

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



The Court rises for the last time in Freetown. See photos from yesterday's RUF Appeal Judgment in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*.

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 October 2009

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

Local News

“RUF Trial Was Abusive”.../ <i>Concord Times</i>	Pages 3-4
The Law is Misapplied / <i>Premier News</i>	Pages 5-6
Special Court Dismisses RUF Appeals / <i>The Satellite</i>	Pages 7-8
Special Court Dismisses 96 Grounds of Appeal.../ <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 9
Special Court Appeals Uphold RUF Sentences / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 10
Special Court Hands Down Final sentence / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 11

International News

Prosecutor Welcomes Convictions in RUF Appeals Judgement / <i>Cocorioko</i>	Page 12
Stringent Prison Terms Upheld in Rebel Trials / <i>Radio France International</i>	Page 13
UN-Backed Court Hands Down Final Rulings / <i>UN News</i>	Page 14
Sierra Leone War Crimes Tribunal Makes Final Ruling / <i>Voice of America</i>	Page 15
Report From The Hague / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Pages 16-17
Special Court Delivers Final Judgement / <i>BBC Focus on Africa</i>	Page 18
Stiff Sentences Upheld for Sierra Leone Rebels / <i>Radio Netherlands Worldwide</i>	Page 19
...He Did Not Order The Execution Of Sierra Leonean Rebel Commander / <i>CharlesTaylorTrial.org</i>	Pages 20-21
Former Prosecutor Calls Sierra Leone Special Court Remarkable / <i>Voice of America</i>	Pages 22-23
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Page 24-27
Q&A: The trial of Radovan Karadzic / <i>CNN</i>	Page 28

Special Court Supplement

RUF Appeal Judgment, in Pictures	Pages 29-32
----------------------------------	-------------

'RUF trial was abusive'

...Sesay's lead defence counsel

By Ibrahim Tarawallie

As the appeals chamber of the special court for Sierra Leone gives his final judgment in the revolutionary united front, RUF case, lead defence counsel of Issa Sesay described the entire trial as abusive and has no proper application of the law.

Wayne Jordash told journalists that the law was continuously missed applied since the beginning of the trial adding

that, the process was a miscarriage of justice.

"We are not surprise about the outcome of the judgment. If the law was properly applied, Sesay would have been acquitted," he said.

The trial convictions of Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao were upheld by the court appeals chamber, with Sesay and Kallon convicted on 16 counts and Gbao on 13 counts of an 18 counts

indictment.

The three RUF leaders were sentenced to 52, 40 and 25 years imprisonment as to the one given by the trial chamber in February this year.

Jordash called on international academicians to come and study Sierra Leone jurisdiction.

Acting prosecutor of the Special Court, Joseph Kamara said he welcomed the final con-

Contd. Page 3

'RUF trial was abusive'

From page 1

victions of the three RUF leaders' adding. "This judgment sends a signal that such tactics of warfare will not go unpunished."

"Today's judgment is a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times. The suffering inflicted by the RUF on the people of this country is beyond words," he said. He said the judgment would act as a deterrent against those who would use this strategy to further their own aims at the expense of the innocent.

"With today's judgment, trial proceedings of the Special Court in Freetown are now complete. The court has now delivered judgment in its Freetown-based trial," he maintained.

It could be recalled that the three RUF leaders were found guilty by the trial chamber on February 25 and sentenced on April 8 this year.

In her judgment, presiding judge, Justice Renate Winter said many of the submissions were dismissed by the chamber because most of the grounds of appeal were vague.

She said the prosecution submitted three grounds of appeal of which two was dismissed adding, "Take into consideration the gravity of the crimes committed, the appeals imposes global sentenced for all three accused."

"Sesay, Kallon and Gbao will serve a global sentenced of 52, 40 and 25 respectively. We order that they remain in custody in Freetown," she said. Here is a short overview of events during the conflict:

1991

In March the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), allegedly armed and financed by Liberian president Charles Taylor and led by former army officer Foday Sankoh,

crosses the border from Liberia and captures several villagers.

Hundreds of thousands of civilians flee their homes in terror as the rebels shoot, loot and rape their way through the diamond-rich southern and eastern parts of the country.

1992

Unhappy with the government's inability to stop the rebels, Captain Valentine Strasser seizes power and establishes a junta government to crush the rebels, who control around one-fifth of the country.

1993-1995

Fighting between government forces and RUF continues with mixed results. Rebels gain control of most of the diamond fields and bauxite and titanium mines.

By 1995, the RUF rebels capture the hills around the capital Freetown and launch offensives around the city. Government troops manage to fight off the rebels and regain control over the lucrative diamond fields.

1996

Strasser is ousted and Vice President General Julius Maada Bio takes office. In March politician Ahmad Tejan Kabbah is elected president in the country's first free elections.

Two days after the elections on March 17 the RUF accepts a ceasefire. In November Kabbah and Sankoh sign a peace agreement.

1997

As the peace deal unravels the RUF ousts Sankoh as leader in March. In May a military coup follows and Kabbah is overthrown by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who establishes the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC).

The AFRC makes a deal with the RUF and sets up a joint government. RUF fighters en-

ter Freetown.

Nigerian-led West African intervention force ECOMOG deploys to Freetown.

1998

In the second battle for Freetown, ECOMOG forces drive out the AFRC/RUF rebels. Kabbah returns from exile in Guinea to resume the presidency. Fighting between government troops and rebels continues.

1999

RUF forces advance on Freetown for the third battle over the capital. The RUF capture the east of the city from ECOMOG. Hospital sources say over 3,000 people were killed in a month. The rebels retreat and both parties agree to hold ceasefire talks. Kabbah and Sankoh hammer out a power-sharing deal under the Lome peace agreement.

2000

The UN sends the UNAMSIL peacekeeping mission to replace ECOMOG. RUF seizes 500 UN peacekeepers to stop UNAMSIL from moving into the diamond fields.

Britain sends troops, and the hostages are released in batches via Liberia. Sankoh is arrested and handed over to the government.

The RUF names Issa Sesay as its new leader. RUF breaks up into rival groups. A ceasefire agreement is signed in November.

2001

UNAMSIL deploys troops throughout the country and disarmament begins.

2002

In January UNAMSIL commander announces an end to war, stating that more than 47,000 fighters turned in their arms since May 2001. The government and the UN sign an agreement to set up a special tribunal to try perpetrators of atrocities against civilians.

Premier News
Tuesday, 27 October 2009

The Law Is Mis-applied

-Defence Counsel

By Alpha Bedoh Kamara



Wayne Jodash

“I am not surprised. The law in this Special Court is misapplied. It is the nature of the court since the beginning of the trial of Issa Sesay,” a visibly angry Wayne Jodash, defense counsel for former interim leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Issa Sesay said, after he was sentenced to 52 years imprisonment.

Jodash said the judgment is a good example of what ought to be done in the trial of accused persons under international criminal tribunals and he invited scholars and legal students to study the jurisprudence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

“The process is a miscarriage of justice. The fundamental guarantees of international law have been flouted,” he said.

