

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Friday, 29 January 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Premier News
Friday, 29 January 2010

Taylor Forced To Appear In Court

The Wednesday morning hearing at the Charles Taylor trial in The Hague was abandoned because Mr. Taylor and his lead defence counsel Courtenay Griffiths were not in court.

The court was told that Mr. Taylor did not appear because some officers in his detention facility tampered with his confidential materials unknowingly to him. But the judges said that was not a valid reason for his absence.

The BBC World Service trust's John Kollie has

this transcription from the Hague....

This was a frustrating moment for all concerned in the Charles Taylor trial. The three regular judges and the prosecuting team were all present in court. But the accused Charles Taylor and his lead defence counsel

Courtenay Griffiths were absent.

Defence counsel Morris Anyah suggested that Mr. Griffiths' absence might be due to illness.

On Taylor's absence, Anyah told the court that the defendant did not appear because the security officers in his detention facility tampered with his confidential materials unknowingly to him during their regular inspection.

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Taylor (center) disembarked from a Nigerian plane at an airport in Monrovia

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According to Mr Anyah Mr. Taylor will need about a week

to cross check his materials. But the Judges insisted on Mr. Taylor's appearance and called for a temporary adjournment. Three hours later he arrived for the afternoon session.

The prosecuting counsel Nicholas Kounjian accused Mr. Taylor of authorizing his ministry of

finance to transfer \$500,000 from the Liberian Government account to a Swiss account in the name of Sanjivan Ruprah.

Mr. Taylor agreed but said it was a government decision. Mr. Taylor told the court that he did not know Sanjivan Ruprah.

He said his government gave him a diplomatic Liberian passport based on some recommendations made about him.

Credit BBCNews.com



Taylor (right) disembarked from a Nigerian plane at an airport in Monrovia

The Torchlight
Friday, 29 January 2010

Charles Taylor Denies Ethnic Cleansing

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor has denied allegations that his former NPFL fighters targeted certain ethnic groups during the Liberian conflict. At his trial in The Hague, Mr Taylor tries to present his NPFL as a well disciplined organisation. But the prosecution accused his fighters of using women as sex slaves during the conflict. John Kollie has this transcription from The Hague for the BBC World Service Trust...

Even when Charles Taylor denied allegations that his NPFL rebel group did not commit massacre in Liberia, the lead prosecution lawyer Brenda Hollis asked Mr Taylor whether, as leader of the group he was aware of the atrocities committed by the NPFL rebels in Liberia.

Brenda Hollis, accused Mr Taylor's NPFL fighters of mainly targeting the Krahn and the Mandingo ethnic groups in Liberia.

Ms. Hollis said the NPFL murdered over 30 civilians in Kakata, 45 kilometers North East of the Liberian capital, Monrovia, and that one of the commanders ate the hearts of five of the victims. But Taylor said this never happened.

The prosecutor also questioned Charles Taylor about the Liberian Truth



and Reconciliation Commission report which accused Mr Taylor's NPFL fighters of raping, looting, recruiting child soldiers and use women as sex slaves during the Liberian conflict.

But Mr Taylor challenged the credibility of the TRC report. According to him the report was full of errors and had been criticized by many Liberians. Mr Taylor's lead defence council Courtenay Griffiths also objected to the use of the TRC report in the cross examination of Taylor. According to Mr. Griffiths the prosecution should not use the report because they failed to disclose it to the defence.

The Spectator
Friday, 29 January 2010

Charles Taylor Turns up Late in Court, Prosecutors Question Him about Transfer of Money into Foreign Bank Accounts

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor was grilled by prosecutors about bank transfers which they say allowed Mr. Taylor to secretly buy weapons while his country was under a United Nations arms embargo. Mr. Taylor said he could not remember specifically what the money was used for.

The questioning followed a surprising start to the day with Mr. Taylor failing to appear in court. Defense counsel for the former president said Mr. Taylor had reported a security breach in his jail cell and refused to appear at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in time for the trial to start. His counsel, Morris Anyah, told the court that security officers at the detention center had tampered with Mr. Taylor's confidential documents during their routine inspection of his cell. As the documents were in excess of a million pages, Mr. Taylor thought he needed about a week to cross-check all his materials. The judges refused and ordered Mr. Taylor to appear.

