

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 Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Monday, 28 November 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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SIERRA LEONE EVENING PRESS REVIEW

Friday 25 November 2005

UNAMSIL

As UNAMSIL successfully accomplishes its mission in restoring peace to Sierra Leone, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago has handed over some facilities of UNAMSIL to the Government. The facilities were formerly used by Sector West. It included the structures, vehicles, standby generators, and other items that were handed over to the Vice President, Solomon Berewa on behalf of Government.

PEACE CONSOLIDATION

More than Sixty people representing peace building organizations all over the country have started a two-day National Peace and Development Forum in Freetown organized by a local organization, Network on Collaborative Peace-building in Sierra Leone with Partners in Conflicts Transformation to discuss what they have achieved over the years, and examine work done to promote peace-building in their respective areas.



UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 26 Nov. 2005

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

International Clips on Liberia

New York Sun 25 November 2005

Liberia's Future

By Eric Witte (Op-Ed)

War-torn Liberia's real transition could begin in January, when Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf becomes Africa's first elected woman head of state. The transitional government she succeeds has used international aid not for such Liberian needs as clean drinking water, electricity and employment, but for cars, computers, and office furniture that its officials are stealing from state offices before relinquishing their positions. Starting over, President Sirleaf will need assistance from America if her promising new government is to have the basic tools for success.

Economist Intelligence Unit ViewsWire Liberia November 24, 2005

Liberia politics: Win for Iron Lady

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has been confirmed as Liberia's president, and the first woman to be elected as an African head of state.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)***Congress for Democratic Change Confirms Sacking Party National Chairman**

- Speaking to Radio Veritas yesterday, Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) Secretary-General Eugene Nagbe said that the party's Chairman Cole Bangalu was suspended for floating a decision not to attend the ceremony in which the winner of the runoff was officially declared.
- He added that Mr. Bangalu initiated talks with the next government concerning jobs. Mr. Nagbe also confirmed that the party's vehicle was withdrawn from Mr. Bangalu.
- Mr. Nagbe reiterated that the CDC was determined to pursue all legal means to reverse the election result adding that preparations were underway to take its run-off fraud claims to the Supreme Court.
- The police confirmed yesterday that the CDC Chairman Bangalu required protection as thugs allegedly pursue him for attending the occasion to declare the winner of the run-off election which the party had resolved not to attend.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Deputy Justice Minister Says Lack of Support for Children Criminal

- At a Ministry of Gender function yesterday, Deputy Justice Minister for Legal Affairs Abla Williams declared that the continuous lack of support for children by parents was criminal under Liberian law.

- She said that husbands and boyfriends who do not provide food, clothing and shelter for their children were breaking the law. Cllr. Williams encouraged single mothers to lodge complaints with the police to investigate and prosecute the father if necessary.

Philippino Peacekeepers Awarded with UN Medals

- More than 150 Philippine peacekeepers have been honored with UN medals for what Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss called their worthwhile contribution to UNMIL.
- Presenting the medals on Friday, Mr. Boss praised the Philippine troops for their professionalism and commitment to duty.
- Mr. Doss said besides performing their peacekeeping duty the UN soldiers from the Philippines has been providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

International Committee of the Red Cross Pledges to Reunify Separate Families

- On Radio Veritas's "Topical Issues", yesterday, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Communication Coordinator Robin Waudo said the organization was committed to reuniting children separated from their families during the war adding that his agency has invested a lot of resources into tracing families because children are the most vulnerable members in society.
- He said that the plight of the over 1,200 Liberian children in West Africa who have been separated from their families would be highlighted in a photo poster campaign Wednesday.

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

Health Workers Complete Sexually Transmitted Infections Management Workshop

- Thirty-two health workers have completed a five-day sexually transmitted infections (STIs) refresher management workshop intended to broaden the knowledge of the practitioners in handling STI-related cases.

Elections Commission to Certificate Legislators-Elect in December

- The National Elections Commission yesterday said that legislators-elect would be certificated in December to allow them take their seat in the Legislature in January. The NEC also urged candidates in the elections to submit their campaign finance reports, warning that failing to comply would result in a fine, prosecution or withholding of the certificate.

Passport Manufacturers to Sue Government for Scrapping Bid won

- An international passport manufacturing company said that it would administer a lawsuit against the Government of Liberia for breaching a bid the company had won to print Liberian passports.