The visibly angry defence lawyer reacted after the Appeals Chamber, presided over by Justice Winter, sentenced Issa Sesay to 52 years, Morris Kallon 40 years and Augustine Gbao 25 years.

The judge made her pronouncement after informing the court that the judgment on the appeal was made following the practices of the Special Court with regards the role played by the accused during the war in Sierra Leone.

She told the court that many of the grounds of appeal were poorly structured and disorganized and that the defence failed to assist the Appeals

Contd. Page 6



Issa Sesay (centre)

ACC Commends Marine Ministry



The Steering Committee of the National Anti-Corruption

The Law Is Mis-applied

From front page

Chamber to properly look into the merits and demerits of the arguments.

"The tone and language of the appeal was not up to standard," she said.

One of the grounds of appeal that was reversed by the Appeals Chamber was the Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE) in the murder of a Limba man in Kono, as not substantiated.

The Appeals Chamber also reversed ground 1 of the prosecution's appeal that the Trial Chamber erred in not finding the accused guilty of participating in concert with the AFRC.

"The Appeals Chamber finds the interpretations incoherent and therefore dismisses the grounds," Justice Winter concluded.

The presiding judge, after looking into the individual grounds of appeal and that of the prosecution, said, based on the seriousness of the crimes, a global sentence of 52, 40, and 25 years respectively was passed on Sesay, Kallon and Gbao.

Reading the dissenting statement of Justice Kamanda and himself to the Appeals Chamber's ruling on ground 1, Justice Gelag-King said in April 1998, there was a Joint Criminal Enterprise between the RUF and AFRC to gain control of the territory of Sierra Leone and the diamond areas.

"Gullit was in contact with Sam Bockarie for RUF reinforcements which the later agreed. Bockarie made a pronouncement of that reinforcement on Radio France International," he said, adding, "the activities of the RUF and AFRC in 2008 saw the slaughter of

Sierra Leoneans, the cutting of limbs and wrists. Villages were razed down and people killed, while the RUF and AFRC shared a common purpose."

Justice King also said they chaired a meeting with RUF, including Gullit and Superman, to attack Freetown but failed, stating that the continued reference to the pattern of crimes was most important.

He also said, "...The ungodly shall not stand in the day of judgment nor sinners in congregations. The ungodly shall perish."

"Widespread violence against civilians was organized by the RUF and AFRC and Operation Pay-yourself was declared by them," he said.

"Rampant operations saw the looting, maiming and the killing of women and children during the war in this country," he said.

The Acting Prosecutor, Joseph Kamara, stated at a Press Conference after the conviction, that the judgement was a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times.

"The suffering inflicted by the RUF on the people of this country is beyond words," he noted.

He said with the end of the trial there is now a final recognition of their crimes and that there is a strong measure of justice and accountability for their victims who were terrorized, slaughtered, raped and mutilated.

"The Appeals Chamber has upheld two new international precedents from the trial judgement.

The convictions of all three accused were upheld for the crimes of 'forced marriage' and of 'attack on peace-keepers,' he said.

He also said that with yesterday's judgement, trial proceedings of the Special Court in Freetown are now complete as the court has delivered final judgement against the accused in all of its Freetown-based trials, with eight accused convicted.

Kamara further said that the judgement is a proof that justice should stand tall and that all those who may want to engage in similar activities will be brought to book.

"We are hoping that what has happened in Sierra Leone will not happen again," he said.

On the issue of the possible return of the AFRC leader, Johnny Paul Koroma, he said they are presently working on Rule 116 for the transfer of trial to a third party.

"Should JP reappear, we will hand him over to another international criminal court for trial," he said.

Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao were convicted on 18 count indictments for crimes against humanity, violations of Article 3 contrary to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

They were charged for acts of terrorism, collective punishments, extermination and murder, violence to life, sexual slavery and pillage, among others.

The Satellite
 Tuesday, 27 October 2009

SPECIAL COURT DISMISSES RUF APPEALS



Justice
 Renate
 Winter

Former RUF Interim Leader Issa Hassan Sesay and Senior RUF Commander Morris Kallon were each convicted in February 2009 on 16 counts of

The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has upheld sentences for convicted Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leaders by a majority dismissing a total of 96 Defence grounds of appeal.

Justice Renate Winter of Austria delivered the majority judgment yesterday retaining earlier convictions of three former leaders of Sierra Leone's RUF.

war crimes and crimes against humanity for atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war. **Contd. Page 4**

7 MORE ARMED

SPECIAL COURT DISMISSES RUF APPEALS

From Front Page

Former RUF Security Chief Augustine Gbao was convicted on 14 counts. The Appeals Chamber judgment, read out yesterday in Freetown, upheld first-ever convictions by an international tribunal for forced marriage as a crime against humanity, and for attacks against United Nations peacekeepers.

The Chamber also upheld convictions for the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The Appeals Chamber unanimously upheld the convictions of Sesay and Kallon on all 16 counts. The Chamber unanimously overturned Gbao's conviction on Count 2 (collective punishments) and found that he was not responsible for one of the two attacks against UN peacekeepers (Count 15) for which he was convicted by the Trial Chamber.

The Judges, by a majority, upheld Gbao's liability for crimes pursuant to his participation in the Joint Criminal Enterprise.

The Prosecution appealed on three grounds, including a challenge to the Trial Chamber finding that the Joint Criminal Enterprises ended in April 1998, the acquittal of Gbao on Count 12 (the recruitment or use of child soldiers), and the acquittal of Sesay, Kallon and Gbao for taking of UN peacekeepers as hostages (Count 18 of the indictment).

The Appeals Chamber allowed the Prosecution's Ground 3, in part, holding that some RUF fighters other than the three Appellants did commit the crime of hostage taking, but that the Prosecution had failed to establish that Sesay, Kallon or Gbao are liable for that offence.

The Chamber, by a majority, dismissed the Prosecution's Ground 1 and unanimously dismissed the Prosecution's Ground 2.

In April 2009, the Trial Chamber sentenced Sesay to 52 years imprisonment. Kallon received a term of 40 years, and Gbao a sentence of 25 years. The Appeals Chamber upheld the total terms of imprisonment for each of the three, although the sentences for some counts were revised.

In addition to the majority opinion, four separate opinions were read out. Justice Winter read out a separate concurring opinion which was joined by Justice Shireen Avis Fisher. A separate concurring opinion was also read out by Justice Emmanuel Ayoola. Justice George Gelaga King read out a dissenting opinion which was joined by Justice Jon Kamanda. Justice Fisher read out a partially dissenting and concurring opinion in which Justice Winter joined in part.

Yesterday's appeal judgment is the last that would be delivered in Freetown, and marks a significant step forward as the Special Court for Sierra Leone works to complete its mandate.

Two other trials held in Sierra Leone are complete, including appeals.

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor continues in The Hague.