When Mr. Taylor arrived, prosecutor Nicholas Koumjian sought to expose how Mr. Taylor's Liberian government purchased arms and ammunition in violation of a United Nations arms embargo

on Liberia. Mr. Koumjian went through portions of a United Nations Expert report which accused Mr. Taylor and his government of busting UN sanctions, as well as involvement in Sierra Leone's conflict. Mr. Koumjian, reading from the UN report told Mr. Taylor that in October 2000, the Bureau of Maritime Affairs transferred 150,000 USD into a bank in Dubai and the said money was used for "sanction busting."

"Did you know about this?" Mr. Koumjian asked Mr. Taylor. "Not specifically," Mr. Taylor responded.

Mr. Koumjian also told Mr. Taylor that during his administration as president of Liberia, a letter originating from the Liberian Ministry of Finance instructed Mr. John Teng, the General Manager of Oriental Timber Company (OTC) in Liberia, to transfer 500,000 USD into a bank in Switzerland. The money, Mr. Koumjian said, was OTC's tax payment to the Liberian government.

"Were you familiar with this instruction to transfer this tax amount not to the Central Bank of Liberia or the Ministry of Finance but to a Swiss Bank?" Mr. Koumjian asked Mr. Taylor. In his response, the former president said that "I wouldn't say specifically but generally, yes." Asked what he meant by that response, Mr. Taylor explained that "a letter from the Ministry of Finance to

Mr. Teng would have gone through some clearing from the presidency."

When asked what the money was meant for, Mr. Taylor said that "I do not know. I cannot recollect specifically. All I can say is that an amount like that will need some presidential clearance."

According to the UN report, Mr. Taylor's government provided money to Mr. Sanjivan Ruprah, the former Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs in Liberia. As Mr. Koumjian pointed out today, Mr. Ruprah was described by the UN Sanctions Committee on Liberia as "Businessman, Arms dealer in contravention of UNSC resolution 1343. Supported former president Taylor's regime in effort to destabilize Sierra Leone and gain illicit access to diamonds."

Mr. Taylor admitted knowing Mr. Ruprah, saying that Mr. Ruprah was an "ambassador at large for Liberia and worked for the Maritime Bureau." He said that he approved Mr. Ruprah's diplomatic status. Mr. Taylor, however, added that he does not know every detail of Mr. Ruprah's life. Asked if he has been honest about his knowledge of Mr. Ruprah, the former president said that "yes, what I have said is what I

know. I do not know every detail of Mr. Ruprah's life."

Mr. Koumjian pointed out that according to the January 7 2008 testimony of the prosecution's expert witness Ian Smilie who was also a member of the UN Panel of Experts, when Mr. Taylor was asked by the UN Panel whether he knew Mr. Ruprah, the former president had said that he does not know him.

"You know that Smilie and I disagree. I disagree with Smilie's account. I would know of him but I would not know him personally," Mr. Taylor responded. "I don't know Mr. Ruprah, I don't know him personally. If you bring him now as big as this building, I would not know him," he added.

The former president also denied Mr. Koumjian's assertion that in 1999-2000, he authorized the disbursement of 1 million USD to Mr. Ruprah for the purchase of arms and ammunition. "I did not authorize money to him to buy arms. I would have authorized money to him but the details of it, I do not know. I do not recall the details of why these amounts were paid. All I can say is that I authorized them," Mr. Taylor said.

"Are you saying you do not know how a million dollars of your country's money was spent?" Mr. Koumjian enquired further.

The former president maintained that he could not recall what the money was

meant for.

Prosecutors have been seeking to discredit Mr. Taylor's credibility as a witness, trying to convince the judges that his testimony cannot be relied upon because the former president has not been truthful in his accounts. From July to November 2009, Mr. Taylor testified as a witness in his own defense during which he denied providing support for Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor denied providing arms and ammunition to RUF rebels, arguing that his government did not have money to purchase arms for his country and so could not have provided any to RUF rebels. The former president also denied sending monies to various banks in foreign countries. Prosecutors now seek to prove that the former president has not been telling the truth.