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

The New York Sun

Liberia's Future

By ERIC WITTE
November 25, 2005

War-torn Liberia's real transition could begin in January, when Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf becomes Africa's first elected woman head of state. The transitional government she succeeds has used international aid not for such Liberian needs as clean drinking water, electricity and employment, but for cars, computers, and office furniture that its officials are stealing from state offices before relinquishing their positions. Starting over, President Sirleaf will need assistance from America if her promising new government is to have the basic tools for success.

This time such aid must be coupled with strong American backing for President Sirleaf to institute a culture of accountability among Liberian leaders. Corruption and cronyism have spilled wars across West Africa and left Liberia in tatters. It will take a bold move to convince West Africans that a new era of accountability is dawning. Nothing could do more to shake the region's leaders and instill hope in their populations than bringing Liberia's former president, Charles Taylor, to justice.

Mr. Taylor stands accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in neighboring Sierra Leone during the 1990s. Mr. Taylor organized and directed the notorious Revolutionary United Front, which abducted children and murdered, raped, maimed, and mutilated its way through Sierra Leone. It also secured the country's diamond wealth for Mr. Taylor and his cronies.

To prosecute those most responsible for such atrocities, the Bush administration offered political and financial support for the United Nations and government of Sierra Leone to launch a war crimes tribunal. The Special Court for Sierra Leone's chief prosecutor indicted Mr. Taylor in March 2003.

That indictment, after it became public in June 2003, helped to strip Mr. Taylor of his political viability and was instrumental in his removal from power two months later. Mr. Taylor's ouster allowed the peace process in Liberia to take hold.

In recent weeks, scenes of Liberians voting peacefully in presidential and legislative elections may seem to justify the Bush administration's decision in August 2003 to join others in coaxing Mr. Taylor into Nigerian exile rather than pressing for his delivery to waiting prosecutors in Sierra Leone. Though the administration sacrificed the justice sought at a court it supported, it can point to tangible progress in stabilizing West Africa.

But West Africans know Charles Taylor, and they know that short-term stability is not durable peace.

Charles Taylor did not go quietly to Nigeria as called for under the deal that sent him there. He has maintained ties to Liberian politicians and militias throughout the region, engaged in business, and funneled money to supporters. He even appeared on Nigerian television last year to discuss his intention to return to Liberia.

Despite Mr. Taylor's breaches of his exile agreement, the Nigerian government has said it will only send Mr. Taylor for trial if asked by Liberia's democratically elected leader. All eyes now turn to President-Elect Sirleaf.

With Mr. Taylor's backing, his cronies did well in last month's legislative elections. For President Sirleaf, overcoming resistance from Mr. Taylor's supporters and requesting his transfer to the court in Sierra Leone will prove difficult without strong American support.

The Bush administration may have signaled such support two weeks ago, when it sponsored a resolution at the U.N. Security Council authorizing U.N. peacekeepers to arrest Mr. Taylor if he returns to Liberia. Yet many Africa hands at the State Department and the National Security Council - still as inured to impunity for African despots as Africans themselves have become - favor containing Mr. Taylor rather than putting him on trial. They would leave Mr. Taylor in Nigeria, and articulate neither a long-term vision for securing the region from his wrath, nor for credibly bolstering good governance in West Africa.

The U.N. institutions that have kept Mr. Taylor in check are pulling back from West Africa. U.N. peacekeepers will leave Sierra Leone at the end of the year, and soon the 15,000-strong force in Liberia will begin its drawdown. The Special Court itself is slated to wrap up its work next year.

Meanwhile, the notoriously tenacious Mr. Taylor bides his time in a Nigerian luxury villa and waits for his opening to return to an unguarded Liberia.

It is an unguarded Liberia for which President Sirleaf must plan. Her background in civil society and international banking provide hope that she can deliver on campaign promises of broad economic development, and steer Liberia's peace beyond the withdrawal of international peacekeepers.

If Mr. Taylor can be brought to trial, then President Sirleaf will gain allies in Liberians newly emboldened to hold their leaders to account for corruption and mal-governance. The Taylor threat will be eliminated, and would-be warlords dissuaded from pursuing power through the gun.

Whether that happens and West Africa gains a chance for durable peace could be determined by what Bush administration officials are now whispering in the ears of President-Elect Sirleaf.

Mr. Witte is former political adviser to the chief prosecutor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone and a senior fellow at the Democratization Policy Council, a trans-Atlantic initiative for accountability in democracy promotion.