Special Court dismisses 96 grounds of appeal ...but frees Gbao on 2 counts

The Special Court Appeal Chamber, by a majority, has upheld the convictions of three former leaders of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Justice Renate Winter of Austria delivered the majority judgment, dismissing a total of 96 defence grounds of appeal.

Former RUF Interim Leader Issa Hassan Sesay and senior RUF Commander Morris Kallon were each convicted in February 2009 on 16 counts of war-crimes and crimes against humanity for atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war. Former RUF Security Chief Augustine Gbao was convicted on 14 counts.

crime against humanity, and for attacks against United Nations peacekeepers. The Chamber also upheld convictions for the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The Appeals Chamber judgment, read out in Freetown, upholds first-ever convictions by an international tribunal for forced marriage as a

overturned Gbao's conviction on Count 2 (collective punishments) and found that he was not responsible for one of the two attacks against UN peacekeepers (Count 15) for which he was convicted by the Trial Chamber.

Your Stars

AQUARIUS JAN 21 – FEB 19

At the very least, you ought to make an effort to try to spice things up a bit around the house right now. You

favor. And you ought to be able to look forward to some interesting new adventures before long.

LEO JULY 21 – AUGUST 20

The Appeals Chamber judgment, read out in Freetown, upholds first-ever convictions by an international tribunal for forced marriage as a



Awoko

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

Special Court Appeals Uphold RUF Sentences

By Betty Milton

The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday upheld the convictions of the Trial Chamber. The three convicts of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao had their global sentences of 52, 40 and 25 respectively reaffirmed.

Delivering the majority decision of the chamber, the Presiding Judge Renate Winter said most of the submissions made by the defence were vague, unsupported, undeveloped and poorly structured. Most of the grounds of appeal she said were dismissed in their entirety adding that the tone and language of the defence does not meet the standards of those appearing before the Special Court. The Appeals Chamber she went on to allow some grounds of appeal and reverse the guilty verdict on some of the convictions of the Trial Chamber especially the killing of a Limba man in Tongo for all of the accused persons.

Despite overturning the judgments on these counts, Justice Winter said that the sentences handed down by the Trial Chamber reflect the totality of their conduct and the seriousness of the crimes.

The Appeals Chamber unanimously overturned Gbao's conviction on Count 2 (collective punishments) and found that he was not responsible for one of the two attacks against UN peacekeepers (Count 15) for which he was convicted by the Trial Chamber.

The Judges, by a majority, upheld Gbao's liability for crimes pursuant to his participation in the Joint Criminal Enterprise.

The Appeals Chamber allowed the Prosecution's Ground 3, in part, holding that some RUF fighters other than the three appellants did commit the crime of hostage taking but that the Prosecution had failed to establish that Sesay, Kallon or Gbao were liable for that offence.

The Chamber by a majority dismissed the Prosecution's Ground 1 and unanimously dismissed the Prosecution's Ground 2.

Issa Sesay's lead counsel Wayne Jordash said that he was not surprised with the judgment as the trial from the beginning was marked with miscarriage of justice.

He said "today's judgment is a clear example of what not to do" adding "I am inviting academics and scholars to study

the jurisprudence of the RUF case and see the miscarriage of justice ... the Special Court massively departs from international standards. The legacy that arises from the RUF trial is a poor one."

Jordash maintained that the equality of arms which is a fundamental principal of a fair trial was never granted to the Sesay team and he has been raising this issue with the court since the start of the trial "if the law would have been applied correctly, Sesay would have been acquitted."

On the issue of their grounds of appeal, the counsel said that they submitted 46 grounds and each of them was solid and had merit but the Appeals Chamber rejected parts in some and all of them.

The Ag. Prosecutor Joseph Kamara on the other hand said that the trial has been totally fair and transparent and that they are pleased with the sentence not only for them as a prosecution but for the people of Sierra Leone as a whole.

According to Kamara "today's appeals judgment is a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times. The suffering inflicted by the RUF on the people of this country is beyond words."

The prosecutor said that with the end of this trial the convicts have finally recognized the crimes they committed

and there is strong measure of justice and accountability for the victims and the families of those who were slaughtered, the women who were raped and children that were forced to fight.

Concerning two of their appeals judgment which were squashed, the prosecutor said when it comes to the law, you don't expect everything to be on your side "but we are really not disappointed by the judgment."

The RUF appeal judgment is the last delivered in Freetown; the two other trials; AFRC, CDF have ended while the trial of Charles Taylor is presently going on in The Hague.

Awareness Times

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

Special Court Hands Down Final sentence

By Augustine Samba

The Special Court for Sierra Leone on Monday 26th October 2009 released final sentences on the accused persons from the defunct Revolutionary United Front (RUF) following their appeals made to the Appeals Chamber of the Court. The trial convictions of the RUF Leaders were upheld by the Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Issa Sesay was sentenced to 52 years imprisonment after being convicted on 16 counts whilst Morris Kallon was convicted on 16 counts and was sentenced to 40 years imprisonment followed by Augustine Gbao who was convicted on 15 counts and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Lawyer Joseph Kamara said the Appeal judgment was a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times. He disclosed that the suffering inflicted by the RUF on the people of Sierra Leone can hardly be explained in words. Prosecutor Kamara maintained that the final trial of these accused will serve as a signal and recognition to the victims and to potential offenders of the world's strong determination for persons to be held accountable for crimes against humanity.

on 40, Augustine Gbao 25

During the civil war, the Prosecutor went on, it was more dangerous to be a civilian than a soldier, adding that, "such tactics of warfare should not go unpunished". The Appeals Chamber found the RUF guilty of terrorizing the civilian populace.

However, in an interview with Issa Sesay lawyer, Wayne Jordash, he disclosed to the Awareness Times that, the trial of his client and other accused was fundamentally unfair. He said, the sentence was massively too harsh and that

was why, he had invited leading scholars of criminal laws to witness the trial. When Awareness Times interviewed members of Issa Sesay's family, his mother-in-law Haja Jaminatu Kenneh complained that other people who committed similar crimes like Issa were never given such lengthy sentences. "The term of imprisonment is too long. I want the accused to run their jail term in Sierra Leone rather far away country. Family members and friends would like to be in contact with them," Madam Kenneh said.

The accused were given a global sen-

tence by the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Renate Winter. Later, some of the Appeals Judges read their opinions with some expressing dissatisfaction with Augustine Gbao's sentence on the grounds that, he was not highly and criminal involved in the joint criminal enterprise (JCE) which specified that both RUF and AFRC had a common ideology to commit crimes since May 1997 when AFRC overthrew the legitimate democratically elected government and invited in the RUF.

Cocorioko

Monday, 26 October 2009

Prosecutor welcomes convictions in RUF Appeals judgement

Written by Special Court of Sierra Leone

The Acting Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Joseph Kamara, today welcomed the final convictions of three leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The trial convictions of the RUF leaders were upheld by the SCSL Appeals Chamber, with Issa Sesay and Morris Kallon convicted on 16 counts and Augustine Gbao was convicted on 13 counts of an 18-count Indictment charging them with atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war.

