

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



View from a ferry

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:

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

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

Local News

“ I Had Nothing To Do With The War in Ivory Coast” / <i>The Spectator</i>	Pages 3-4
Mr. Taylor Denies Responsibility for Maskita’s Death / <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 5
Charles Taylor Ordered Sam Bockarie’s Arrest / <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 6
“ I Am Not Responsible for Sam Bockaries’ Death / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 7
Within 7 Days Convicts Leave Freetown for Rwanda / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 8
Appeals Chamber of Special Court upholds RUF Convictions / <i>Cotton Tree News</i>	Page 9
UN Describes Court Ruling As Landmark / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 10
Taylor: I Was A Peacemaker / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 11
Sexual Victims Should Not Be Discriminated / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 12

International News

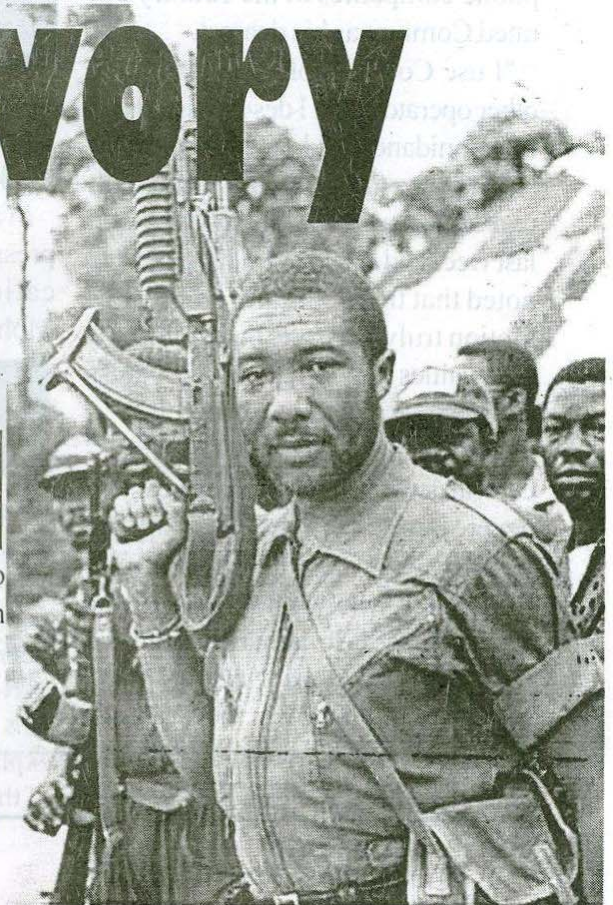
'I Had Nothing To Do With The War In Ivory Coast,'.../ <i>CharlesTaylorTrial.org</i>	Pages 13-14
Sierra Leone Court Renders Rebel Leaders Judgement / <i>Radio Netherlands Worldwide</i>	Page 15
Appeals Chamber Upholds Sentences for Convicted Revolutionary United Front.../ <i>The PV</i>	Pages 16-17
Playing the Race Card at War Crimes Trial / <i>ABC</i>	Page 18
South African Mercenaries Arrive in Guinea / <i>The Patriotic Vanguard</i>	Pages 19-20
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 21-24
Karadzic Fails to Appear For Second Day of Trial / <i>Radio Netherlands Worldwide</i>	Page 25
Victims Outraged at Karadzic Adjournment / <i>Radio Netherlands Worldwide</i>	Page 26
Sweden Releases Biljana Plavsic / <i>International Justice Tribune</i>	Page 27
Alleged Génocidaire Not Tried Nor Extradited / <i>International Justice Tribune</i>	Page 28

"I Had Nothing To Do With The War In Ivory Coast,"

-Taylor Tells Special Court

Charles Taylor today denied allegations that he sent rebel forces to attack Ivory Coast as part of any grand plan to destabilize the West African sub-region.

Generals Pour Millions In Dragon F.C.



I Had Nothing To Do With The War In Ivory Coast

"I had nothing to do with the war in Ivory Coast," Mr. Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone judges today.

Mr. Taylor was refuting the testimony of a prosecution witness Jabaty Jaward, a former member of Sierra Leone's rebel group Revolutionary United Front (RUF) who was later recruited into Mr. Taylor's Anti Terrorist Unit (ATU) in Liberia. In 2008, Mr. Jaward testified that he was part of a team that launched rebel attacks in Ivory Coast under the command of RUF commander Sam Bockarie, with orders from Mr. Taylor. The witness said that the forces were based in the Ivorian town of Seguela, from where they launched attacks against Ivorian forces. He said that prior to his arrival at Seguela, other forces loyal to Mr. Taylor had been in the town fighting under Mr. Bockarie's command. Mr. Taylor today dismissed the witness' account as "lies".

"I don't know who they are because I did not send anyone from my government to a town called Seguela," he told the judges.

Mr. Taylor denied ever wanting to attack the Ivorian government of President Laurent Gbagbo, whom he described as a "close friend".

"In so many ways, I ensured that Laurent Gbagbo became president and I was the first African leader that went there after his election," he said.

Much of the prosecution's allegations about the relationship between Mr. Taylor and the RUF have been tied to his closeness with the RUF's commander, Mr. Bockarie. Witnesses have testified that Mr. Bockarie took orders from Mr. Taylor as rebel commander in Sierra Leone, and that after Mr. Bockarie left Sierra Leone for Liberia in December 1999, Mr. Taylor sent him on military missions in other countries including Ivory Coast. Mr. Taylor has insisted that after Mr. Bockarie left Liberia in 2001, he did not have any further contact with him.

"I had absolutely no contact with Sam Bockarie after he left Liberia in 2001. Once Bockarie left Liberia, I Charles Taylor and my government had nothing to do with him," he said today in his testimony.

