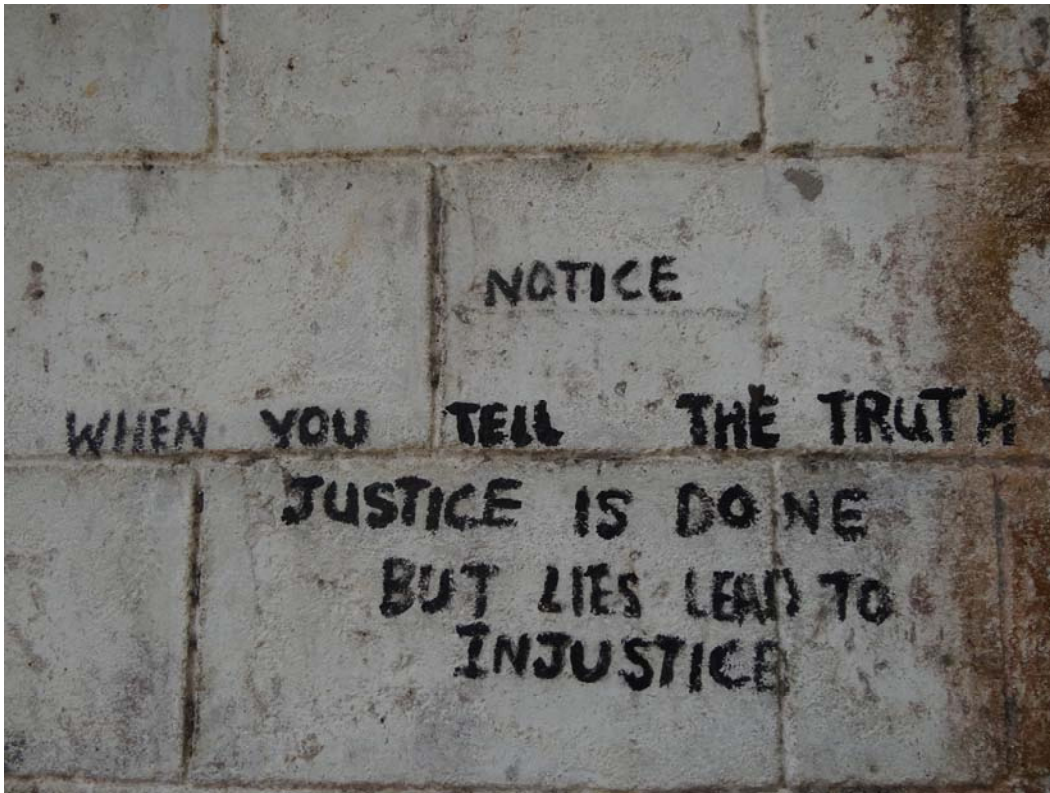


**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



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:

Thursday, 28 February 2013

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

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL COURT STILL DOING IN SIERRA LEONE?

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has been around since 2002, about a decade. It was established as a result of an agreement signed between the Sierra Leone government and the Security Council of the United Nations.

The Court's mandate was to prosecute "those deemed to bear the greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed by the various warring factions, during the country's bloody civil conflict of the 90s.

Indeed, the court managed to convict three commanders from the RUF: Issa Sesay, Augustine Gbao and Morris Kallon, alias "Bilai Kareem." From the AFRC were Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, Santigie Kanu alias "Five Five" and Tamba Brima alias "Gullit." And, from the pro-government "kamajor" militia were Allieu Kondewa and Moinina Fofana.

Two high profile indictees, Sam Hinga Norman of the Kamajors and Foday Sankoh of the RUF, died during the course of their trials. Still believed to be at large is AFRC junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma. Also convicted but appealing against sentence is former Liberian President Charles Taylor. This may seem a job well done, at least in the eyes of the international community, which financed this hybrid experiment in international jurisprudence. And, for those who worked for the Court, especially the so-called white "expatriates," it was an opportunity to make huge money.

We dare suggest here that the main losers in this exercise were, and still are, the thousands of victims of the war: the amputees, the maimed and the impoverished. Yes, the scars of the murderous war are still etched on the faces, bodies and limbs of the victims.

A little over ten years since the war was declared over, there are still many houses lying in ruins, in Kissy in eastern Freetown, Kono, Kailahun, etc, as a result of the arson attacks by rebel forces and sustained bombardments by the regional intervention force, ECOMOG.

And a decade after the war, the people are still picking the pieces of their broken lives. Life continues to be tough for the ordinary man and woman on the street and uncertainty looms large about the future of this country.

The Special Court promised "recovering" warlord, Charles Taylor's loot and sharing it among Sierra Leone's war victims. They have since failed to do so. The war victims are still waiting in anguish, not sure where and how to get the next meal and, of course, given up all hopes of benefitting from the Taylor fortune.

Only last month, the Special Court convicted one unknown Prince Taylor, allegedly for "influencing" witnesses in the trial of his namesake Charles Taylor. Ironically, Prince Taylor worked for Charles Taylor's defense team as a researcher and one who seeks witnesses for the ex-Liberian President [with whom he had no relation.] He received a year and half's jail sentence. But this was, as usual, a way of prolonging the life span of the now useless Court, in order to open money-making opportunities for white boys working there.

We ask: Is the Court going to continue functioning till Johnny Paul is found?

The NEW STORM strongly believes the work of the court must be brought to an end now. Its impact has not been substantially felt by ordinary Sierra Leoneans and there is no guarantee that its operation will in any way end impunity in this country, which was at the core of its mandate.