Also referenced in the UN report today was an interview with former Ivorian leader, the late General Robert Guei, who himself took power by a mili-

tary coup in Ivory Coast. According to the report, Gen. Guei told that Panel that shortly after the 1999 coup which brought him to power in Ivory Coast, he had requested and received arms and ammunition from Mr. Taylor in Liberia. Mr. Taylor admitted that he had indeed sent arms and ammunition to Gen. Guei in Ivory Coast.

"We sent some of the Ivorians in Liberia and they carried the light arms and ammunition to Ivory Coast," Mr. Taylor said.

Prosecutors have alleged that as president of Liberia, Mr. Taylor sent arms and ammunition to RUF rebels in Sierra Leone which were used to commit heinous crimes against the people of Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor has maintained that while he was president, he did not have arms for his own country and so could not have provided any to foreign forces. Prosecutors now seek to prove that he provided said arms to forces outside Liberia, such as those given to Ivorian forces.

NEWS ITEM

28, Jan. 2010

A heated exchange took place between Former Liberian President, Charles Taylor and Prosecution Lawyer, Nicholas Kumjain on Thursday in The Hague. The emotional outburst between the two men came about when Mr. Taylor on cross-examination denied knowing one of his own Ambassadors. The Prosecution also accused Mr. Taylor of violating the UN travel ban to facilitate the travel of members of the Sierra Leone Rebels, the Revolutionary United Front, RUF, but Mr. Taylor denied. John Kollie has this transcription on the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor from The Hague....

It was the quick intervention of Presiding Judge, Julia Sebutinde that quieted Mr. Taylor and Prosecution Lawyer Nicholas Kumjain. Prosecuting Attorney, Kumjain in an attempt to impeach Mr. Taylor's testimonies of November 9, 2009, called Mr. Taylor a liar.

He said Mr. Taylor lied about his knowledge of one Sanji Van Ruprah whom he (Taylor) appointed Ambassador-At-Large. This led to a bitter exchange between Mr. Taylor and the Prosecution Lawyer, Mr. Kumjian.

The Prosecution Lawyer also accused Mr. Taylor of accommodating RUF Leaders in violation of the UN travel ban. Mr. Kumjian alleged that Mr. Taylor facilitated the travel of RUF Leaders Sam Bockarie, Issa Sesay and Gibril Massaquoi to Liberia and other parts of Africa without any regard for the UN Travel ban.

The Former Liberian President said the UN which instituted the travel ban on the Sierra Leone rebels did not rebut him for his action.

Meanwhile Presiding Judge, Julia Sebutinde has announced a new sitting schedule for the trial of Mr. Taylor. Beginning Monday, February one, the Chamber Two of the Special Court would sit from 3pm to 7pm daily.

The International Criminal Court which houses the Special Court for Sierra Leone will now use the courtroom being used for Mr. Taylor's trial from the morning hours to 2pm.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 28 January 2010

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberia: U.S. Ambassador Signs grant agreements for six counties

Source: STAR Radio

Date: 28 Jan 2010

US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield has signed grant agreements for twelve community projects in six counties. The Counties include Bong, Nimba, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Kru, Garpolu, and Montserrado. The community projects are under the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund which started in Togo in 1964. The Self-Help Fund allows the US Ambassador to respond to modest requests for assistance from communities. During the signing ceremony Wednesday, Ambassador Greenfield described the initiative as her favorite. She said it gives her the opportunity to interact with people at the community level. The US Ambassador said despite the challenges in getting the program to the communities, the important thing was the nature of grass-root assistance. Ambassador Greenfield said under the Fund, 84 projects have been undertaken in the 15 counties of Liberia with a little over 380-thousand US Dollars expended. According to Ambassador Greenfield, one hundred proposals were submitted to the US Embassy for the 2010 cycle but only twelve of them were considered.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