"My God, how does Charles Taylor, in 2000, expel Bockarie?" Mr. Taylor asked. "He is involved in the war in Ivory Coast that starts in early 2000, he is thrown out in late 2000, he goes and he lives in Burkina Faso and I have control over Sam Bockarie in Burkina Faso, I arm him in Burkina Faso, so I am running Burkina Faso, I am running Ivory Coast and I am running Sierra Leone?"

"I mean, how can people be so silly to believe all this nonsense just to make a case?" Mr. Taylor said. "Sam Bockarie has nothing to do with Charles Taylor."

Mr. Taylor further told the court that it would be "very silly" for anybody to believe that he could be running wars in three countries at the same time.

Mr. Taylor also refuted the testimony of former Liberian commander in the RUF, Isaac Mongor, who in 2008 testified about Mr. Taylor's alleged relationship with the RUF. Mr. Taylor denied Mr. Mongor's assertion that during Sierra Leone's 1996 presidential elections, Mr. Taylor endorsed RUF leader Foday Sankoh's plans to cut off the arms of civilians so as to prevent them from voting in the elections. Mr. Taylor reiterated an earlier position he has told the court: that after 1992, he had no relationship with Mr. Sankoh and therefore he would not have had such communication with Mr. Sankoh in 1996.

"He [Sankoh] was not with me beyond 1992," he said. Mr. Taylor also dismissed as "lies" Mr. Mongor's claim that he (Taylor) gave RUF commander Mr. Bockarie a plan on how to invade Sierra Leone's capital Freetown.

"This is a lie out of - I don't know what to say. This is all blatantly, blatantly a lie," he said.

Mr. Taylor further denied allegations that when his government came under attack from a rebel leader called Mosquito Spray in 1998-99, he had to call RUF fighters to quell the rebellion. He also denied providing arms shipment for RUF rebels in Sierra Leone and denied ever promoting Mr. Bockarie to the position of General in the RUF, as alleged by the prosecution.

Mr. Taylor has been accused by the prosecution of collaborating jointly with others to take over political and physical control of Sierra Leone in order to exploit its abundant natural resources and

Mr. Taylor denies responsibility for Maskita's death

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 Bockarie, I never gave any such order. Sam Bockarie's death hurt me, I actually liked Sam Bockarie and I can tell the World about this. Even if Sam Bockarie 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" .

Charles Taylor ordered Sam Bockarie's arrest

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 repeat-

edly 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.

Awoko

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

*Charles Taylor tells court ...***“I am not responsible for Sam Bockarie’s death”**

The Prosecution had led evidence at the trial in The Hague, The Netherlands that Former Liberian President Charles Taylor was responsible for the murder of the Sierra Leone rebel commander Sam Bockarie in Liberia in 2003.

A number of Prosecution witnesses had alleged that Bockarie was killed because he knew too much about the links between Charles Taylor and the RUF rebels.

At the resumption of his trial in The Hague after a three-week break on Monday, Mr. Taylor said he looked on Sam Bockarie like a son.

The circumstances surrounding the death of RUF commander 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, Alhaji Dr. Ahmad 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 him 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 Kabbah” Taylor said.

A Prosecution witness had 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. “Never” was Mr. Taylor’s usual vehement response.

*Three years after incompleting of Science Dept...***NU urges govt. to pressure contractors**

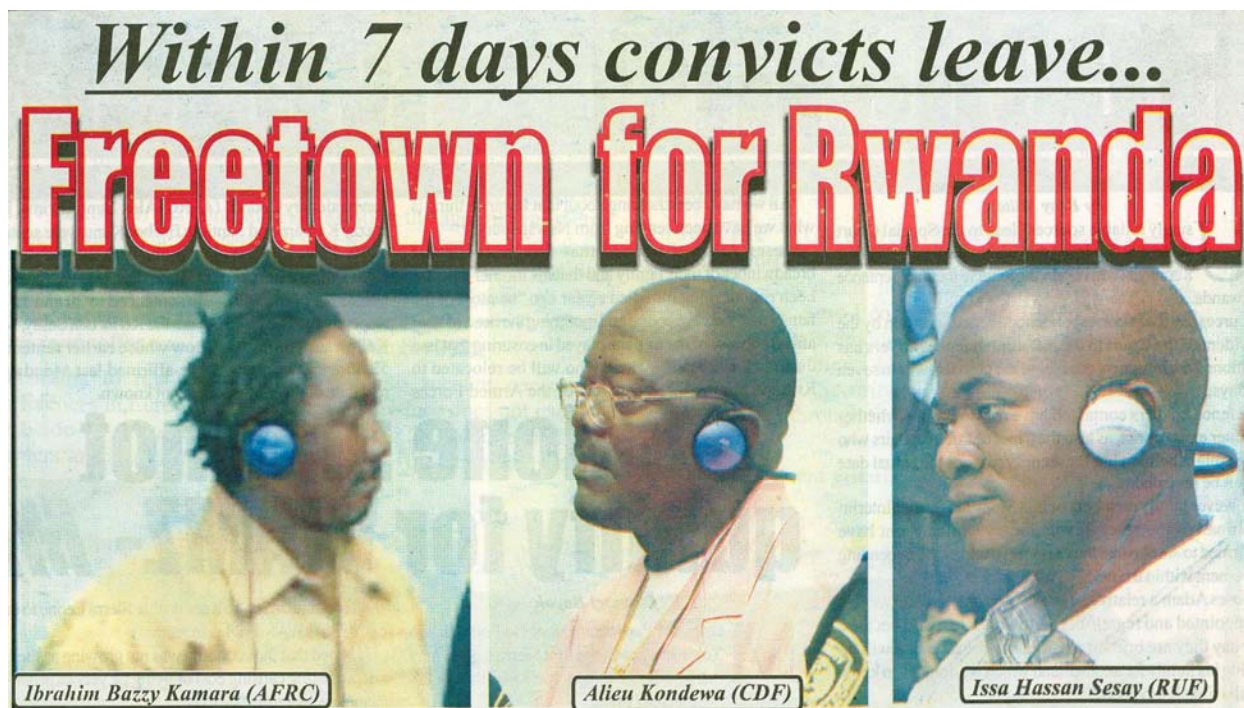
Mr. Zac Bah of the Biological Sciences department of the Njala University has told Awoko that government should put pressure on the

contractors to complete the construction of the Biological Laboratory.