"Today's Appeals judgement is a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times," said Kamara. "The suffering inflicted by the RUF on the people of this country is beyond words."

"With the end of this trial, there is now a final recognition of their crimes. And there is a strong measure of justice and accountability for their victims – the families of those who were slaughtered, the women who were raped, the children forced to fight and kill, the many thousands who were mutilated and terrorized."

The Appeals Judgement upheld nearly all the conviction counts of the Trial Chamber's February 2009 ruling, including that the RUF had committed 'acts of terrorism' against the civilian population. "During the Sierra Leone civil war, it was more dangerous to be a civilian than a soldier," said Kamara. "This judgement sends a signal that such tactics of warfare will not go unpunished. It may act as a deterrent against those who would use this strategy to further their own aims at the expense of the innocent."

The Appeals Chamber also upheld two new international precedents from the trial judgement. The convictions of all three Accused were upheld for the crimes of 'forced marriage' and of 'attacks on peacekeepers.'

With today's judgement, trial proceedings of the Special Court in Freetown are now complete. The Court has now delivered final judgements against the Accused in all of its Freetown-based trials, with eight Accused persons convicted.

In its three Freetown trials, the SCSL has expanded jurisdiction for international crimes with the achievement of numerous "firsts" in international justice. In addition to the RUF convictions on forced marriage and attacks on peacekeepers, these include being the first court to recognize and pronounce convictions for the crimes of the use child soldiers and of sexual slavery.

The one remaining SCSL trial is that of former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, which is ongoing in The Hague, where it was moved for security reasons. The Accused has been testifying in his own defence since 14 July. It is expected that the Prosecution's cross-examination of Taylor will begin within the next few weeks.

Radio France International

Monday, 26 October 2009

Stringent prison terms upheld in rebel trials



Issa Hassan Sesay, former RUF commander sentenced to 52 years for war crimes

(Photo: Special Court for Sierra Leone)

The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone upheld stiff prison terms of up to 52 years on Monday for three former rebel leaders who played key roles during Sierra Leone's civil war. The three men - Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao - were all leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and had appealed their ruling.

Sesay, 39, was handed down the longest sentence and will be imprisoned for 52 years. He was convicted of a number of atrocities, including leading armed attacks throughout the country, targeting civilians, aid workers, and peacekeepers. He was charged with murder, rape and robbery and was known for conscripting children into the RUF.

Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao were handed down 40- and 25-year sentences, respectively.



Augustine Gbao, sentenced to 25 years in prison for war crimes

(Photo: Special Court for Sierra Leone)

Some 120,000 people were killed and thousands had limbs chopped off during the brutal civil war. The conflict also gave rise to illegal trade in diamonds and timber.

The trial took place in Freetown, the Sierra Leone capital, and will be the last trial of its kind in the country. The final war crimes trial, of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor, will be held in The Hague and not in Freetown, for security reasons.

The court will close after taking care of final details, such as the transfer of convicts to serve their sentences in other countries.

Out of the 13 people originally indicted by the court, all were arrested except for Johnny Paul Koroma, a leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, who is presumed dead. In addition, there are three who have died while in custody.

UN News

Monday, 26 October 2009

Sierra Leone: UN-Backed Court Hands Down Final Rulings

The United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has upheld the convictions and sentences passed on three former rebels in the last judgment by the tribunal to be handed down in the West African nation.

The three former leaders of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) were convicted earlier this year for atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war.

The charges include forced marriage as a crime against humanity and attacks against UN peacekeepers - the first time that an international criminal tribunal has entered guilty verdicts for both charges.

The Court - which is based in the capital, Freetown - dismissed all the appeals of the defendants, except one regarding Augustine Gbao for the charge of collective punishment, which has been overturned. He will still have to serve the 25-year sentence originally imposed on him.

The other defendants, Issa Sesay and Morris Kallon, will serve 52 years and 40 years, respectively.

The acting Prosecutor of the Court, Joseph Kamara, welcomed today's judgment, calling it "a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times.

"This judgment sends a signal that such tactics of warfare will not go unpunished. It may act as a deterrent against those who would use this strategy to further their own aims at the expense of the innocent," he added in a news release.

With today's judgment, the Court's trial proceedings in Sierra Leone now complete. It has now delivered final judgements in all three of its Freetown-based trials, with eight accused persons convicted.

The remaining trial, involving former Liberian president Charles Taylor, is continuing at The Hague, where it was moved for security reasons.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the Sierra Leonean Government and the UN in 2002. It is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

Voice of America

Monday, 26 October 2009

Sierra Leone War Crimes Tribunal Makes Final Ruling

By Fid Thompson
Dakar

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, established to try rebel leaders for atrocities committed during the country's brutal civil war, handed down its last judgment Monday.



AFP Photo

A decade has passed since Sierra Leone put an end to its brutal civil war and embarked on the long road to reconciliation and justice.

As part of that process Sierra Leone's Special Court upheld the convictions of three rebel leaders accused of war crimes. The appeal ruling is the court's final word on atrocities committed during 11 years of civil war.

Patrick Fatoma is outreach coordinator for the Special Court. He says the ruling is a milestone for the people of Sierra Leone.

"For Sierra Leone this is a landmark decision," said Fatoma. "For the first time in the sub-region, people have been assigned responsibility for mass murder and serious crimes committed against the people in their own country."

Three leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group at the Sierra Leone's UN-backed tribunal in Freetown, 26 Oct 2009

Fatoma says victims of the war in Sierra Leone can now breathe a sigh of relief to see the case come to an end.

During the war, tens of thousands of civilians died and rebels mutilated many people who had their arms, legs, noses and ears cut off. Women were raped and forced to become 'bush wives' to rebel fighters and thousands of children abducted, drugged and forced to fight as soldiers.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was established in 2002 by the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to prosecute those who bore the "greatest responsibility" for atrocities committed during the war.

Prosecutors brought a case against the three surviving leaders of the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front. In February, the Special Court found Issa Sisay, Augustine Gbao and Morris Kallon guilty on several counts including murder, attacks against U.N. troops, sexual slavery and recruitment of child soldiers.

Sisay was sentenced to 52 years in prison, the longest sentence given by the court. Kallon was given a 40-year sentence and Gbao, who was acquitted of the sexual slavery charge, received a 25-years sentence.

The defendants appealed 91 of the guilty verdicts. But the Special Court's final decision upheld the convictions and original sentences.

The decision marks the end of a decade-long struggle to bring to justice the worst perpetrators of war crimes in Sierra Leone.

The Special Court's only ongoing case is the trial of former president of Liberia Charles Taylor in the Hague.