Guinea must hold elections within six months - AU

Reuters

January 28, 2010 09:13AM

Guinea's military junta must hold elections within six months, the African Union (AU) said on Wednesday. Donors have been pressuring the country, the world's biggest bauxite exporter, to hold its first democratic elections since Moussa Dadis Camara took power in a coup in December 2008. "We urge all the stakeholders in the Guinea crisis to rapidly form a National Unity Government capable of leading the country towards the restoration of constitutional order through the holding of free and transparent elections within the next six months," the AU's International Contact Group on Guinea said. The group is made up of African and international diplomats. Last week Guinea's junta named Jean-Marie Dore as prime minister of a transitional government charged with restoring civilian rule. A source close to the junta said Dore, leader of the Union for the Progress of Guinea party, would of steer the country through to elections. The AU imposed sanctions on the leaders of the junta in October. Camara is still convalescing outside the country after he was wounded on December 3 during an assassination attempt.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone youth need jobs for peace-World Bank 27 Jan

FREETOWN, Jan 28 (Reuters) - Sierra Leone needs donors' help to create jobs for disarmed but unemployed youth if the west African nation is to maintain the peace achieved since the end of a decade-long war, the World Bank said on Wednesday. World Bank President Robert Zoellick praised steps towards promoting democracy and fighting corruption. But his visit coincided with the country's president accusing some officials of corruption, chasing away investors and undermining his rule. Sierra Leone's 11-year war ended in 2002 and the country, whose minerals were central to the conflict, has enjoyed steady economic growth. But critics say not enough progress has been made to fight corruption and find jobs for former combatants. "It is vitally important that the World Bank support this cause as it is important to keep the peace in Sierra Leone," Zoellick said during a visit to the country.

Cote D'Ivoire

Fined for exporting military jet from Malta

The Times of Malta...Thursday, 28th January 2010

A 50-year-old Frenchman was found guilty of exporting a military aircraft to the Ivory Coast six years ago after an appeals' court overturned a previous judgment and fined him almost €12,000. Jean Jacques Fuentes was found not guilty by the Magistrates' Court a year ago of exporting two Strikemaster military aircraft from Malta to the Ivory Coast in May 2004. The Attorney General filed an appeal arguing that the first court should have found him guilty. In his reply to the appeal, Mr Fuentes claimed he did not export anything, insisting it was a company called NCA International Limited that co-ordinated the export of the "aircraft parts". The parts were of a civilian not military aircraft and, moreover, once assembled together, they would not be sufficient to build an aircraft. But Mr Justice David Scicluna pointed out that in his first statement to the police Mr Fuentes had said: "I had arranged for disassembling G-BXFP in Malta through NCA and Medavia's technicians and also arranged for the shipment of the aircraft via Tristar Agency." It also resulted that he effected all payments.

Local Media – Newspaper

US Secretary of State Declares Support for President Sirleaf's 2nd Term Bid

(The Inquirer and The Analyst)

- An Executive Mansion statement issued in Monrovia said U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has declared support for President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's decision to seek re-election.
- According to the release, Secretary Clinton made the pronouncement Tuesday during a town hall meeting with employees of the U.S. State Department in Washington, DC to commemorate her first year in office.
- The U.S. Secretary of State praised President Sirleaf for her pioneering role in combating gender-based violence through different institutions including the Gender Ministry, the Liberia National Police, as well as the Special Court.
- Secretary of State Clinton said the Liberian government has created special programmes for the protection of women and children who bore the brunt of the violence of the 14-year crisis.

"Assets Declaration Not Mandatory" Says LACC Chairperson

(Heritage, The Monitor and New Democrat)

- The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) has told the Legislature to either comply with its assets declaration request or leave it alone.
- The Chairperson of the Commission, Cllr. Frances Johnson Morris said it would be unacceptable for people to suggest declaring their assets outside of the LACC assets declaration form.
- Cllr. Morris made the statement during an investigative hearing before the Senate Committee on Autonomous Commissions and Agencies.

- The hearing was to inquire from the LACC whether it was mandatory for Legislators to comply with the new assets declaration.
- Meanwhile, Bong County Senator Jewel Howard Taylor says the LACC assets declaration form has a security risk as there are no guarantees that privacy of individuals would be protected.