Continued on Page 7

Awoko

Wednesday, 28 October 2009



By Betty Milton

Usually reliable sources close to the Special Court yesterday disclosed that within the next 7 days the 8 convicts will be leaving to serve their jail sentence in Rwanda.

Sources say that a correspondence allegedly written by the President of the Court to the different defence lawyers has mentioned the imminent transfer of the convicts within seven (7) days.

Defence lawyers contacted have refused to say whether the letter exists or not, as also the Chief of Public Affairs who says it might be soon but for security reasons the actual date cannot be revealed.

However family members of Issa Sesay the former Interim Chairman of the rebel Revolutionary United Front have confirmed to Awoko that they have been told of the impending movement within the next 7 days.

Moses Adam a relative of Issa Sesay told Awoko “we feel disappointed and regretful. Not towards the court because they say they are bringing justice but because Issa will be leaving his family for another land which we don’t even know and the time is too short.”

He said that they are unhappy with the decision because no arrangement has been made for visitation for any of the family members. Moses Adam lamented that the court even failed to take into consideration the role Issa played in bringing peace to the country, condemning the sentences as being “very long.” “With all this we thought they were going to stay here” he said.

Adams expressed their shock at the news of the quick relocation suggesting that the court should have called the relatives of the convicts to discuss with them first.

“All we have been hearing about that Rwanda thing is what we have been reading from Newspapers. “

Moses Adam disclosed that Issa Sesay is the breadwinner of their family and that his mother who has been encouraging him died a year ago “so most of the family members are crying and mourning the dead mother afresh because of the role she played in ensuring that Issa disarms the rebels.” The 8 who will be relocated to Rwanda are the three convicts of the Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu were sentenced to 50, 45 and 50 years jail; along with the two surviving Civil Defence Forces (CDF) convicts Alieu Kondewa and Moinina Fofana who were sentenced to 20 and 15 years respectively. The last three are the RUFs Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbow whose earlier sentences of 52,40 and 25 years were re-affirmed last Monday. The real date of the movement is not known.

Cotton Tree News

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

Appeals Chamber of Special Court upholds RUF convictions

Written by Ndeamoh Mansaray



The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has upheld the conviction of the three former commanders of the Revolutionary United Front.

The first, second and third accused persons were sentenced to fifty-two, forty and twenty five years jail terms respectively by the Trial Chamber early in April this year.

Before delivering the Appeals Chamber's ruling, on Monday, Presiding Judge, Justice Renate Winter said the ninety six grounds of appeal filed in by the defense teams shared common deficiencies which she said were vague and as a result dismissed. She said the parties also frequently raised the same arguments in a number of the grounds of their appeal.

The Appeals Chamber also dismissed grounds one and two of the prosecution's appeal with the two Sierra Leonean Judges dissenting on ground One which had to do with the Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE). Reading a joint statement containing reasons for their dissenting opinion, Justice George Gelaga King on behalf of Justice John Kamanda highlighted a number of incidences that he said were enough to show that the JCE existed between the AFRC and the RUF until February in 1999. The trial chamber had earlier found that the JCE ceased to exist between the two factions in 1998.

Meanwhile, the prosecution said they welcomed the final convictions of the three former leaders of the RUF. Acting Prosecutor Joseph Kamara said the Appeals Chamber's judgment was a final condemnation of one of the most brutal and notorious rebel groups in modern times. He said the sufferings inflicted by the RUF on the people of Sierra Leone were beyond words. However, counsels for the convicted persons in separate statements said they were disappointed at the Appeals Chamber's judgment because they claimed that the chamber failed to address important issues raised in their grounds of appeal.

The three convicts were indicted in March 2003 by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the country's civil war. Their jail terms commence from the time they were arrested and brought into the Special Court's custody.

UN describes court ruling as landmark

United Nations has lauded the recent Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) ruling as a landmark that successfully held earlier convictions and sentences passed on three former rebels, thereby challenging scathing claims by the defense.

Wayne Jordash, lead defence counsel for Issa Sesay, had earlier described the entire trial as abusive and one that has no proper application of the law.

He told journalists, immediately following what was the final ruling of the UN-backed tribunal in Freetown, that the law employed was continuously misapplied since the beginning of the trial, adding that "the process was a miscarriage of justice."

In a press release the UN ReliefWeb catalogued all charges brought against the former rebel leaders, among them forced marriage as a crime against humanity and attacks against UN peacekeepers, the first time an international criminal tribunal has

entered guilty verdicts for both charges.

The Court 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.

Lawyer Jordash said he was not surprised that the court could nail the defendants, especially Sesay whom he argued was definitely part of the whole process that ushered the era of peace in the country.

"We are not surprised about the outcome of the judgment. If the law was properly applied, Sesay would have been acquitted," he said but called on international academicians to come and study country's jurisdiction.

However, acting prosecutor of the Court, Joseph Kamara, said he welcomed the judgment and called it 'a final con-

demnation 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.

In principle, the Court's trial proceedings in Sierra Leone have completed after having delivered final judgments 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.

Taylor: I was a peacemaker

By 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 coun-

try 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 hindrance 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 knowledge 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.

Concord Times
Wednesday, 28 October 2009

Local News

By Mohamed
Massaquoi

Field supervisor for reparations at the national commission for social action, NaCSA, has urged communities to encourage women who were sexually assaulted during the country's decade-long civil conflict.

Hawa Sesay, who made the plea during an exclusive interview with Concord Times, said the reparation process was designed to provide redress to victims of human rights abuses during the war and that the programme would not succeed without the col-

Sexual victims should not be discriminated

lective efforts of members of the public.

She noted that some of the victims, especially those that have been sexually assaulted, still face challenges among families and in their communities.

"It is pathetic to hear testimonies from some of the victims. Amputees, war wounded and victims of sexual violence are all part of the reparation process. Victims of all categories are to benefit from free healthcare services, edu-

cation, housing and other facilities.

"I am appealing to members of the public to treat these victims with the respect and dignity they deserved," she pleaded, adding that her organization was working with other humanitarian organizations to provide proper healthcare services for the victims.

Sesay noted that the reparation process was a nationwide engagement which involves various stakeholders.

One of the victims who

did not want to be named disclosed that since she was sexually abused five years ago her husband had always marginalized her at home.

"I am the first wife to my husband but after the war he decided to marry another woman who is now responsible for everything in the home. I feel marginalized and isolated even within the community," she explained in tears.

She said it was significant that NaCSA embark on the reparation programme at their respective communities to restore their dignity and respect.



Hawa Sesay: making a case for war victims

WorleyParsons joins Tonkolili ore project

American Minerals Ltd. has appointed a new manager for the Tonkolili ore project in Sierra Leone. After a full review of the project, the company has decided to have unparalleled iron

CharlesTaylorTrial.org (The Hague)

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

'I Had Nothing To Do With The War In Ivory Coast,' Taylor Tells Special Court for Sierra Leone

Alpha Sesay

Charles Taylor today denied allegations that he sent rebel forces to attack Ivory Coast as part of any grand plan to destabilize the West African sub-region.

"I had nothing to do with the war in Ivory Coast," Mr. Taylor told the Special Court for Sierra Leone judges today.

Mr. Taylor was refuting the testimony of a prosecution witness Jabaty Jaward, a former member of Sierra Leone's rebel group Revolutionary United Front (RUF) who was later recruited into Mr. Taylor's Anti Terrorist Unit (ATU) in Liberia. In 2008, Mr. Jaward testified that he was part of a team that launched rebel attacks in Ivory Coast under the command of RUF commander Sam Bockarie, with orders from Mr. Taylor. The witness said that the forces were based in the Ivorian town of Seguela, from where they launched attacks against Ivorian forces. He said that prior to his arrival at Seguela, other forces loyal to Mr. Taylor had been in the town fighting under Mr. Bockarie's command. Mr. Taylor today dismissed the witness' account as "lies".

"I don't know who they are because I did not send anyone from my government to a town called Seguela," he told the judges.

Mr. Taylor denied ever wanting to attack the Ivorian government of President Laurent Gbagbo, whom he described as a "close friend".

"In so many ways, I ensured that Laurent Gbagbo became president and I was the first African leader that went there after his election," he said.

Much of the prosecution's allegations about the relationship between Mr. Taylor and the RUF have been tied to his closeness with the RUF's commander, Mr. Bockarie. Witnesses have testified that Mr. Bockarie took orders from Mr. Taylor as rebel commander in Sierra Leone, and that after Mr. Bockarie left Sierra Leone for Liberia in December 1999, Mr. Taylor sent him on military missions in other countries including Ivory Coast. Mr. Taylor has insisted that after Mr. Bockarie left Liberia in 2001, he did not have any further contact with him.

"I had absolutely no contact with Sam Bockarie after he left Liberia in 2001. Once Bockarie left Liberia, I Charles Taylor and my government had nothing to do with him," he said today in his testimony.

"My God, how does Charles Taylor, in 2000, expel Bockarie?" Mr. Taylor asked. "He is involved in the war in Ivory Coast that starts in early 2000, he is thrown out in late 2000, he goes and he lives in Burkina Faso and I have control over Sam Bockarie in Burkina Faso, I arm him in Burkina Faso, so I am running Burkina Faso, I am running Ivory Coast and I am running Sierra Leone?"

"I mean, how can people be so silly to believe all this nonsense just to make a case?" Mr. Taylor said. "Sam Bockarie has nothing to do with Charles Taylor."

Mr. Taylor further told the court that it would be "very silly" for anybody to believe that he could be running wars in three countries at the same time.

Mr. Taylor also refuted the testimony of former Liberian commander in the RUF, Isaac Mongor, who in 2008 testified about Mr. Taylor's alleged relationship with the RUF. Mr. Taylor denied Mr. Mongor's assertion that during Sierra Leone's 1996 presidential elections, Mr. Taylor endorsed RUF leader Foday Sankoh's plans to cut off the arms of civilians so as to prevent them from voting in the elections. Mr. Taylor reiterated an earlier position he has told the court: that after 1992, he had no relationship with Mr. Sankoh and therefore he would not have had such communication with Mr. Sankoh in 1996.

"I had no relationship with Sankoh beyond 1992," he said.

Mr. Taylor also dismissed as "lies" Mr. Mongor's claim that he (Taylor) gave RUF commander Mr. Bockarie a plan on how to invade Sierra Leone's capital Freetown.

"This is a lie out of – I don't know what to say. This is all blatantly, blatantly a lie," he said.

Mr. Taylor further denied allegations that when his government came under attack from a rebel leader called Mosquito Spray in 1998/99, he had to call RUF fighters to quell the rebellion. He also denied providing arms shipment for RUF rebels in Sierra Leone and denied ever promoting Mr. Bockarie to the position of General in the RUF, as alleged by the prosecution.

Mr. Taylor has been accused by the prosecution of collaborating jointly with others to take over political and physical control of Sierra Leone in order to exploit its abundant natural resources and to establish a friendly or subordinate government there to facilitate this exploitation. This was, the prosecution has argued, part of a larger strategy that included helping others militarily in their respective revolutions to take over their respective countries. In effecting these strategies, the prosecution has alleged that Mr. Taylor assisted, directed and controlled the RUF as it committed crimes in Sierra Leone in pursuit of these larger aims. Mr. Taylor has denied all the charges against him.

Mr. Taylor's testimony continues tomorrow.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Monday, 26 October 2009

Sierra Leone court renders rebel leaders judgement

By Thijs Bouwknecht



Sierra Leone's UN-backed war crimes court has upheld the convictions and sentences passed on three former rebels in the last judgment by the tribunal to be handed down in Freetown.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone's (SCSL)

Appeals Chamber has upheld the convictions of three former leaders of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), dismissing a total of 96 Defence grounds of appeal.

Monday's ruling upholds the 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.

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.

The Appeals Chamber unanimously upheld the convictions of Sesay and Kallon on all 16 counts. The Chamber unanimously found that he was not responsible for one of the two attacks against UN peacekeepers for which he was convicted by the Trial Chamber.

In April 2009, the court 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.

Today's appeal judgment is the last that will be delivered in Freetown, while the court's last trial - that of former Liberian President Charles Taylor - continues in The Hague. Taylor 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.

Appeals Chamber Upholds Sentences for Convicted Revolutionary United Front Leaders

PRESS RELEASE Freetown, Sierra Leone, 26 October 2009

Appeals Chamber Upholds Sentences for Convicted Revolutionary United Front Leaders

The Special Court Appeals 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.

The Appeals Chamber judgment, read out (recently) in Freetown, upholds 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 were 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.

The recent appeal judgment is the last that will 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.

ABC

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

Playing the Race Card at War Crimes Trial

Lawyer for Accused Blood Diamond-financed President Slams Tribunal for "Racism"

By ANNA SCHECTER

The lawyer for the African despot accused of financing rape and pillage with stolen diamonds, has blasted the War Crimes Tribunal where his client stands trial as "racist," and a tool of American foreign policy.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor, right, sits in the courtroom of the International Criminal Court prior to the hearing of witnesses in the trial against him in The Hague.

"International criminal justice as currently conceived is about those lesser breeds without the law. It is a civilizing process you see," Courtenay Griffiths, lead Counsel for former Liberian President Charles Taylor facetiously told ABC News last week in the lead-up to the direct examination of his client which resumed Monday.

Taylor is being tried by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which receives a third of its funding from the U.S., and is charged with masterminding the atrocities, such as mass rape and amputation of civilians, in Sierra Leone (which shares a border with Liberia) in order to take advantage of the country's vast natural resources, including diamonds.

Warlord Charles Taylor in the Hot Seat in The Hague Former Liberian Warlord Becomes Jew More from Brian Ross and the Investigative Team The U.S. has given \$69.4 million for the Special Court for Sierra Leone since 2002, according to the United Nations, which includes the trials of Sierra Leonean rebel leaders who carried out atrocities. The UN cannot say exactly what percentage of that has gone to the Taylor trial, but it comes to millions of dollars each year. Griffiths asserted that this funding has influenced a predetermined conviction because America does not want that money to have gone to waste.

"In a way the court has been set up with a conviction in mind," said Griffiths.

Over the course of the almost two-year long trial, Taylor has grabbed headlines by firing his first attorney and converting to Judaism, such that there is never a dull moment at The Hague's International Criminal Court where the trial is taking place. United Nations officials decided that for security reasons it would be safer to try Taylor there than in Sierra Leone where the atrocities occurred.

The Patriotic Vanguard

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

South African mercenaries arrive in Guinea

According to Erika Gibson, writing in the authoritative Beeld newspaper of Pretoria, South Africa, a group of up to 50 South Africans and other foreigners have apparently been recruited to lend armed support to the military junta in control of Guinea. Erika's report appeared October 18.



Beeld reports that the first few members of the group have already left for Guinea, where soldiers of the junta, using sharp point ammunition, opened fire on opposition protesters on September 28, killing about 160 people and wounding another 1200.

According to the South African newspaper, informed sources said the military involvement of South Africans in yet another unstable African country could cause renewed damage to that country's international reputation. A group of South Africans were involved in a failed coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea in 2004.

What is more, the latest actions could cause the tensions in Guinea to degenerate into total anarchy, experts have said.

The security company concerned has offices in Dubai in the Arab Emirates and in the Democratic Republic of Congo. There was no reply at any of the telephone numbers in those offices when contacted by Beeld.

The company's contract with the junta apparently involves VIP protection in the presidential guard, training, intelligence training, and armed escorts.

There was also apparently an undertaking that the group of "security specialists" would "facilitate" the shipment of weapons for the junta from the Ukraine.

The weapons are believed to have been shipped to Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Liberia, from where the South Africans will escort them to Guinea. The reason for this is to prevent the monitoring of any direct weapon deliveries to the junta.

The company's name is similar to that of a South African security concern that also provides foreign security services.

Secretive e-mails

From e-mails seen by Beeld it appears that three South Africans left for Guinea a couple of days ago and should be in the country now.

Their travel arrangements are cryptic and secretive: "Before you board the aeroplane you will receive a call from our senior executive officer on his cellphone. He will bring you up to speed – so ensure that you can take the call."

The South Africans will receive SIM cards and laptops to use and will not be allowed to use their own cellphones or equipment.

Beeld has heard that the group's details have already been supplied to the South African security and intelligence community.

The department of international relations and co-operation said they can take action only if South Africans land in any kind of trouble.

Omega Risk Solutions CEO Alex de Witt told Beeld he is aware of the allegations that the company concerned is active in Guinea. He is concerned that his company may be confused with the other one, while he has no links with it at all.

"I'm even more concerned that South Africans may be exploited on the pretext of something being a legal security contract. In view of events in Guinea in the past few weeks it is clear that any military support given to the junta could end up in a fiasco.

"It could also cause the South African government a great deal of embarrassment."

A substantial number of the South Africans recruited are believed to be former police officers.

The junta is said to be paying for the security contract in gold and other mineral mining concessions. Guinea is one of the world's largest suppliers of aluminium ore.

According to David Zounmenou, senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, there was already talk of foreign military aid to the junta at the time of the slaughter in September.

The Economic Community of Countries in West Africa (Ecowas) is investigating the incident, as is the International Criminal Court.

PV has not yet been able to confirm whether the government in Freetown, Sierra Leone, is aware of the incident.

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 27 October 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

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

Oct 27, 2009 (CharlesTaylorTrial.org/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, took 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.

Liberia: Post-war farmers persevere amid multiple challenges

Source: [AllAfrica Global Media](#)
Date: 27 Oct 2009

Monrovia — Nathaniel Ziayee and his family live in a single-room hut built with mud bricks and palm branches, held firmly together by sticks cut from the bushes that surround their small farm. Ziayee is a 56-year-old farmer who feeds his wife and nine children on what he earns from his plot of land in lower Margibi, just outside the Liberian capital, Monrovia. "The government needs to come and help us kill the germs so we can get food to eat," Ziayee says about the pests that hinder farming activities here. But he and his neighbors are not content just to eek out a daily living through subsistence farming. "I want to send food to the market this year," says Ziayee. Liberia's climate is tropical and humid, with heavy downpours occurring during the six-month rainy season. It has one of the largest rainforests in Africa.

SHC extends detention order of foreign vessel posing security threat to war

Oct 27, 2009 (MENA News from Al-Bawaba via COMTEX) -- Sindh High Court Monday extended till November 12, 2009 ad-interim order for detention of Liberian cargo vessel posing security threat to ongoing joint war exercises of Maritime Security Agency & Pakistan Navy.

On October 24, 2009 SHC allowed application filed by MSA Legal Advisor, seeking detention of Liberian vessel, MV AG Ekaterini, anchored at Karachi Port that may pose security threat ongoing war exercises within country's water territorial limits. Today, SHC bailiff submitted report, stating defendant M/s Ellas Seaways Company of Liberia, vessel's owner, was served notice. But, none appeared on behalf of defendant.

Guinea

Guinea's September Massacre Pre - Planned: HRW

DAKAR (Reuters) - The killing of more than 150 people at an opposition rally by Guinean security forces on September 28 was premeditated, Human Rights Watch said on Tuesday. The bloody crackdown has drawn broad international condemnation of the country's ruling military junta led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, with the European Union on Tuesday saying it would impose an arms embargo. Human Rights Watch said Camara and some of his closest military associates in the National Campaign for Democracy and Development (CNDD) junta should face criminal prosecution for the incident, characterized by rapes and brutal beatings. "Security forces surrounded and blockaded the stadium, then stormed in and fired at protesters in cold blood until they ran out of bullets," Africa director Georgette Gagnon said in a statement.

Sierra Leone

Special court for Sierra Leone / Prosecutor welcomes convictions in RUF appeals judgement

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, October 27, 2009/African Press Organization (APO)/ — 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."

Local Media – Newspaper

Split Emerges in Former Ruling Party over Who to Support in Upcoming By-Election

(The Analyst, New Democrat, The Inquirer, The Informer, National Chronicle, The News)

- A split has emerged in the former ruling National Patriotic Party over the declaration of support for the opposition Congress for Democratic Change candidate in the forthcoming Montserrado Senatorial by-election.
- The split occurred when the Montserrado Chapter of the former ruling party announced its decision to support CDC's Geraldine Doe-Sheriff in the by-election.
- However, some senior partisans of the party said the decision was not the official position of the party.
- Meanwhile, a local pro-democracy group, Liberia Democratic Institute on Monday released preliminary findings into the process which revealed what the group said is voters' apathy towards the November 10 by-election. The group said more awareness was needed especially as regards replacing voting cards.

Catholic School Teachers Vow to Continue Strike Action

(Daily Observer, Heritage)

- Catholic school teachers and support staffs of the Archdiocese of Monrovia have vowed to continue their go-slow action until demands for salary increment are met.
- The strike which was launched early Monday has paralyzed academic activities in all Catholic schools within Monrovia, Brewerville in Montserrado, Margibi, Bomi and Grand Bassa Counties.
- The striking teachers are demanding an increment of LD\$3,500 for all teachers irrespective of the status of the school or its location.
- In an interview, the President and spokesman of the striking teachers, James Wrokpoh said their current salary structure does not commensurate with their initial demand.
- An estimated eight hundred Catholic school teachers and support staff are participating in the strike.
- The Secretary of the Catholic Education Secretariat, Saywon Nagbe said the authorities were holding an emergency meeting and would comment appropriately.

Police Rescues Suspected Armed Robbers from Mob's Wrath at Waterside Commercial District of Monrovia

(New Democrat, Heritage, The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- Police on Sunday rescued two alleged armed robbers from an angry mob in Waterside Commercial District of Monrovia.
- According to the police, the two suspects, Michael Igbo and Foley Tamba have terrorized residents in that area and its surroundings for a number of years now.
- The Police say the two notorious criminals were overpowered by the mob early Sunday after breaking into the Universal Business Centre on Water Street.
- Residents say the men are connected to a criminal ring that has carried out series of burglaries in the area during the past couple of years.

IMF Holds Fund Outreach Seminar Today

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF), through the Office of the Resident Representative is expected to attend a Fund outreach seminar today in Monrovia.
- The one-day event, under the theme "The IMF Supporting Africa and Liberia through the Global Crisis", is expected to bring together, civil society organizations, university students and other stakeholders.
- During the seminar, former Finance Minister, now Director of the African Department of the IMF, Dr. Antoinette Sayeh will deliver remarks on fund support for Africa as well as the achievements and challenges of the IMF supported programmes in Liberia.

President Sirleaf Places Hold On Salary Increment At NPA

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has placed an immediate hold on the proposed salary increment of the management team of the National Port Authority (NPA).
- The President's action comes in the wake of a meeting she held with the senior management team of the National Port Authority (NPA) yesterday at the Foreign Ministry.
- Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Wleh Badio said during the meeting, the President mandated members of the board and senior management team to place an immediate hold on the proposed salary increment.
- The President also directed the board and management team to submit a comprehensive report of the financial operations of the NPA within two weeks.

Catholic Hospital Gets New HIV 'Detector Machine'

(Daily Observer)

- A state-of-the-art machine that detects HIV/AIDS in infants at just six weeks old has been donated to the St. Joseph Catholic Hospital in Monrovia.
- The new equipment is put at a value of US\$22,000 and was donated by the US-based Global Strategy.
- The Real-Time (RT) PCR Instrument 7500 machine operation is different from the traditional testing method which tests antibodies and not virus in the blood samples

LNP Gets New Partnership... As Netherland NGO Visits Police Stations

(The Analyst)

- The Netherland based-NGO, Altus Global Alliance in collaboration with the Liberia National Law Enforcement Association (LINLEA) has begun a tour of police stations in the country.
- A LINLEA release said the visitation is an annual event developed by Altus to enable citizens around the world to visit local police stations, interact with officers and familiarize themselves with the work of the police.
- Several police stations in and around Monrovia including the Liberia National Police Headquarters were visited yesterday as part of the tour which is expected to last until the 30th of the month.
- The Altus Global Alliance hopes the interaction will enhance community police interactions and would assist members of the public appreciate the challenges officers face in the performance of their duties.

Catholic School Teachers Vow to Continue Strike Action

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

Bong County Motorcycle Union Expresses Disappointment in Government

- The Bong Motorcycle Union says it is disappointed over government's failure to arrest the killers of motorcyclists in the county.
- The President of the Union, Samuel Elliot said the brutal murder of motorcyclists in the county is worrisome.
- According to Mr. Elliot the murder of a motorcyclist on October 23 this year brings to four the number of motorcyclists killed in cold blood in the county.
- He said prior to the latest incident, President Sirleaf promised that government would ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book but to no avail.
- The President of the Bong Motorcycle Union said it was disheartening for citizens to feel insecure when UN troops are on regular patrols in the country.

Labour Ministry Challenges 85% Unemployment Rate

- The Assistant Labour Minister for Trade Union Affairs, Cole Bangalu has challenged what appears to be the official statistics of the unemployment rate in Liberia.
- Minister Bangalu dismissed the claim that the unemployment rate in the country still stands at eighty-five percent. He said the figure was unrealistic and could not be scientifically proven.
- He said the eighty-five percent unemployment referred to was reached between 1991 and 1992 but said that figure has since improved under the current government.
- Speaking on Monday at programmes marking the second Management Seminar Certification of about sixteen Liberian apprentices, Assistant Minister Bangalu disclosed that over the next two weeks numerators would be out in the field to conduct a survey on the rate of unemployment in the country.

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

Nigerian Ambassador Committed to Job Creation in Liberia

- Nigerian Ambassador to Liberia, Ebenezer Adigun has pledged his country's commitment to job creation opportunities for youths and women in Liberia.
- Ambassador Adigun said job creation and the empowerment of youths and women are cardinal to Liberia's recovery process.
- According to him, when Liberians are employed they would contribute positively to the reconstruction drive of their country.
- The Nigerian Ambassador spoke Monday at the formal launching of the new logo, a micro-finance scheme and the announcement of new branches of FiBank Liberia Limited in Monrovia.
- Ambassador Adigun noted there are four Nigerian banks in the country which are complementing government's effort in its poverty reduction strategy.

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

Liberia and Sierra Leone want Rainforests Protected

- Liberia and Sierra Leone have renewed their commitment to conserve the natural rainforests of the two countries.
- In a joint press statement issued in Stockholm, Sweden, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma said there are more benefits in conserving the forests.
- The two leaders believe the long term benefits of conserving the forests outweigh the short term benefits from other uses including logging and mining. Their call comes ahead of the Climate Change conference in Copenhagen.

Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 09:45am)*

Catholic Hospital Gets New HIV 'Detector Machine'

Split Emerges in Former Ruling Party over Who to Support in Upcoming By-Election

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Tuesday, 27 October 2009

Karadzic fails to appear for second day of trial

By Johan van Slooten



The Hague, Netherlands

Former Bosnian Serb leader leader Radovan Karadzic again failed to appear at the second day of his trial before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague.

The trial of Radovan Karadzic began yesterday - but was almost immediately adjourned because of his absence. When he again refused to attend today, Judge O-Gon Kwon ruled that the trial should proceed without him. Because he had chosen not to be present, said the judge he "must therefore accept the consequences".

Architect of ethnic cleansing

Mr Karadzic is defending himself on 11 charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the 1992-95 Bosnian war. In his opening statement, prosecutor Alan Teiger described him as the "supreme commander" of ethnic cleansing and accused him of being both the architect of genocidal policies and the leader of the forces that implemented them.

Srebrenica massacre key

Key among the charges against Mr Karadzic is the massacre of more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys after his troops over-ran the UN-protected enclave of Srebrenica in July 1995. Present in The Hague both yesterday and today were women from the group Mothers of Srebrenica who are still seeking justice for their murdered husbands and sons.

They'd travelled 40 hours by bus hoping to come face to face with Mr Karadzic in the courtroom and were bitterly disappointed at his failure to appear. One of them, Kata Hodic, said, "I just don't understand why the court didn't force him to come. He was in hiding for fourteen years, now he should finally show himself to us".

Legal tricks

Axel Hagedorn is a Dutch lawyer representing the Mothers of Srebrenica. He's been with them outside the court building since Monday. ""Here you see that all kinds of legal tricks are being played, and that is disappointing for everyone", he says. But he and his clients still hope and expect that justice will be done. "The tribunal should give him the same punishment as our men and children got from him", Ms Hotic says.

Slow justice

The trial of Radovan Karadzic has been a long time in the making. He was indicted for war crimes in 1995, but then spent 13 years in hiding before being arrested in July of last year. He is defending himself and demanding another ten months to prepare his case - the reason for his refusal to attend the trial. The prosecution is now asking the court to appoint a lawyer for him so the trial can continue without further delays.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

Victims outraged at Karadzic adjournment

By Sebastiaan Gottlieb



The Hague, Netherlands

Few people expected Radovan Karadzic to show up to the start of his trial on Monday. He had already announced his intention not to attend a few days earlier in a written submission to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The former President of the Serb Republic in Bosnia stayed away to protest the fact

that he hadn't been given more time to prepare his case. The pre-trial and appeals chambers rejected his request for a 10-month postponement earlier this month.

As he opened the trial Monday in Courtroom 1 of the ICTY, Presiding Judge O-Gon Kwon saw only empty seats where the defence team should be and quickly decided to adjourn the trial until the next day. "We will start with reading the opening statement," he said, "and we request Mr. Karadzic to attend, so that his trial is not further obstructed." Judging by this gentle approach, Kwon is hoping to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict with Karadzic.

This could be because of what has been until now a cooperative relationship between Karadzic and the tribunal. This is in stark contrast to the earlier trials of the late Slobodan Milosevic and enfant terrible Vojislav Seselj, who made obstructing and frustrating the tribunal their primary business. Kwon's good faith in Karadzic may also come from the letter the defendant sent to the court stating that he "will never boycott his own trial" and hoping the court would find "a fair solution."

117 members of victim's rights group the Mothers of Srebrenica attended the first day of trial in The Hague. They represent the families of the more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys killed during the Srebrenica genocide in 1995. They were shocked by the judge's soft approach and when Kwon announced the court's adjournment, they stood up in the public gallery and shouted with frustration.

Once they were outside the courtroom they expressed their anger to the international press that thronged to the first day of trial.

"I just don't understand why the court didn't force him to come," said one woman. "He was in hiding for 14 years, now he should finally show himself to us."

Trial watchers at the ICTY in The Hague see Karadzic' absence as a ritual contest between the court and the accused. Michael Wladimiroff who represented Duso Tadic, the first person to be convicted by the ICTY, said: "I expect Karadzic to turn up in the courtroom once the first witnesses are presented by the prosecution. He will not attend the opening statement because there is nothing to win there for him."

Wladimiroff has been right so far: Karadzic didn't attend the postponed opening of the trial Tuesday where the charges against him were presented by the prosecution. Whether Wladimiroff is also right that Karadzic will show up at a later time, is still to be seen.

International Justice Tribune

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

ICTY: Sweden releases Biljana Plavsic

By International Justice Tribune



Belgrade, Serbia

Sweden released former Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic Tuesday, two-thirds into an 11-year jail term for war crimes, according to the Swedish prison authority. She immediately left Sweden and returned home to Serbia.

“I don’t know what to think being free after eight years,” Plavsic told reporters after landing in Belgrade.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, which convicted Plavsic in February 2003, consented last month to grant her an early release.

79-year-old Plavsic was one of three members of the presidency of the Serbian Republic, headed by Radovan Karadzic. She was the only woman convicted by the ICTY of war crimes committed during the 1992-1995 Bosnian war.

Plavsic pleaded guilty to persecution on political, racial and religious grounds by “inviting paramilitaries from Serbia to assist Bosnian Serb forces in effecting ethnic separation by force”. Charges of genocide, extermination and murder were dropped as part of a plea bargain.

Bosnian Serbs celebrated her release and Bosnian Serb Prime Minister Milorad Dodik was in Belgrade to welcome her back home.

But Muslim victims of the war voiced outrage last month at the decision to grant early release. “It might be in line with international law, but it has nothing to do with justice,” Murat Tahirovic, head of an association of Muslim and Croat war camp prisoners, told reporters.

Kada Hotic, a mother still searching for a son who went missing in the 1995 Srebrenica genocide said “they don’t think about the blood of so many of our children, whom we are still digging out of mass graves.”

“Nobody feels sorry for them but they feel sorry for Plavsic, who spent her prison days very comfortably, writing books and memoirs,” Hotic said.

International Justice Tribune

Wednesday, 28 October 2009

Alleged génocidaire not tried nor extradited

By Franck Petit



Paris, France

Fifteen years after the Rwandan genocide, the situation regarding a dozen Rwandans suspects living in France remains deadlocked.

French courts refused to transfer suspected génocidaires to Rwanda following various rulings that suspects could not be guaranteed a fair trial.

As well as this Rwanda will not allow French officials to carry out investigations over there. Diplomatic relations between the two countries soured after a French judge implicated President Paul Kagame in the assassination of former Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana.

Habyarimana's widow now lives in France. But on October 16th the country's highest legal authority refused to grant her asylum, saying that "presumptions exist" regarding her involvement in the massacres

Agathe Habyarimana could, therefore, be deported to Rwanda, or she could be tried in France under the principle of universal jurisdiction, if a judicial inquiry launched against her last year so decides.

At the same time, a hospital in Northern France recently suspended medical doctor Eugene Rwamucyo after discovering he was wanted by Interpol in connection with the genocide.

But Rwamucyo is also unlikely to be extradited or tried anytime soon. At least not until relations between Paris and Kigali improve.