Saddam: a trial for justice

By Geoffrey Robertson
November 26, 2005

The trial of Saddam Hussein will begin again on Monday in Baghdad, a city rent by civil war. Since his last appearance, two defence lawyers have been assassinated and it has been admitted that Saddam was physically assaulted by court clerks at a previous hearing. Changes to the tribunal statutes have also raised serious concerns about the future fairness of the proceedings. It is time to ask whether this trial is too important to be left to, and in, Iraq.

It is not an easy matter to bring a tyrant to justice in his own country. When he first appeared in the dock, Saddam used the same words, in translation, as King Charles I when he faced Cromwell's judges: "By what authority (legal, I mean) do you try me?" It was a good question in both cases, asked by heads of state constitutionally clothed with immunity. Charles was executed and became as a result a "blessed martyr" - when his family returned to power, they disembowelled his judges.

That was not a happy precedent, but 60 years on from Nuremberg we now have an alternative, and much better, way to deal with political and military leaders accused of crimes against humanity, namely by putting them before international criminal courts.

The moral claim of the Iraqi people to exact retribution sounds fine in theory - as President George Bush argues: "They were the people who were brutalised by this man." But if justice can neither be done nor be seen to be done in Baghdad, in the midst of a civil war in which the defendant's "people" are killing the "people" of the judges, then Iraq's claim must give way to the moral and legal right of the international community to try international crimes. The genocide charges that Saddam faces for the gassing of the Kurds and mass murdering the Marsh Arabs are crimes "against humanity" because the very fact that they can be conceived and committed by fellow human beings demeans us all, wherever we live and whatever our nationality.

After all, Saddam and his henchmen are only in the dock because of action by a coalition led by the United States but which included Australia. The US established the Iraqi Special Tribunal (at a cost of \$75 million), trained the judges and arrested all the "playing card" suspects, while the evidence was amassed by the Justice Department's Regional Crime War Liaison Office. The tribunal's original statute, drafted by American and British lawyers, was based on UN court models and provided fair trial, with the prospect of international jurists sitting with the Iraqi judges. Last year I helped to train the courageous men, who told me they wanted to sit with international colleagues, like the UN's court in



Sierra Leone.

But strange things have happened to this court since the hand-over. Its name has been changed, to the Iraqi Higher Criminal Court, and its statute has been rewritten to exclude the possibility of international judges (except in rare cases where a foreign state is a party). And there is a sinister new provision: "No authority, including the President of the Republic, may grant a pardon or mitigate the punishment issued by the court." Article 6(4) of the Human Rights Covenant (which the US, the UK, Iraq and Australia have all ratified) insists that anyone sentenced to death must have the right to seek commutation or pardon after conviction, so this is a breach of international law at which all coalition partners seem to have connived. But merciless Iraqi politicians want Saddam executed, and this new provision will prevent President Jalal Talabani from ever considering clemency.

There is a prospect that Saddam will be executed speedily after conviction on the first charge, which accuses him, with senior officials, of killing villagers at Dujail as a reprisal after some of them made a botched attempt on his life. Many of these villagers admitted involvement in the plot, and comparatively speaking this is the least serious of the charges Saddam faces. His immediate execution would deprive the world of any trial, and hence any authoritative judgement, on his responsibility for genocide.

An international criminal court, sitting (as in Sierra Leone) with both local and international judges, would provide such a verdict. It would not be troubled, as would a domestic court, by the fact that the president had constitutional immunity for any crimes committed while in office, because international law trumps amnesty provisions. Given the deteriorating security situation in Baghdad, the argument for moving the trial to The Hague, before a special court set up by agreement between the Security Council and the Iraqi Government, should be irresistible.

The main reason it is being resisted by the Iraqis and by the US is that no UN court can impose the death penalty. It seems they want Saddam and his henchmen hanged high in some dusty square, to shouts of joy from his Shiite opponents. But this spectacle will make the man a martyr - like Charles I - inflame the civil war and only serve to endorse the disrespect for human life that so scars Iraq's past and present.

Of course, if convicted, the Baathist leaders could not be imprisoned for life in the country where they still have factional support. Nor could they be permitted to communicate with supporters. Britain learned one lesson from the martyrdom of Charles I: instead of executing Napoleon, it sent him to exile in the South Atlantic. The UK opposes the death penalty, and doubtless it would make St Helena, or better still, the Falkland Islands, available, as a place where the defendants would never be heard from again. Australia could offer to arrange their imprisonment on Nauru.