U.S. Ambassador Signs Grant Agreements for Six Counties

(The News and The Analyst)

- U.S. Ambassador to Liberia, Linda Thomas Greenfield has signed grant agreements for twelve community projects in six counties.
- The Counties include Bong, Nimba, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Kru, Gbarpolu, and Montserrado.
- The community projects are under the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund which started in Togo in 1964 to allow the U.S. Ambassador to respond to modest requests for assistance from communities.
- Ambassador Greenfield said under the Fund, 84 projects have been undertaken in the 15 counties of Liberia with a little over US\$380,000 expended.
- She said 100 proposals were submitted to the U.S. Embassy for the 2010 cycle but only 12 of them were considered.

Twenty-one Liberians Deported from the U.S.

(The News, New Republic, Daily Observer and New Democrat)

- Twenty-one Liberians deported from the United States have arrived home.
- They arrived at the Roberts International Airport Wednesday and were taken to the Headquarters of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) for screening.
- BIN authorities said the current batch of deportees will not be sent to the National Palace of Corrections in Grand Gedeh as was done to the last batch.
- Deputy BIN Commissioner Archie Williams said crimes committed by the current batch of deportees were not grave but stressed that the BIN would closely monitor their activities.
- Meanwhile, one of the deportees, Albert Stokes has described his deportation by the United States Government as unfair.

Save The Children-UK Turns Over Modern School Complex To Government

(The Inquirer)

- The UK-based charity, Save the Children-UK yesterday turned over a modern school complex to the Government of Liberia.
- The John S. Varfley Elementary Public School building and a playground built through donations from Mike Balfour and his wife Margaret, Save the Children supporters and readers of the Sunday Time Newspaper in the United Kingdom.
- The donations followed a Christmas appeal for the Kingsville community in Careysburg District on the internet.
- The Christmas appeal, according to Save the Children Country Director, Susan Grant was intended to raise one million British pounds to help the children of Kingsville to access quality healthcare, education and clean water in a safe and protected environment.

Public Works, CICO to Increase Working Hours

(The Inquirer)

- In a bid to accelerate the ongoing road rehabilitation within Monrovia City streets, the administrations of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and China Chongqing International Construction Corporation (CICO) have agreed to double the regular working hours to ensure the speedy completion of rehabilitation work on various streets in Monrovia.

- Making the disclosure during a road inspection tour, Public Works Minister Samuel Kofi Woods said the speed of the road work was necessary but said precision will also be taken for quality output.
- For his part, the General Manager of CICO, Liu Libo acknowledged the importance of speeding up the road rehabilitation work saying technical segments of the road will be slightly delayed due to damaged drainages and outdated pipes underground.

Local Media – Star Radio *(culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

“Assets Declaration Not Mandatory” Says LACC Chairperson

(Also reported on Radio Veritas, Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Former Deputy Minister Recommends Consultation For TRC Report

- Former Deputy Information Minister Richmond Anderson says consultation remains a relevant component to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) final report.
- Mr. Anderson said citizens need to be given the opportunity to discuss such a critical national issue that has the propensity to maintain the peace or destroy it.
- He called on Liberians to prioritize the palava hut component of the TRC report as mentioned by President Sirleaf in her State of the Nation Address at the National Legislature.

(Also reported on Radio Veritas, Sky FM, and ELBC)

US Ambassador Signs Grant Agreements For Six Counties

LISGIS Begins Capacity Building for Over 200 Enumerators

- The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) has begun the training of over 200 enumerators for three major surveys in the country.
- The surveys valued at 1.25 million dollars include the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaires (CWIQ), the Labor Force and Human Rights surveys.
- The Director General of LISGIS, Dr. Edward Liberty said the CWIQ survey would measure progress made in the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy while the Labour Force survey would evaluate the extent of child labour, the current employment rate in the country and other labour related indicators.
- The Human Rights survey according to Dr. Liberty would provide information that would be used to prepare a national human rights action plan for Liberia.

Twenty-one Liberian Deportees Arrive From the U.S.

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

“We Will Not Vote For President Sirleaf if...” Marketers Warn

- Marketers of the Liberia Marketing Association say they will not vote for President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf if she fails to stop Acting Monrovia City Mayor Mary Broh from destroying their market stalls.
- They said Mayor Broh was in the constant habit of sending a taskforce to the waterside market community to destroy their stalls.
- They said that in many instances, their products were taken away by members of the taskforce.