Let the white boys and girls go home with the fortunes they have amassed and leave us alone. The Special Court has frankly outlived its usefulness. Period!

JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA TIPPED FOR TOP JOB



How easily people here forget history. Johnny Paul Koroma, the wanted man by that useless Special Court, is rumored to come home soon to roost. Why not? The man fought gallantly to save this country from SLPP hopeless rule with his AFRC arsonists, rapists and murderers.

Yes, the man helped in the capture of that elusive Rasta Sanks of the RUF. He in fact brought peace to Salone, not Pa Kabba or anyone else. How can that loser Maada Bio claim to have brought peace to this country? That is distortion of historical fact. Did Pa Kabba not make Johnny Paul head of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace?

Well, JPK is about to bounce back from his hiding place. After all, the Special Court will be gone by end of this year and Prezo will announce amnesty for all fugitives. Now, Johnny Paul will come back and take a new position: head of national reconciliation and bridging regional and tribal divide. Wow. This country needs reconciliation badly, doesn't it?

And, JPK fits the bill quite well. He is a northerner, an ethnic Limba from Bombali district... A la Wusum Stars! What more qualification does he need, anyway? The day he emerges would be declared a public holiday for our former foot-of-state. Yes, he deserves it, doesn't he? After all, every Jack and Jill, even the bitch, can bag a top government job in today's Mama Salone. *Leh Papa God sorri for Salone.*

Associated Press

Thursday, 28 February 2013

War Crimes Court Issues Death Sentence

DHAKA, Bangladesh—A special tribunal in Bangladesh convicted the leader of an Islamic political party of crimes during the nation's 1971 war for independence, and sentenced him to death.

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee was found guilty Thursday of eight counts out of 20 charges involving mass killings, rape and other atrocities during the nine-month war against Pakistan, prosecutor Syed Haider Ali said. The verdict was announced by presiding tribunal judge ATM Fazle Kabir in a packed courtroom.

"Justice has been done to those who lost their loved ones at the hands of Sayedee," Mr. Ali said.

Lawyers for the defendant boycotted the tribunal during the verdict and rejected it as politically motivated. Mr. Sayedee's lawyer Abdur Razzak said they will appeal.



Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee, here leaving court in 2011, was sentenced to death Thursday for crimes during the 1971 war for independence from Pakistan

Jamaat-e-Islami was enforcing a nationwide general strike Thursday to denounce the trial and to demand Mr. Sayedee be freed.

Protesting the verdict, supporters of Mr. Sayedee clashed with police in Sirajganj district, about 100 kilometers northwest of Dhaka—leaving two people dead, private television channel Ekattar TV reported. Police were not immediately available to comment on the reported deaths.

Mr. Sayedee is the third defendant to be convicted of crimes against humanity since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government initiated the tribunal in 2010.

In the first verdict in January, the tribunal sentenced former Jamaat leader Abul Kalam Azad to death on similar charges. Another Jamaat leader, Abdul Quader Mollah, was sentenced to life in prison in February.

Another seven top leaders of Jamaat are on trial over atrocities during the war.

Jamaat-e-Islami, the largest Islamic party in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, had campaigned against the 1971 independence war, but it denies committing any atrocities. As a key ally of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party led by ex-premier Khaleda Zia, it was a partner in her government from 2001 to 2006.

Ms. Zia's party has questioned the conduct of the tribunal, saying it's aimed at destroying the opposition.

International human-rights organizations also questioned fairness of the trial, noting the disappearance of one witness for Mr. Sayedee. Bangladesh says the 1971 war left three million people dead and 200,000 women raped, and forced millions to take shelter in neighboring India.

BBC

Tuesday, 26 February 2013

ICC Kenyatta trial 'may be delayed' on defence complaint

International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutors say they do not object to delaying the trials of four prominent Kenyans charged with fuelling violence.

One of the suspects, Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta, is contesting next week's presidential elections.

The ICC trials, over violence that broke out after the disputed 2007 election, was due to start in April.



Uhuru Kenyatta (right) is one of the frontrunners in the presidential poll

But defence lawyers complained that they had not been given enough time to prepare for the cases.

ICC spokesman Fadi El Abdallah said judges had not

yet decided whether to delay the trials, the Associated Press news agency reports.

But the prosecutors' comment, in written filings posted on the ICC website, makes it likely the trials will be pushed until later in the year.

The prosecution had initially rejected calls for a delay, but now admits that "operational constraints", such as the availability of court space, may make an April date "untenable", reports the BBC's Anna Holligan from The Hague.

The political implications of a delay would be significant, if there is no clear winner in Kenya's 4 March election, our reporter says.

It would mean that the accused would be free to stay for any run-off vote, she adds.

Mr Kenyatta and his running mate, William Ruto, are charged with crimes against humanity over the violence which left more than 1,000 people dead and 600,000 homeless after the 2007 election.

Kenya's former UN ambassador Francis Muthaura and journalist Joshua arap Sang are facing similar charges at The Hague.

They all deny the charges.

About two weeks ago, a Kenyan High Court refused to annul Mr Kenyatta's candidature, saying it did not have the power to do so.

He is a frontrunner for the presidency, along with Prime Minister Raila Odinga, in next week's election.

Mwai Kibaki is stepping down, at the end of his two terms.

Defence lawyers had said they need more time to prepare for the trials because prosecutors had not disclosed all their evidence.

The 2007 violence broke out after Mr Odinga's supporters reacted angrily to Mr Kibaki's victory, claiming the vote had been rigged.

Mr Kibaki was backed by Mr Kenyatta, while Mr Ruto supported Mr Odinga. However, the two have formed an alliance to contest next week's election.