The coalition did not invade Iraq to prosecute Saddam. But in the absence of any weapons of mass destruction or links with al-Qaeda, and in the shadow of the death toll already taken on Iraqis and coalition troops, effective trial of the Baathist leadership would be one positive consequence - a landmark, perhaps, in deterring tyranny. If the Iraqi legal system - described as "chronically dysfunctional" by a recent UN study - cannot produce a proper trial, these proceedings must be transferred to The Hague before they become an example of that wild justice - revenge.

Justice Geoffrey Robertson is vice-president of the UN's War Crimes Court for Sierra Leone. He is the author of *The Tyrannicide Brief* (Random House).



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Saddam lawyers expected to seek trial delay

BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN) -- The trial of Saddam Hussein and his seven co-defendants will resume Monday, but defense attorneys concerned about security and frustrated with the court processes plan to seek a three-month delay in the proceeding.

The eight defendants are accused in the slayings of more than 140 males in the town of Dujail north of Baghdad in 1982 after an unsuccessful assassination attempt against former Iraqi dictator Saddam.

The trial began on Oct. 19 but was postponed that same day for 40 days to give the defense more time to prepare. However, more time is still needed, said defense attorney Khames Hameed al-Ubaidi. ([Watch Iraqis call for Saddam's execution -- 2:10](#))

For example, Al-Ubaidi said, certain documents have not been received by the defense, including death certificates for people prosecutors claim were killed in Dujail. In addition, a disc of witness statements the defense was given has bad picture and sound quality, al-Ubaidi said. Defense attorneys lack the names of witnesses as well, and need their names and a better quality disc.

Attorneys have devoted some of their energies to safety problems, rather than the legal spadework needed to prepare their cases, after two of the defense attorneys in the case were slain.

Even though Saddam defense attorney Khalil al-Dulaimi earlier demanded a solution to protect the defense team from attacks and insisted the team would not participate in the trial until that solution is found, the attorneys thought it would make more sense to return to court.

Al-Ubaidi said defense attorneys have had offers to help with a security plan, and plan to be in court on Monday, as they know the case best and can act in the best interests of their clients. If they fail to show up, he said, the case could be given to attorneys who are unfamiliar with the case.

In fact, Ramsey Clark, a former U.S. attorney general under President Lyndon Johnson, is in Baghdad and is expected to serve as an adviser to the defense attorneys. Al-Ubaidi said some of the defense attorneys plan to petition the court to allow him in the courtroom. ([Watch Ramsey Clark explain his goals -- 2:23](#))

Clark has been a civil rights attorney and controversial activist in recent years. Clark, who opposed the Iraq war, met with Saddam in February 2003, just before the U.S.-led invasion began.

Assisting in the defense of accused war criminals is not new to Clark. He also has provided advice to Slobodan Milosevic, the former president of Yugoslavia whose war-crimes trial is ongoing at The Hague.

Security for defense attorneys

The issue of security for the defense attorneys is expected to be a primary topic when Saddam's trial resumes.

On Oct. 20, a day after the Dujail trial began, Sadoon Janabi was kidnapped and fatally shot in the head. Janabi had been representing Awad Hamad Bandar, the former chief judge of Saddam's Revolutionary Court.

Adil Muhammed al-Zubaidi, who was representing former Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, was fatally shot on Nov. 8 in an attack that left another lawyer wounded.

Janabi had refused any protection from the government, according to an Iraqi government official, and willingly appeared on videotape of the Oct. 19 court proceedings. Iraq's government insists it is committed to protecting the judges and the attorneys participating in the trial.

The United States is working with Iraq's Ministry of Interior to investigate the attorneys' killings.

The court is prepared to provide full security to everyone involved in the legal proceedings and has acted on several attorneys' request to have multinational forces and the Regime Crimes Liaison Office, the arm of the U.S. State Department charged with assisting the Iraqi High Tribunal, involved in some of the security operations, a U.S. official close to the tribunal told CNN.

The security options being offered to the defense attorneys "are at least as good as those" being offered to other participants in the trial, the official said, but would give no details about the offers.

As far as the trial itself, the official offered other details about the proceeding:

- The court is expected to call witnesses, but it is not clear who or how many or if they will appear on camera.
- It is up to witnesses themselves whether they reveal their identities or not.
- The proceedings could run several days before a break is called.
- There will be a break in proceedings during the Dec. 15 elections for a permanent parliament.

Monday will be the third time the Iraqi High Tribunal has been convened in an official capacity.

After the first day of the trial on Oct. 19, testimony was taken at a hospital from Wadhah al-Sheik, the former director of Iraq's secret police.

Al-Sheik was terminally ill at the time and has since died. At the time of his testimony no defense attorneys showed up despite arrangements made by the court for them to appear in person or by telephone, the official said.

