers who opted for another autopsy and DNA.
- In an interview, the lead defense lawyer, Counselor Musa Dean, said results from the autopsy will be sent in three weeks.
- Correspondents say the autopsy was characterized by tension after journalists, members of the civil society and the deceased parents were barred from entering the JFK.

President Sirleaf Makes Several Appointments in Government

(The Informer, The News, The Independent, New Democrat, The Monitor)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has made the following appointments in Government, pending confirmation by the Liberian Senate.
- Those nominated are: Dr. Laurence K. Bropleh, Chairman, Board of Directors, Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS); Mr. Peter Bonner Jallah, Minister of National Security; Ms. Bartu Dorley, Assistant Minister and Coordinator, Ministry of Internal Affairs; and Mr. Kederick Johnson, Assistant Minister for Technical Services, Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- Others nominated include: Amelia Ward, Chairperson, Board of Directors, Liberia Petroleum Refinery Corporation (LPRC); Mr. Joseph Acqui, Member, Board of Directors, LPRC; Mr. Binyah C. Kesselly, Member, Board of Directors, National Port Authority (NPA); and Mr. Oscar Quiah, Member, Board of Directors, NPA.
- Also nominated are Counsellor Estrada Bernard, Legal and Security Advisor to the President of Liberia; Mr. James Ngenda, Chairman, National Housing Authority (NHA) and Mr. Stephen Y. Neufville, Managing Director, NHA.

Liberian Civil Society Hosts Zimbabwe Day Today

(The Independent, New Democrat, The Informer, The News, The Monitor)

- Liberian civil society groups will join their counterparts across Africa to celebrate Zimbabwe Day on Monday.

- The day was set to coincide with the May 25 observance of African Liberation Day, which falls on Sunday.
- According to a release issued in Monrovia, Monday's observance is in solidarity with the continuously ambiguous and uncertain political situation the people of Zimbabwe are faced with. Zimbabwe has been plagued with growing instances of violence since general elections in March. The results of the elections were delayed for nearly two months, after which the electoral commission announced the lack of an outright winner, and declared a rerun later in June.
- This political situation is an outgrowth of persistent antagonism that has been flamed since early 2000, leading to huge breakdowns in the economy, pushing inflation by more than a million per cent, and destroying the country's profile from the regional breadbasket to one of increasingly hungry people.
- The solidarity observance is thus meant to draw international attention, through civil society advocacy, to the troubling, conflicting, dangerously eroding and terrible situation in Zimbabwe.
- Monday's observance will be held across the continent, in consonance with the resolution of an Africa – wide civil society meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria from 12th – 13th May.
- In Liberia, the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP), in collaboration with the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) and other civil society organizations in country, will host a symposium to discuss the unfolding situation, and make propositions that African and world leaders can be guided by to help stabilize conditions in that country.

Stakeholders' Conference Highlights Plans Reduce Liberian Cities

(New Democrat)

- [sic] A Plan has been discussed to undertake a number of political reforms, including a referendum to end the current by-elections and adopt a simple majority, and to reduce the number of towns declared as cities. The reduction Liberian cities was among key issues discussed when the National Elections Commission (NEC), international partners, stakeholders and the media concluded a three-day conference in the port city of Buchanan. NEC Chairman James Fromayan told the gathering by October of this year, NEC will submit a package to the Legislature requesting a referendum on portion of the constitution which stipulates that absolute majority must be obtained at every level of election before one is declared winner.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

Chinese Government To Assist Liberia Tackle Looming Food Crisis

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia says the Chinese Government has disclosed plans to provide fertilizers, pesticides and seeds to Liberia by July this year as a way of identifying with Liberia in its strive to address the looming global food crisis.
- The release said China will also send experts to teach Liberian farmers modern farming methods and that as a short term measure, the China Oil and Food Corporation has been instructed to work with Liberia in helping the country secure more stockpile of rice.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Pathologists Depart Liberia After Autopsy on Exhumed Body of 13-Year Old Girl

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

President Sirleaf Makes New Appointment in Government Pending Confirmation

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Police Begins Removing "Design" Seats from Commercial Buses

- Police in Monrovia will this morning began removing the extra seats locally known as "designed seats" from commercial buses.

- Speaking to journalists, the Chief of Traffic of the Liberia National Police (LNP), Mickey Gray said the seats which are placed directly behind the drivers violate traffic regulation.
- Nearly a month ago, the police began enforcing several traffic safety regulation including removing taints from windshield, carrying one person in the front passenger seat and wearing of seat beats.

BBC

Tuesday, 27 May 2008

Guinea soldiers seize army chief

Troops in Guinea have seized the deputy head of the army in a protest over pay.

The soldiers captured Gen Mamadou Sampil when he tried to negotiate with them at an army base in the capital, Conakry.

The troops, who say they have been owed money for up to 12 years and protested over the same issue last year, also fired shots into the air.

The protests come the week after President Lansana Conte sacked Lansana Kouyate as prime minister.

Gen Sampil was seized at Conakry's Alpha Yaya Diallo base on Monday.

The BBC's Alhassan Sillah in Guinea says that shots were also heard in two other garrisons in Kindia, north-east of Conakry, and N'Zerkore in the south east.

Call for dialogue

Following the unrest President Conte summoned senior government officials including new Prime Minister Ahmed Tidiane Souare for a meeting that lasted more than four hours.

The government then issued a statement calling for dialogue and offering to release soldiers arrested after protests last year in return for calm, our correspondent says.

But it also said it had paid all the money owed to the soldiers.

The dismissed prime minister was appointed as part of a deal in 2007 to end deadly riots that paralysed the country.

He was replaced by Mr Souare, a former minister of mines and ally of Mr Conte.

The dismissal of Mr Kouyate was reportedly one of the soldiers' complaints, as they said they had no-one left to petition.

The sacking sparked protests in Conakry last week.

Mr Conte has ruled Guinea since taking power in a bloodless coup in 1984.



The military have provided key support for President Conte over the years

BBC

Monday, 26 May 2008

Uganda sets up war crimes court

Uganda has set up a special war crimes court to deal with cases of human rights violations committed during the 20-year insurgency in the north.

Principal Judge James Ogoola said the court will have the mandate to try Lord's Resistance Army rebel leaders.

Reporters say the move is seen as an attempt to convince the International Criminal Court (ICC) to drop indictments against top LRA commanders.

The LRA leader has refused to sign a peace deal until they are lifted.

Some two million people have been displaced during the conflict, notorious for atrocities against children.

It was agreed that the court, a special division of the Uganda High Court, would be set up at peace talks between the rebels and government.

But LRA leader Joseph Kony refused to sign a final peace agreement last month, wanting further assurances about the ICC warrants.

He wants the Ugandan government to write to the UN Security Council and the ICC to have indictments lifted.

Media reports in Uganda say Justice Akiiki Kiiza has been named to head the war crimes court.

He will be assisted by Eldad Mwangusya and Lady Justice Ibanda Nahamya, who served at Sierra Leone's UN-backed war crimes court.



The LRA are notorious for mutilating victims