Truth FM *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

US Secretary of State Declares Support for President Sirleaf’s 2nd Term Bid

Miami Herald

Friday, 29 January 2010

Closings set in Liberian torture victim lawsuit

Five Africans who suffered horrific torture on the orders of the son of former Liberian President Charles Taylor will suffer mental problems for the rest of their lives, a psychologist testified Friday in their lawsuit seeking millions of dollars in damages.

The five torture victims - who were set on fire, were held in chest-high pits of filthy water and repeatedly sexually assaulted - are suing Taylor's son, Charles McArthur Emmanuel, who is also known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr. He is serving a 97-year prison sentence for violating U.S. anti-torture laws while he commanded an elite paramilitary unit in his father's war-torn government.

Psychologist Jethro Toomer, who interviewed each of the five victims, said they suffer from long-term post-traumatic stress disorder in addition to numerous scars and physical ailments caused by the torture.

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Psychologist Jethro Toomer, who interviewed each of the five victims, said they suffer from long-term post-traumatic stress disorder in addition to numerous scars and physical ailments caused by the torture.

Five Africans who claim they were tortured and abused in Liberia when former President Charles Taylor ruled will come to a Miami courtroom next week seeking millions of dollars from the man they say ordered the atrocities: Taylor's son, Charles McArthur Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, also known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr., was convicted in federal court in Miami last year of violating U.S. anti-torture laws as a high-level enforcer for his father. He is serving a 97-year prison sentence.

The five Liberian victims filed a lawsuit against him earlier this year, winning a default judgment in May that leaves only the question of damages for a trial that begins Monday.

Aretha Franklin is the undisputed Queen of Soul, but opera fans were bowled over when Franklin, a last-minute substitute for tenor Luciano Pavarotti at the 1998 Grammy awards, raised the roof singing the Puccini aria, "Nessun Dorma"

Die-hard Franklin fans, however, knew that Franklin's powerful voice could take on opera. Franklin herself has never been one to shy away from trying different musical genres.

With roots solidly planted in gospel, Franklin also made a name for herself in pop, jazz and R&B. When she signed with Columbia Records in the early 1960s, she even had a Top 40 single with "Rock-a-bye

Your Baby with a Dixie Melody." Franklin has always been willing to experiment with different musical genres.

•For Africans seeking better lives, Latin America is the new grail
For Africans seeking better lives, Latin America is the new grail
George Kingsley fled his war-torn homeland of Sierra Leone by stowing away on a cargo ship with no idea where his journey would lead him. Three weeks later, he arrived broke, hungry, and dehydrated in Argentina.

“The only thing I knew about the country was that Diego Maradona was the best footballer in the world,” he said, taking a break from selling cheap, gold-plated jewellery out of a briefcase in a working-class district of Buenos Aires.

As European countries tighten up border controls, more and more Africans fleeing war and poverty in their homelands are landing at ports in Latin America. While some arrive in Mexico as a stepping stone to reach the United States, others find themselves in Brazil and Argentina after sneaking aboard cargo ships in African ports they mistakenly thought were bound for Europe.

MIAMI -- Acting as his own lawyer, the son of former Liberian President Charles Taylor will tell a Miami federal judge why he shouldn't have to pay money to five Liberians despite his criminal conviction for torture.

Charles McArthur Emmanuel, also known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr., is scheduled Friday to give his closing statement in the lawsuit. The five Liberians are each seeking millions of dollars in damages from Emmanuel for torture they suffered during the West African nation's brutal civil war.

Emmanuel commanded an elite paramilitary unit in his father's regime that used torture and killings to silence opposition.

The 32-year-old Emmanuel was convicted of violating U.S. torture laws in 2008. He is serving a 97-year prison sentence.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Friday, 29 January 2010

ICC prosecutor expects Bashir genocide charge

By Thijs Bouwknecht



The Hague, Netherlands

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) says he expects judges to add a charge of genocide within weeks against Sudan's

"fugitive" President Omar Hassan al Bashir.

The ICC issued an arrest warrant for Bashir last March on seven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sudan's Darfur conflict, including murder, rape and torture, but ruled it had insufficient grounds for a charge of genocide.

Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo, who appealed the ruling, said the continued plight of 2.5 million people in Darfur camps justified the label of genocide.

"The people in the camps are still suffering what I consider genocide," the prosecutor said. "And in a few weeks the appeal chairman will rule on my request to include genocide charges. I think I will win."

The United Nations says as many as 300,000 people have been killed since conflict erupted in Darfur in 2003, although Sudan rejects that figure.

Ocampo said conditions in the camps amounted to a "slow death" which the world had lost interest in.

Bashir, who is seeking re-election in April, has denied responsibility for wide-scale killing in Darfur and said the arrest warrant against him was part of a plot against Sudan.

Although Bashir has brushed off the charges and remained in office, Ocampo said his authority was diminished.

"President Bashir is indicted. He is a fugitive president," he said, citing what he said were refusals by South Africa, Uganda, Nigeria, Turkey and Venezuela to host the Sudanese leader since the warrant was issued.

"It's a process of marginalisation.... Bashir's destiny is to face justice -- in two years or 20 years."

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Thursday, 28 January 2010

Lubanga lawyer says child soldiers are liars



The Hague, Netherlands

Trial of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo



Thomas Lubanga Dyilo:

Alleged founder of *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) and *the Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo* (FPLC); Alleged former Commander-in-Chief of the FPLC, since September 2002 and at least until the end of 2003. Alleged president of the UPC.

Charges:

1. Enlisting and conscripting of children under the age of 15 years into the FPLC and using them to participate actively in hostilities in the context of an international armed conflict from early September 2002 to 2 June 2003.
2. Enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years into the FPLC and using them to participate actively in hostilities in the context of an armed conflict not of an international character from 2 June 2003 to 13 August 2003.

Witnesses lied when they claimed to have been recruited as child soldiers by Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga Dyilo's forces, his lawyer told the International Criminal Court (ICC) Wednesday.

"All the individuals presented as child soldiers, as well as their parents in some cases, deliberately lied before this court," Lubanga's lawyer Catherine Mabille told the judges presiding over Lubanga's war crimes trial.

"Six of them were never child soldiers, the seventh lied about his age and the conditions in which he enrolled, and the eighth never belonged to the UPC (Lubanga's Union of Congolese Patriots)."

Fabricated

This false testimony was fabricated "with the collaboration of the office of the prosecutor," Mabille charged.

Lubanga (49) went on trial a year ago charged with war crimes for using children under the age of 15 to fight for his militia. He pleaded not guilty.

Mabille said many of the witnesses were "encouraged to lie" about their age, their parents' names and the schools they attended "so that it would be more difficult to verify the information relating to them".

"How can judges carry out their role, that is to say seeking out and establishing the truth, if the testimony that they have heard is the result of concerted efforts to deceive them?"

Lubanga, his lawyer said, had "played no active role in the creation of the UPC military forces, and in no way did he take part deliberately in a common plan to recruit minors."

"Thomas Lubanga, during the few months where he did have responsibilities, did all he could to demobilise the minors who were present."

Defence

Lubanga's defence got under way behind closed doors in the ICC on Wednesday with the testimony of the first witness.

Prosecutors allege that Lubanga's militia abducted children as young as 11 from their homes, schools and football fields and took them to military training camps where they were beaten and drugged. The girls among them were said to be used as sex slaves.

The child soldiers were allegedly deployed in combat between September 2002 and August 2003.

Lubanga is accused of being driven by a desire to maintain and expand his control over the Congo's eastern Ituri region, one of the world's most lucrative gold-mining areas, where rights groups say inter-ethnic fighting has claimed 60,000 lives over the last decade.

The prosecution wound up its case in July last year after calling 28 witnesses.

Its very first witness, an alleged child soldier, retracted his testimony under Lubanga's constant glare from the dock, forcing the court to examine new ways of shielding witnesses.

"This initial statement by the first witness confirmed the investigations done by the defence regarding the possibility that certain prosecution witnesses had been manipulated so that they would give false testimony," Mabille said.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Friday, 29 January 2010

Karadzic able to stand trial in March



*The Hague,
Netherlands*

Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said on Thursday he was ready to give an opening statement if his war crimes trial resumes on 1 March, but he intends to file motions to delay its resumption.