Mowaffak al-Rubaie, Iraq's national security adviser, said Sunday the trial "will begin tomorrow as scheduled" at the court of the Iraqi High Tribunal.

"And you will see ... we will implement justice on Saddam Hussein to show the outside world what the new Iraq is all about."

Find this article at:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/11/28/saddam.hussein.trial/index.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Human Rights Watch

For Immediate Release

Senegal Places Crimes of Ex-Chad Dictator in Hands of African Union

Hissène Habré should be extradited to Belgium to stand trial

(Dakar, November 27, 2005) – In the wake of Senegal’s announcement that it would place the case of former Chadian dictator Hissène Habré in the hands of the African Union (AU), Human Rights Watch insisted on Senegal’s legal obligation to prosecute or extradite Habré and called on the AU to recommend Habré’s extradition to Belgium, where he is wanted to stand trial for the most serious crimes.

Senegal's Foreign Minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio said Sunday that Hissène Habré may remain in Senegal until AU leaders decide, at a summit in January, where he should be tried. Gadio recognized that Habré was accused of “odious crimes, even crimes against humanity.” and promised that Senegal would “abstain from any act which would permit Hissène Habré not to face justice.” He said that it was “up to the African Union summit to indicate the jurisdiction which is competent to hear the case.”

“We welcome Senegal’s promise that Hissène Habré will not escape justice,” said Reed Brody of Human Rights Watch, who coordinates the international campaign for the Chadian victims. “Indeed, having failed to prosecute Hissène Habré when it had the chance to do so, Senegal cannot avoid its legal obligation to extradite Habré. The Belgian courts, which have spent four years investigating the case, offer the best possibility for Hissène Habré to answer the charges against him in the context of a fair trial.”

The Belgian international arrest warrant, issued on September 19, charges Habré with crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture and serious violations of international humanitarian law. The files of Habré’s political police, discovered by Human Rights Watch in 2001, reveal the names of 1,208 persons who died in detention, as well as over 12,000 victims of different abuses.

On Saturday, after a Senegalese court had failed to rule on an extradition request from Belgium, Senegal’s interior minister issued an order placing Habré “at the disposition” of Nigeria’s President Olusegun Obasanjo as chairman of the African Union. On Sunday, Gadio said that Habré would stay in Senegal until the issue was considered at the next summit of the African Union, scheduled to be held in Khartoum on January 23-24.

“This case must not become a political football,” said Brody. “Habré’s victims have suffered too much and waited too long to find a court willing to listen to their suffering. Belgium is ready and able to hear the case. The African Union and Senegal must choose justice and not impunity.”

Human Rights Watch noted that the government of Chad has consistently supported Habré's extradition to Belgium. In 2002, the Chadian justice minister wrote to the Belgian investigating judge to state that "Mr. Hissène Habré can not claim to enjoy any form of immunity from the Chadian authorities." On Thursday, Chad's President Idriss Déby publicly called for Habré's extradition to Belgium.

Two weeks ago, thousands of Chadians took to the streets of N'Djamena to renew their support for the extradition of the former dictator of their country.

The chairperson of the African Union Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, has also spoken in favor of Hissène Habré's extradition to Belgium.

Background

Hissène Habré ruled the former French colony of Chad from 1982 until 1990, when he was deposed by current President Idriss Déby and fled to Senegal. His one-party regime was marked by widespread atrocities. Habré periodically targeted various ethnic groups such as the Sara (1983-84), Chadian Arabs, Hadjerai (1987) and the Zaghawa (1989-90), killing and arresting group members en masse when he believed that their leaders posed a threat to his regime. Files of Hissène Habré's political police, discovered by Human Rights Watch in 2001, reveal the names of 1,208 persons who died in detention, as well as over 12,000 victims of different abuses.

In February 2000, a Senegalese court charged Habré with torture and crimes against humanity and placed him under house arrest. But in March 2001, Senegal's highest court said that Habré could not stand trial in Senegal for crimes allegedly committed elsewhere. Habré's victims immediately announced that they would seek Habré's extradition to Belgium, where 21 of Habré's victims had filed suit. A four-year investigation by a Belgian judge resulted in an international arrest warrant against Habré on September 19, 2005 and his arrest in Senegal on November 15. On November 25, a Senegalese court ruled that it had no jurisdiction to rule on the extradition request, throwing the case into a legal limbo.

Information on the Habré case can be found at:

<http://www.hrw.org/justice/habre/>