BBC World Service Trust

Monday, 26 October 2009

NEWS ITEM

INTRO: The Former Liberian President Charles Taylor has again vigorously denied being responsible for the killing of the Sierra Leone rebel commander, Sam Bockarie. At the resumption of his trial in The Hague after a three-week break, Mr Taylor said he looked on Bockarie – who was murdered in 2003 in Liberia – like a son. A number of prosecution witnesses have alleged that Bockarie was killed because he knew too much about links between Charles Taylor and the RUF rebels. Adolphus Williams sends this report from The Hague.

SCRIPT

The circumstances surrounding the death of RUF commander, Sam Bockarie after he was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone on war crimes charges, are shrouded in mystery.

Mr Taylor said he ordered his Vice President Moses Blah to ensure that armed men, including Sam Bockarie, did not enter Liberia with weapons.

According to him, the order was to arrest Bockarie, not to kill him, nor as a prosecution witness had alleged, to hand Bockarie over to the then president of Sierra Leone, Tejan Kabbah.

TAYLOR: The last person on this planet that I wanted killed was Sam Bockarie. I never gave any such order. Sam Bockarie's death hurt me. Sam Bockarie was someone that I actually liked and I can tell the world about this. Even if Sam Bockarie had been arrested and brought to me, I had no intention of giving him to Kabbah. I never wanted that boy dead. I liked him like a son; I never wanted him dead. And I never intended to give him to Tejan Kabbah either – never gave any such order that Sam Bockarie should be killed. Never..

WILLIAMS: The prosecution claimed that Mr. Taylor ordered the execution of Bockarie to destroy evidence of his close relationship with the RUF rebels.

A prosecution witness also had alleged that Charles Taylor gave Bockarie arms to capture the town of Kono in return for diamonds.

When this was put to him by his defence lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, the former president replied: “No, that's another lie”.

“Did you ever provide dollar bills to Sam Bockarie in return for diamonds?”, “ Mr Griffiths asked. “ Never” was Mr. Taylor's response.

GRIFFITHS: He said “I'm trying to go to Charles Taylor and then he took this paper. Diamonds were in it. He called it ‘stones.’” He said, “I'm taking these stones to the father, because we called Charles Taylor the father. That was how we used to call him by code, the father. He said these are the stones I'm taking to the father, for me to go and get some materials quickly for us to launch a big offensive on those men, and to take back Kono.” Now you deny that, Mr. Taylor, is that right?

TAYLOR: Of course I deny this [indistinct] it never happened.

Mr. Taylor continues his testimony Tuesday.

John Kollie

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor has again vigorously denied being responsible for the killing of the Sierra Leone rebel commander, Sam Bockarie. At the resumption of his trial in The Hague after a three-week break on Monday, Mr Taylor said he looked on Bockarie – who was murdered in 2003 in Liberia – like a son. A number of prosecution witnesses have alleged that Bockarie was killed because he knew too much about links between Charles Taylor and the RUF rebels. BBC World Service Trust’s John Kollie transcribes reports on the trial of the former Liberian leader from The Hague...

The circumstances surrounding the death of RUF commander, Sam Bockarie after he was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone on war crimes charges, are shrouded in mystery.

Mr Taylor said he ordered his Vice President Moses Blah to ensure that armed men, including Bockarie, did not enter Liberia with weapons. According to him, the order was to arrest Bockarie, not to kill him, nor, as a prosecution witness alleged, to hand Bockarie over to the then president of Sierra Leone, Tejan Kabbah.

“The last person on this planet that I would want to kill was Sam Bokarie, I never gave any such order. Sam Bokarie’s death hurt me, I actually liked Sam Bokarie and I can tell the World about this. Even if Sam Bokarie had been arrested and brought to me, I had no intention of turning him over to Tejan Kaba. I liked him like a son, I never wanted that boy dead, I never wanted him dead and I never intended giving him to Tejan Kaba. Mr. Taylor repeatedly told the Sierra Leone Special Court.

The prosecution claimed that Mr. Taylor ordered the execution of Bockarie to destroy evidence of his close relationship with the RUF rebels.

A prosecution witness also alleged that Charles Taylor gave Bockarie arms with which to capture the town of Kono in Sierra Leone in return for diamonds. When this was put to him by his defence counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, the former president replied: “No, that’s another lie”.

“Did you ever provide dollar bills to Sam Bockarie in return for diamonds, “ Mr Griffiths asked., here again “ Never” was Mr. Taylor’s usual vehement response. “Of course I deny that” was an addition to his “NEVER” response.

Mr. Taylor continues his testimony Tuesday.

BBC Focus on Africa

Monday, 26 October 2009

Special Court Delivers Final Judgement

LEAD-IN: The United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone has delivered its final judgment on Sierra Leonean soil. The Appeal Chamber of the court has upheld sentences against three leaders of the former Revolutionary United Front rebel movement who had been convicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court was set up to try those held most to blame for the atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war. Umaru Fofana followed the proceedings in court.

FOFANA: It took seven years to happen. Happen it did today. Three former leaders of the RUF rebel movement will among them spend more than one century behind bars.

JUSTICE WINTER: In respect of Sesay, taking into account the grounds of appeal which have been allowed, the Appeals Chamber therefore imposes a global sentence for Count 1 through 14 of 52 years of imprisonment.

FOFANA: Presiding Judge, Justice Renate Winter, upheld the sentences handed down earlier this year by the Trial Chamber against the RUF Interim Leader, Issa Sesay, and two of his lieutenants, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao. Issa will spend 52 years in prison; Morris 40 years, and Augustine 25 years. It follows their conviction on several counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during Sierra Leone's decade-long brutal civil war in the 1990s which left an estimated 200,000 people killed and hundreds of others amputated. While the court upheld some of the grounds upon which appeals were made, with one of the convicts having one of his jail terms reduced by five years, it did not affect the overall prison terms of the three men, who looked well fed, well-dressed and well-behaved in court. Flanked by uniformed security personnel, they each stood up to listen to the verdicts, a move that will go down in history as that which ended impunity in this West African country, according to human rights activists.

But for Eldred Collins, the new leader of the revived Revolutionary United Front Party and a former comrade in arms of the jailed men, it is all a travesty of justice.

COLLINS: Giving 52 years to someone that gave up all his life, all his intention, to bring peace to Sierra Leone. Supposing he should have refused of bringing peace to Sierra Leone. What will have been the consequence? You know, he has given up everything to make sure that lasting peace returns to Sierra Leone and now Sierra Leone is enjoying peace and stability. When I go to bed I can see that [Africans] have peace.

FOFANA: "Victims of peace" says Collins. But for Jabaty Mambu, who had his right hand chopped off by people he says were RUF rebels, he can now go to bed and sleep, convinced justice has finally been delivered.

MAMBU: Very, very decisive decision, and I think to me personally it's a good one to the end of impunity in this country. I hope that others that went to the court today, they will remember that something happened and the end part of it will be a prison term.

FOFANA: It is not immediately clear where those prison sentences will be served. Court officials say Rwanda is a likely destination. This is the final in-court activity of the Special Court inside Sierra Leone. What remains now is taking the men to the country where they will serve their jail terms, and concluding the trial in The Hague of the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, who is believed to have aided and abetted the men who ripped this country apart. That trial resumed today, with direct cross-examination expected to last between one and two weeks.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 26 October 2009

Stiff sentences upheld for Sierra Leone rebels

The United Nations-backed Sierra Leone tribunal has upheld sentences of up to 52 years in prison for three former rebel leaders in its last case in Freetown.

Although the court accepted grounds for appeal by the defendants, the five-judge panel confirmed the sentences of 52, 40 and 25 years for Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao respectively.

The three men were convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity for overseeing a spree of rapes and killings, as well as recruiting child soldiers, during the country's civil war which ended in 2002 after a decade of bloodshed.

The ruling against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leaders is the last judgement the court will hand down in Freetown, as its only remaining case - the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor - has been moved to The Hague for security reasons.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was established by the UN in 2002 to try those who bear "the greatest responsibility" for the atrocities of the civil war. The court is now expected to close its doors eight years after the end of the civil war. The conflict left some 120,000 people dead and tens of thousands mutilated.

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Monday, 26 October 2009

Liberia: Taylor Says He Did Not Order The Execution Of Sierra Leonean Rebel Commander 'Mosquito'; Was A Peacemaker

Alpha Sesay

Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, took to the witness stand again today after a three week judicial break, denying allegations that he ordered the execution of a key Sierra Leonean rebel commander, Sam Bockarie, during his neighboring country's vicious civil war.

Mr. Taylor is on trial in The Hague for his alleged role in war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious crimes committed by rebel forces in Sierra Leone.

"The last person on this planet that I wanted killed was Sam Bockarie. I did not order him killed," Mr. Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone judges today.

Mr. Taylor was responding to the testimony of a prosecution witness who in her September 2008 testimony said that Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commander Sam Bockarie (alias "Mosquito") was executed in Liberia while returning from Ivory Coast in 2003 on the orders of Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor denied the witness' claim.

"I never wanted him [Bockarie] dead. I liked him as a son. I never gave such an order that Bockarie should be killed," Mr. Taylor said.

Mr. Taylor dismissed as "nonsense" the witness' assertion that he ordered the execution of Mr. Bockarie to silence him, given Mr. Bockarie's level of knowledge about Mr. Taylor's relationship with the RUF.

"That is nonsense. Who knows more than Issa Sesay or all those RUF commanders on trial at the Special Court? What did Bockarie know that the other senior RUF officers did not know?" Mr. Taylor asked.

Mr. Taylor explained that Mr. Bockarie was killed in a cross-fire with Liberian government troops who had tried to stop him (Bockarie) from entering into Liberia with armed men from Ivory Coast. Mr. Taylor denied claims that he sent Mr. Bockarie with a group of fighters to attack Ivory Coast. He referred to Ivory Coast as a friendly country against which he would not have ordered any attacks.

Mr. Taylor was responding in part to the 2008 testimony of a former Sierra Leonean member of Mr. Taylor's Anti-Terrorist Unit (ATU), Jabati Jaward. Mr. Jaward had testified that he was among those sent by Mr. Taylor to Ivory Coast under Mr. Bockarie's command. Mr. Taylor denied Mr. Jaward's claim, arguing that the Sierra Leonean members of the ATU decided they no longer wanted to be part of the Unit and decided to travel to different places, including Ivory Coast. Mr. Taylor explained that because they had left the country and launched attacks in Ivory Coast, he (Taylor) gave orders to his soldiers that Mr. Bockarie and his troops must be disarmed before they would be allowed to enter Liberia.

Mr. Taylor said that he personally sent his Vice President, Moses Blah, to travel to the border and put the situation under control. Mr. Taylor said he asked Mr. Blah to ensure that Mr. Bockarie was disarmed and personally brought to Mr. Taylor in Liberia. When Mr. Bockarie and his allied fighters refused to be disarmed, Mr. Bockarie was killed in an exchange of fire, Mr. Taylor said.

"I was very hurt when Blah told me that Bockarie was killed. I sent Blah there because I did not want that boy killed," Mr. Taylor said. "Blah lied here to say that he was just in the area when Bockarie was killed. I sent him there."

Mr. Blah testified as a Prosecution witness in Mr. Taylor's case in 2008 and discussed, among other things, Sam Bockarie's death. Indeed, the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Bockarie have been controversial throughout the trial. Several prosecution witnesses have testified that Mr. Bockarie was killed on the orders of Mr. Taylor, but accounts of how Mr. Bockarie died have differed among the witnesses.

Meanwhile, as his testimony continued today, Mr. Taylor again returned to a consistent theme throughout his time on the witness stand: that he was a peacemaker in Sierra Leone and acted with the knowledge, consent and backing of other West African leaders in his dealings with Sierra Leonean rebels. This theme emerged today when Mr. Taylor returned to the issue of Mr. Bockarie's relocation to Liberia in 1999, after he (Bockarie) had fallen out with RUF leader, Foday Sankoh.

In responding to Prosecution witness testimony that Mr. Bockarie's relocation was at Mr. Taylor's invitation, Mr. Taylor countered that he did not act alone. Instead, he said Mr. Bockarie's relocation was a collective decision by West African leaders who considered Mr. Bockarie's continued presence in Sierra Leone a hinderance to the country's peace process.

"Bockarie was invited by me after consultations with other African leaders. It was decided by ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States]," he said.

Mr. Taylor also denied allegations that he ordered RUF rebels to fight Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebels in Voinjama, Liberia in 1998.

"There were no instructions or knowlege on my part of RUF being called into Liberia to fight," he said.

Mr. Taylor is on trial for 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. He is responding to allegations that he was involved in a joint criminal enterprise with RUF rebels to wage war in Sierra Leone, and had control over RUF activities, including the crimes the group committed.

The prosecution also alleges that Mr. Taylor provided aid and support to RUF rebels in Sierra Leone through the supply of arms and ammunition in return for the country's diamonds. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations. He is testifying as a witness in his own defense.

Mr. Taylor's testimony continues tomorrow.

Voice of America

Monday, 26 October 2009

Former Prosecutor Calls Sierra Leone Special Court Remarkable

26 October 2009



The Special Court for Sierra Leone held its final hearing Monday, upholding sentences for three rebel leaders for crimes against humanity.

The court's appeals chamber confirmed sentences of 52 years for Issa Hassan Sesay, 40 years for Morris Kallon and 25 years for Augustine Gbao. They were charged with rapes and killings during Sierra Leone's civil war.

While the special court has ended its hearings in Freetown, it is still holding a trial for former Liberian leader Charles Taylor in The Hague. Taylor faces charges of crimes against humanity relating to the Sierra Leone conflict.

David Crane, the former chief prosecutor for the special court, who signed the indictment against Taylor, says of the final hearing, "My reaction is one of quiet pride in the people of Sierra Leone to have the courage to move forward in doing this all these many years."

Crane says he's "pleased to see justice done.... Not a perfect court but a court that...is a perfect model into the future for working with the International Criminal Court in the principle of complementarity."

Would he do any differently?

Crane says no.

"It was in the right place, which was in Freetown. It had the right mandate.... And it had the ability to go out and talk to the people of Sierra Leone.... The strategy that I put together to...bring justice largely fell into place. I think it has done a remarkable job," he says.

Precedents were set

"One of which is that a head of state who commits international crimes while a head of state

is culpable," he says.

Another precedent was making the recruiting of child soldiers an international crime.

He says, "In fact, any head of state or any cynical general or politician who unlawfully recruits children below the age of 18 into an armed force will be prosecuted."

A third precedent, he says, is that the United Nations, "working with a country or a region which has been distressed by war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide...can and does have the legal power to enter into a treaty...to prosecute those who commit international crimes."

Finally, Crane says a new crime against humanity was also established -- forced marriage in time of armed conflict. This crime focuses on the "bush wives," whose numbers grew during the civil war.

"In the indictments that I signed back in 2003, the cornerstone...(was) crimes against women," he says.

Crane is currently a professor at Syracuse University College of Law.



Former special court prosecutor crane signed indictments against Charles Taylor

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 26 October 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

Displaced by War, Families Grow Own Food

Brewerville, Oct 26, 2009 (allAfrica.com/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- "The cassava we are eating today is from that small garden you see over there," said Hayford Quaye, a 50-year-old father of four. His cassava garden was planted just behind a large makeshift house in Brewerville, a community on the outskirts of Liberia's capital, Monrovia. We spoke as 15 or more joyful looking children gathered around a teenage girl who dished out cooked cassava from a large pot onto their plates. Quaye left his home in the southeastern county of Maryland and settled in Monrovia during Liberia's civil war. He and his family live with another large group of people who were displaced by the fighting. "I am serious," he emphasized, seeing I was surprised at the number of people living with him. "We are about 100 persons living in this house." He said they were from different counties, squatting in the 10-bedroom unfinished building and could not go back home because life in their rural communities is difficult. "The road is not good and the hard time is too much in the bush," he said. I watched as the children had lunch. They seemed to like the cassava. It's usually boiled and a little pepper sauce added.

International Clips on West Africa

Sierra Leone

Special UN-backed court for Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, Oct 26, 2009 (AFP) - The UN-backed war crimes tribunal for Sierra Leone on Monday has delivered its final verdict in Freetown over atrocities during the nation's decade-long civil war in which 120,000 people died and thousands more had limbs chopped off. Created in January 2002, the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) is a hybrid of international and local law under a deal between the West African country's government and the United Nations. It is mandated to prosecute those considered to bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed during the country's civil war, chief among them former Liberian leader Charles Taylor. Taylor's trial is still ongoing but was moved to The Hague in the Netherlands for security reasons. Among the 13 people originally indicted by the court, all were arrested except for Johnny Paul Koroma, a leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) who is presumed dead.

UN-backed court dismisses S. Leone rebels' appeal

FREETOWN, Oct 26 (Reuters) - Sierra Leone's U.N.-backed Special Court rejected the appeals of three former rebel commanders on Monday, upholding jail terms of up to 52 years imposed for crimes during the country's 1991-2002 civil war. Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao, the most senior surviving members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), whose uprising sparked the conflict, were sentenced in April after earlier being found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Their convictions included recruiting child soldiers, attacks on peacekeepers and forced marriages. The dismissal of the appeal leaves Charles Taylor, the former president of neighboring Liberia, as the only remaining indictee of the Freetown-based court.

Local Media – Newspaper

Government of Liberia Appoints 21 Honorary Consuls

(The Inquirer, New Vision, The Monitor, Public Agenda, Heritage, Daily Observer, The Informer, The Analyst)

- The Government of Liberia has appointed 21 persons as honorary consuls to 14 countries covered by relevant Liberian Embassies.
- The appointments made in compliance with new guidelines governing the appointment of Honorary Consuls, has scrapped the designation of non-Liberians as Ambassadors-at-Large or special envoys abroad and the granting of diplomatic passports to Honorary Consuls.
- According to a Foreign Ministry release, following a review of Government's Honorary Consuls in 2007, six Honorary Consuls were retained because of their relationship to Liberia's Maritime Programme.
- The six are Geraldo F. Bernstein of Argentina, Hannelore Bohnis Dettinger of Germany, Nicolas Soutos of Greece, Jan Tormond Dege of Norway, Jesus Munarriz of Spain and David A. Straz, Jr. of Florida, the United States of America . Eighteen new consuls have also been named.
- Liberia's foreign missions have over the years been plagued with what observers say is a myriad of problems including the "indiscriminate" appointment of Consuls.

Vice President Boakai Says Country's Security Still Fragile

(The Monitor, New Vision)

- Vice President Joseph Boakai has again reiterated that the country's security remains fragile.
- Speaking during programmes marking the observance of United Nations Day in Liberia over the weekend, Vice President Boakai said though the presence of UNMIL is being felt throughout the country there was a need for their continuous assistance until the restructuring of the Armed Forces of Liberia is completed.
- He said the crisis in neighbouring Guinea poses a threat to the country and called on UNMIL to confront the situation.

"Police Tight-lipped Over Bropleh Reported Vindication"...Says Investigation Still Ongoing

(Heritage, The Informer, The Inquirer, New Vision)

- [SIC] Authorities of the Liberia National Police are tight-lipped over media reports that suspended Information Minister, Laurence Bropleh stands vindicated by a police investigation in connection with over US\$300,000 financial scandal at the ministry.
- Last week, there were media reports that Minister Bropleh stands to be vindicated and would return to work this week.
- However, police sources it is inconceivable that the suspended Minister had been vindicated when the investigation into the financial scam was still ongoing.
- Meanwhile, reports say police authorities are widening their inquiry to establish whether or not the Minister was framed.
- The suspended Information Boss has since denied any link to the scandal claiming his signature was forged

NPA, Houston Port Sign Memorandum

(The Inquirer, New Democrat)

- The Board of Directors of the Port of Houston Authority (PHA) in the United States has committed itself to assist the National Port Authority (NPA) in any area of need it may present to the institution.
- An NPA release said the PHA made the commitment recently during the signing of a Memorandum of Friendship and Trade Cooperation with the NPA.
- The agreement formally known as the Sister Port Agreement was signed by NPA Managing Director Matilda Parker and the management of PHA during her visit to the United States.
- During the ceremony organized by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas, the Chairman of the PHA Jim Edmonds pledged his institution's support in addressing the current difficulties of the NPA.

European Development Days 2009 Tackles Democracy and Development Issues (The Inquirer, Heritage)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says the building of strong democratic institutions must also be supported by emphasis on building infrastructure.
- The President observed that democracy can not function effectively when the citizens lack infrastructure, including adequate health care facilities, schools, roads and basic necessities to meet their needs.
- She said the promotion of good governance and democratic principles must go along with the building of infrastructures to sustain democracy.
- The Liberian President spoke last Friday, in Stockholm, Sweden, during a high-level round-table discussion on "Democracy and Development."

Campaign for Montserrado Senatorial By-Election Turns Violent...CDC-Kromah Supporters Clash, LP spokesman Stoned

(Daily Observer, The Monitor)

- The race for the Montserrado County Senatorial seat over the weekend descended into fistfight and the stoning of a Liberty Party candidate.
- The fistfight erupted between supporters of Independent candidate, Alhaji Kromah and Geraldine Doe-Sheriff of the Congress of Democratic Change in the Jacob Town suburb while ex-soldiers stoned supporters of Liberty party candidate in the Saye area in Sinkor.
- Eyewitnesses say the fight at the Jacob town Field broke out when CDC supporters left the main road during a parade and ventured into the area where Mr. Kromah's campaign was being launched.
- Meanwhile, ex-soldiers reportedly stoned a Liberty Party spokesman after being misled that a rally held by the party was intended to discuss benefits the former soldiers claimed Government owe them.
- Prior to the opening of the campaign, the National Elections Commission cautioned all candidates to conduct their campaign free of aggression.

IMF Delegation Arrives In the Country Today

(The Informer, Daily Observer, Liberian Express)

- The Director of the African Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Dr. Antoinette Sayeh, is expected in the country today.
- While in the country, Dr. Sayeh will participate in the third programme review of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) and discuss progress to date and the challenges ahead.
- The PRGF is the IMF's concessional lending facility, which provides finance for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).
- It was created in September 1999, and is crucial to the Liberian Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).
- A Finance Ministry release said Dr. Sayeh along with an IMF Mission already in the country will take part in the final discussions of the memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) and wrap up meeting with the Finance Ministry and Central Bank of Liberia officials.

Ministry of Public Works, SIDA Sign US\$12.5M Pact for Roads in Lofa, Bong

(The Informer, Daily Observer)

- The Government of Liberia and Sweden have signed an equivalent of US\$12.5 million agreement for the rehabilitation and construction of feeder roads in Lofa and Bong Counties.
- The project aims to rehabilitate or construct 300 kilometers of roads and maintain them during the project period which will cover three dry seasons starting October 2009.
- The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) will contribute the funds while the Ministry of Public Works will contribute counterpart staff and office space at its premises in Monrovia.

MSF Decries Rape Issues in Liberia

- The Belgian humanitarian group, Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) says issues of rape are getting increasingly serious in Liberia.
- MSF supervisor for sexual violence programme in Monrovia, Ms. Theresa Saday quotes MSF hospital records as saying between 60 to 70 cases of rape are reported every month.
- Ms. Saday said over 80 percent of the reported cases of rape are children with ages as low as 18 months old.
- She called on government to ensure that protection measures are put in place to minimize the instances of sexual violence in the society.

UNMIL Vehicle Kills Two in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County

- [SIC] Reports from Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County say an UNMIL vehicle has killed two persons in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County.
- The victims are identified as Commissioner of Gbao-Tabo District, Augustus Brooks and a teacher of the Alphonso Gaye School, William Brown.
- Correspondents say police have launched an investigation into the incident.

World Bank to Monitor Liberian Projects

- The World Bank says it is putting in place measures to monitor infrastructure projects being funded by it in Liberia.
- World Bank Director for Infrastructure, Ms. Ingor Anderson said the Bank is increasing its personnel in the country in order to monitor projects undertaken in its name.
- Ms. Anderson said the Bank was interested in rebuilding Liberia's huge infrastructure damaged by years of hostilities and was specifically interested in ensuring that roads it is helping to build or rehabilitate are maintained.
- She said though the Bank was interested in quality projects it was up to the Government of Liberia to monitor the contractors noting that the rebuilding of Liberia's roads was crucial to economic growth and her institution attaches serious importance to it.

(Also reported on Radio Veritas, Sky F.M., Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Radio Veritas *(News culled from website today at 09:45 am)*

Catholic Teachers begin go-slow

- Teachers of the Catholic School System have started a go-slow action in demand of salary increment.
- In a release, the Catholic school teachers accused the Education Secretariat of failing to address their plight saying they will continue the go-slow until their demands are met.
- But the Catholic Education Secretariat pleaded with the teachers to abandon the go-slow action and return to the classroom.

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

Truth FM *(News culled from website today at 10:00 am)*

NPA, PHA sign Memorandum

CNN

Monday, 26 October 2009

Q&A: The trial of Radovan Karadzic

After Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic's failure to appear at the start of his trial on genocide and war crimes charges CNN Senior International Correspondent Nic Robertson explains what happens next.

Q: How does the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) differ from the International Criminal Court (ICC)?

A: The ICTY was set up by the United Nations in 1993 specifically to try people for crimes committed during the break up of the former Yugoslavia. The ICC is the first permanent, treaty-based, international criminal court established to prosecute the most serious crimes of concern to the global community including genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Q: Why did Karadzic fail to show up in court on Monday?

A: Karadzic failed to show up because he wrote to the court several weeks ago telling judges he had not had sufficient time to prepare his defense. He is a "self-representing accused," meaning he is defending himself. But he is backed by a large number of lawyers supported by a bevy of interns from U.S. law schools.

Despite all this legal support, Karadzic says there has been too much evidence for him to go through. Prosecutors say they have 490 hours of evidence to present. The judge wrote back to Karadzic last week telling him he doesn't need to present his defense yet, he can do it after the prosecution. But Karadzic still refused to show.

The court cannot compel him to come even though he is held in a detention facility about seven minutes drive from the court run exclusively for those awaiting or on trial at the tribunal. The detention facility is a lot more comfortable than a conventional jail. Karadzic will be able to watch TV when he wants, he has access to books and can mix with other defendants. Indeed, detention facility staff report that members of all three ethnic groups -- Serbs, Croats and Bosnians -- mingle freely, even playing games together.

Q: Can the trial proceed without a defendant in the dock?

A: The trial can go ahead without Karadzic present because there is no legal reason that says he needs to be there, even though he is defending himself. But the court is bound to give him a fair trial so if the prosecution begins without him the judges may give Karadzic a video feed so he can watch proceedings unfold.

Q: How long is the trial expected to last?

A: The trial could last at least two years and possibly three. The court allows at least one year for the prosecution and one year for the defense as a minimum.

Q: What measures have been put in place to prevent a repeat of the delays and obfuscation seen during the trial of the former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic?

A: Milosovic's trial dragged on because he defended himself, refused to accept the legitimacy of court and because of the complexity of the case and lengthy charge list -- 66 counts -- against him.

Karadzic's case is less complex and this is one of the lessons prosecutors have learned from the Milosevic trial: make cases simpler and only go for those that can be readily proved. But with Karadzic defending himself and refusing to accept the court's legitimacy, the judges are still struggling to figure out how to deal with tactics designed to delay the trial. They are likely to be less lenient than they were with Milosevic.

Special Court Supplement
RUF Appeal Judgment
Monday, 26 October 2009