Karadzic's trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) began late last year, but he boycotted the first three days on the grounds that he needed more time to prepare his defence. He has been representing himself.

The court appointed British lawyer Richard Harvey last October to represent Karadzic and postponed the trial until 1 March to give Harvey time to prepare. Karadzic wants to dismiss Harvey and filed an appeal last week against his appointment.

But he confirmed Thursday that he would be ready regardless to present his opening.

"Yes, if you decide that it is going to be the first of March after all," Karadzic said when trial judge O-Gon Kwon asked him to confirm if he would present his opening statement at the scheduled start of the trial.

He quickly added, though, that he would file to postpone the resumption of the trial yet again to have more time to prepare. He said it was not clear yet how much additional time he would need to request.

Karadzic denies all 11 counts of war crimes relating to the 1992-95 Bosnian war, including the killing of 8,000 Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica, the worst atrocity of the conflict.

Read more on the Karadzic trial on [The Hague Justice Portal](#)

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Friday, 29 January 2010

Rwanda discusses membership of International Criminal Court



The Hague,
Netherlands

Rwanda's Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama has met top officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to discuss the country's non-membership of the court, a statement said Thursday.

"During the meeting the president of the ICC, Judge Sang-Hyun Song, inquired about the prospects of the Republic of Rwanda acceding to the Rome Statute," the court's founding document, the ICC said in a statement.

"President Song underlined the Court's commitment to assist in any appropriate way to ensure that the government and people of Rwanda become familiar with its mandate." He also invited Rwanda to attend a Rome Statute review conference to be held in Kampala, Uganda in May and June.

Karugarama was accompanied for Wednesday's meeting by Rwanda's ambassador to the Netherlands, Jean Pierre Bizimana, the court said.

"The prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo and the registrar Silvana Arbia also held meetings with the Rwandan high representatives."

In an address last July, Rwanda's President Paul Kagame dismissed the ICC as a new form of imperialism created by the West to control the world's poorest countries.

The Hague Justice Portal

Wednesday, 27 January 2010

UN Legal Counsel discusses co-operation with The Hague courts and tribunals

The United Nations Legal Counsel has visited the heads of the international courts and tribunals in The Hague to discuss improving co-operation.

The United Nations Legal Counsel, Patricia O'Brien, visited the heads of the courts and tribunals in The Hague to discuss issues including better co-operation between the organisations. Ms O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, began a three-day visit to discuss issues with the heads of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) the International Court of Justice (ICJ) the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL). Ms O'Brien will also visit the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the mayor of The Hague.

On 25 January, Ms. O'Brien discussed closer co-operation with the International Criminal Court with President Judge Sang-Hyun Song. They discussed the Review Conference of the Rome Statute, which is set to take place in Kampala, Uganda in May 2010. Judge Song also discussed closer co-operation with the other UN ad hoc tribunals, and re-iterated an offer to host the residual mechanisms and archives when these come to a close. Ms O'Brien also met with the court's chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo and Registrar, Silvana Arbia.

The Legal Counsel visited the ICTY for meetings with the tribunal President, Judge Patrick Robinson, Vice-President Judge O-Gon Kwon, Prosecutor Serge Brammertz and Registrar John Hocking. The main focus of the meeting was the tribunal's Completion Strategy as well as the tribunal's plan to preserve its legacy in the former Yugoslavia once it has completed its remaining trials. There was also discussion on the residual mechanisms of the UN ad hoc tribunals once the trials and appeals have ended.

At the ICJ, Ms O'Brien met with the Court's president, Judge Hisashi Owada and Registrar, Mr. Philippe Couvreur as well as other judges of the Court. They discussed cooperation between the UN's Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) and the ICJ as well as other issues, such as the role of international law.

While in The Hague, Ms. O'Brien met with the STL's President, Judge Antonio Cassese; Prosecutor Daniel Bellemare; and the Head of the Defence Office, François Roux. She also held talks with the members of the trial chamber of the SCSL that is currently hearing the trial of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor.