

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



Deputy Prosecutor Dr. Christopher Staker listens to a question during Wednesday's Outreach at Parliament.
See more photos from the event in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Thursday, 29 November 2007

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

Sierra Leone Laws Are Archaic / *Awoko*

Page 3

International News

Sierra Leone Awaits Taylor Trial / *Exponto (Netherlands)*

Pages 4-7

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / *UNMIL*

Pages 8-9

Rwanda 'Hate Media' Terms Slashed / *BBC Online*

Page 10

ECOWAS Court Adjourns With No Ruling in Case Against Gambia / *Voice Of America*

Page 11

Special Court Supplement

Special Court Outreach to Parliament, in Pictures / *PAO*

Pages 12-13

Awoko

Thursday, 29 November 2007

Si Leone laws are archaic

By Ophaniel Gooding

Justice Bankole Thompson, Special Court Judge who was the guest speaker at the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture's (SLCCIA) business luncheon yesterday said, "where there is poverty, [and] where state institutions are weak it is meaningless to say that the rule of law [and] democratic governance would make a difference."

He explained that, "there are several issues

that are worth consideration when looking at the effectiveness of the rule of law", noting in particular that the attitude of people was premium among these issues.

The judge pointed out that Sierra Leone had the democratic structures, but however regretted that these structures were weak and law enforcement seemed nil.

He argued that, "though it is true to say that some of our laws are archaic; replacing it with modern laws is not a prerequisite for their enforcement".

He noted that, "there are serious problems somewhere along the line with the system",

- Justice Bankole Thompson

adding that, "at the end of the day enforcement is important."

"I further contend that democratic governance propels society forward towards economic development, and provides an attractive and conducive climate for investment, thereby helping society to identify and implement policies that promote equitable growth," he said

The judge however submitted that after examining the vision, mission statement and the list of services and functions that formed the core elements of SLCCIA activities, "it is refreshing to note that

[the] institutional vision is "to be the essential focus for the whole business community by promoting commercial, industrial and agricultural growth through the private sector." He maintained that, "it is also instructive to observe that, in response to the phenomenon of globalization; you are institutionally committed to providing a network of national and international business contacts and opportunities including international trade services".

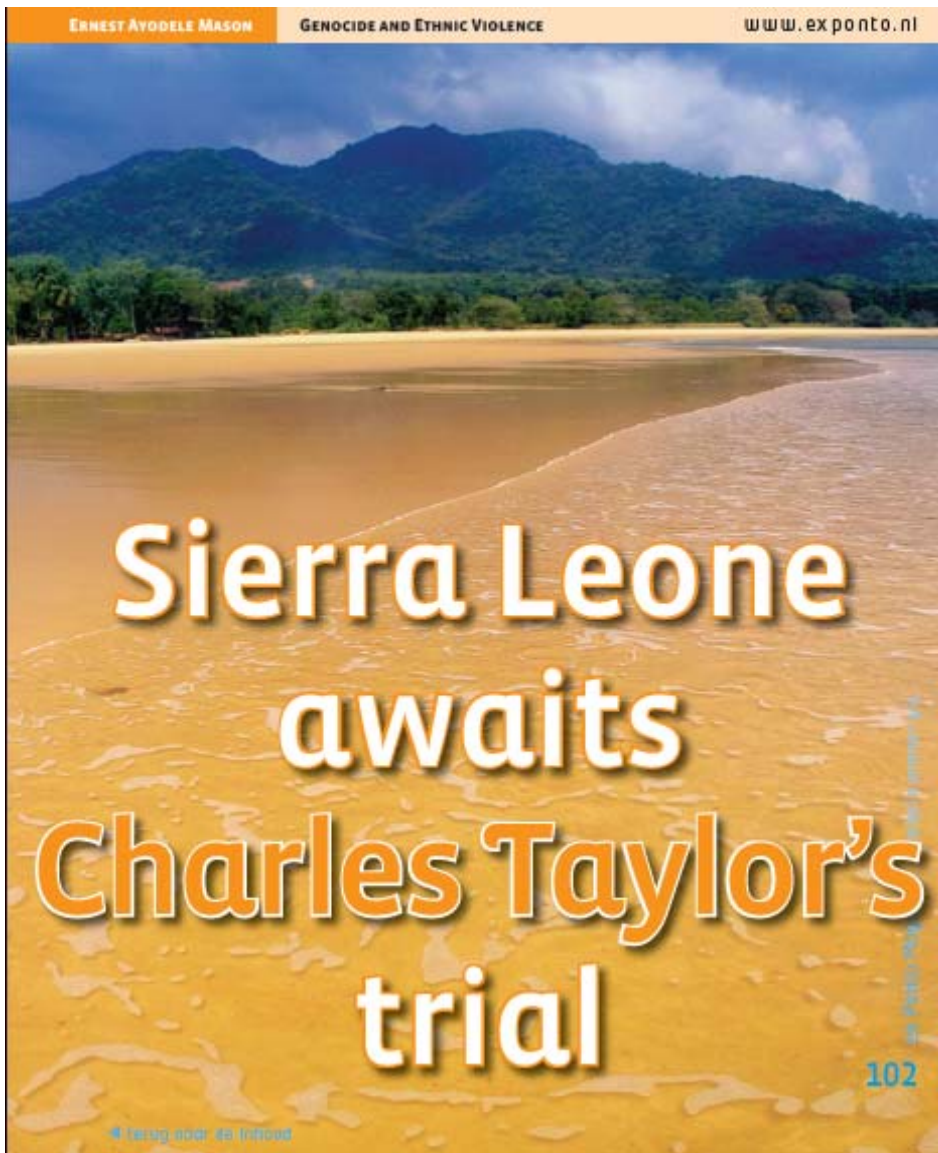
In his opening statement prior to the address SLCCIA's president, Henry Aki Macaulay, said, "over the years we have strove to be the advocacy body for the private sector which we all know is the key engine for growth in any economy."

He maintained that, "we have also strove to be relevant by engaging in constructive dialogue with all parties in the economy."

Mr Macaulay lamented: "regrettably our input has not always been taken onboard," adding that, "our chamber has a list of priority issues affecting the private sector and development in general."

This list, he said, was identical to that which government was addressing. "Top on that list is energy generation which is so vital to the private sector... Chamber has however decided to put rule of law in a democratic setting number one on it list," he said.

Exponto (Netherlands)
Winter 07/08



As Liberia's Charles Taylor awaits prosecution in The Hague, the people of Sierra Leone are trying to come to grips with the deep scars which the ten-year civil war has left behind. Taylor played an important role in the war.

The trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor in The Hague is a symbolic event for the people in West Africa, particularly Sierra Leoneans who are struggling to come to terms with the despicable acts that had engulfed their country. Sierra Leone fought a ten-year war that ended in 2002. The Chief Prosecutor at the start of Taylor's trial, Stephen Rapp, said that "the accused involvement in the crimes alleged in the indictment took a variety of forms – planning, instigating, ordering, committing, aiding and abetting in the commission of the alleged crimes, and thus he is responsible for the acts of those under his control".

Various warring factions, including the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), were

central in the campaign to hack civilian limbs, and the indiscriminate killings of innocent people. RUF's leader Foday Sankoh trained alongside Charles Taylor in the Cold War guerrilla camps of Libyan Muammar al-Ghaddafi in the 1980s. Sankoh, who died four years ago in the custody of the UN, teamed up with Taylor to start their war enterprise in the region.

Sankoh was known for acquiring weapons by exchanging diamonds with Taylor. Sierra Leonean civilians were not excluded from the violent acts perpetrated by the opposing fighters, and endured a brutal civil war ignored by most of the world. Thousands of innocents, especially children and babies, suffered horrific amputation, rape, mutilation and death. A whole generation of children have

been forced to live with emotional scars of the war.

Taylor's part in the war

Sierra Leone's civil war was a product not only of the political impotence of a corrupt system, but also of Charles Taylor's support to Foday Sankoh to capture diamond fields. Sierra Leone's civil war was fundamentally different from the war in Liberia: the latter had been a war to overthrow a regime, while the former was a war to amputate and liquidate innocent civilians and control the country's diamond mines. One of the reasons Taylor supported the war was the decision by the authorities in Sierra Leone to create a base to ward off his advancement to capture Monrovia. At one point, Taylor almost overthrew President Doe. Once Taylor realised in 1989 that the West African Peace Keeping force would make Sierra Leone its base, he told the BBC that Sierra Leone would taste the bitterness of war.

Brutal war

Within weeks of his threat, rebels advanced into Sierra Leone and captured the village of Bomaru in the eastern part of the country. The rebels were RUF fighters, and their pattern of violence was terrifying. They were aggressive against villagers, and attacked, ransacked and looted entire towns and villages in the countryside. Sierra Leone's war had grave consequences from the outset. A great number of the fighters were hostile to peace overtures. This meant that they flouted every attempt to secure peace, and continued to inflict terror in Sierra Leone and the surrounding region. Guided by an ideology which attributed violent behaviour to innate character-

A whole generation of children have been forced to live with emotional scars of the war.

istics, the Foday-Sankoh-inspired rebels formulated a terror exercise that created fear, and eliminated anyone who challenged them. The havoc of the combatants provoked widespread resentment. Faced with the collapse of their country, Sierra Leoneans looked to the international community to confront the hard truths about how their country could have gone so deep into such a violent war, and which parties were responsible for this.

UN Special Court

The UN took significant steps to approve the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which would try people accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity during the decade-long war. Taylor's trial in The Hague seemed to represent a shift in the world's mentality towards holding leaders accountable for crimes committed against ordinary people. He faces 11 charges which include terrorising the civilian population, enslavement, using child soldiers (under the age of 15), and sexual and physical violence. For many Sierra Leoneans, however, Charles Taylor's transfer to The Hague has taken away some of the value of the trial. The people would have loved to see him facing trial in Freetown, since the Special Court was set up in Sierra Leone

to try all those involved in the country's war. Since its creation, the Court has indicted 13 people, five of which were important actors in the conflict. So far, three have died, and a leader of the military junta, Johnny Paul Koroma, has not been found. There is apprehension among Sierra Leoneans about the Special Court's strategy to go for the top guns. Moreover, most of the foot soldiers who committed terrible acts are still roaming the streets today.

Dealing with the scars of war

The task of eliminating the mental scar of the war in Sierra Leone through justice is of utmost importance. Without it, victims of the civil war won't be able to bury the hatchet and will continue to be pre-occupied with their fate, which in turn prevents them from probing into their own responsibilities during the civil war. The war victims are desperate to latch on to anything that will expose the perpetrators who maimed and killed their loved ones. Sierra Leoneans welcomed the idea of prosecuting Taylor for war crimes. They view it as sending a strong signal to potential leaders in Africa: that they are not immune from prosecution whenever they use draconian measures to suppress dissent.

The reign of terror that clinched Sierra Leone was not merely a nation at war with itself, but rather a battle of indiscriminate killing and looting by unscrupulous individuals. The assets and wealth of many people were plundered. Sierra Leonean diamonds ended up in the clutches of foreign hands, and the enormous support given to the RUF exacerbated the crisis.

Many Sierra Leoneans still find it almost impossible to believe that their country

could have fought such a crude war and wondered why they had to witness such violence. Setting up a Special Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Committee are essential steps to erase the emotional scars of the people.

However, Sierra Leoneans are wary of the former SLPP government's attitude of not implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report. The report calls for the need to address the root causes of the civil war: corruption, an unfair justice system, the marginalisation of those vulnerable in society. It also urged compensation for the war's victims.

Sierra Leoneans are refusing to gloss over the trial of Charles Taylor. This implies that the world has changed its old face, and that the concept of justice will reach out to war mongers everywhere.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ERNEST MASON studied journalism in Sierra Leone. He worked as a radio producer by Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service. In the Netherlands he studied at the School of Journalism in Utrecht. He worked at the Dutch broadcasting Evangelische Omroep (EO) and Mira Media.



United Nations  Nations Unies
United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 28 November 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberian, Swedish leaders stress importance of EU-African Summit

STOCKHOLM, Nov 27, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Visiting Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt attached great importance to the summit meeting between the European Union and the African Union here on Tuesday. Both leaders agreed with each other that all the leaders of Africa should attend the summit next month in Lisbon, they said at a joint press conference after their talks. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf said that all African leaders should be invited to the meeting.

Vice President Fetes Visiting Swiss Defense Minister

Monrovia, Nov 27, 2007 (Liberia Government/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Liberia's Vice President Joseph N. Boakai has lauded the Swiss government for its assistance to Liberia over the years, especially in the priority areas of health and education. Vice President Boakai cited that Switzerland was a contributing member of the West African Rice Development Association which had its headquarters in Liberia.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast leaders meet Burkina president to revive peace deal

OUAGADOUGOU, Nov 27, 2007 (AFP) - Ivory Coast leaders met Tuesday with President Blaise Compaore of neighboring Burkina Faso to revive a peace deal brokered eight months ago but which has shown signs of stalling. Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo and his prime minister, former rebel leader Guillaume Soro, flew into the capital of Burkina Faso to discuss the sticking points and try to speed up the process.

Ivory Coast leaders pledge elections by mid-2008

By Mathieu Bonkougou

OUAGADOUGOU, Nov 27 (Reuters) - Divided Ivory Coast's leaders aim to hold long-delayed elections in the first half of 2008, mediators said on Tuesday, earlier than the electoral commission's estimate that they could take until October.

Local Media – Newspaper

Concerned institutions Intervene in Strike Action at NASSCORP

(The Parrot and The Inquirer)

- Correspondents said that the Ministries of Justice, Labor as well as the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission intervened in a strike action by workers of the National

Social Security and Welfare Corporation (NASSCORP) in order to end the feud. In a statement, the workers said that Labor Minister Kofi Woods stated that the Government was particularly concerned about the matter especially that it raises an issue of corruption at the NASSCORP.

Government and Partners Cautioned to Appreciate Role of the Media

(The Informer and Public Agenda)

- According to its recent report, an international organization, the Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa called on the Government and its international partners to demonstrate their appreciation of the role of the media in promoting democratic governance by seriously investing in the sector and specifically recommended the inclusion of the media in the Poverty Reduction Strategy document.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

Ministry of Justice and Others Intervene in NASSCORP Labor Unrest

(Also reported on Star Radio, SKY FM, Truth FM and ELBS)

Government and Partners Cautioned to Appreciate Role of the Media

(Also reported on Star Radio, SKY FM, Truth FM and ELBS)

UNIFEM and Partners Launch Liberian Women Caucus Secretariat

- UNIFEM-Liberia and other international partners have launched and turned over the Women Caucus Secretariat to be used by the women of Liberia to build peace. Cutting the ribbon to the office Tuesday, the Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy Brooks Robinson urged women to use the secretariat to build the Country.

(Also reported on Star Radio, SKY FM, Truth FM and ELBS)

Court Denies Bonds of Suspects of Economic Sabotage

- The Judge of Criminal Court-C has granted the State motion to set aside the criminal appearance bond filed by former Finance Minister Luseni Kamara and others in economic sabotage. According to the Judge the bond does not give any evidence of the asset of the surety and could be subjected of adjudication and enforcement in event of forfeited proceedings were the defendant bridged the bond.

(Also reported on Star Radio, SKY FM, Truth FM and ELBS)

Youth Group Debunks Opposition Politician's Claims

- The Acting Chairman of the Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) Steve Marvel said that the statement of Liberty Party Standard-bearer Charles Brumskine that the ruling Unity Party plans to arrest him is a "scared tactic" being employed to tarnish the Government's image abroad.

(Also reported on Star Radio, SKY FM, Truth FM and ELBS)

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

BBC Online

Wednesday, 28 November 2007

Rwanda 'hate media' terms slashed

Three Rwandan media executives have had their sentences reduced for inciting violence against ethnic Tutsis during the genocide when 800,000 people died.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda reduced the life sentences of Ferdinand Nahimana and Hassan Ngeze to 30 and 35 years respectively.



Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza's jail term was reduced from 35 to 32 years. **Their lawyers had said they were exercising free speech**

Nahimana and Barayagwiza set up a radio station which broadcast lists of people to be killed in 1994.

Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) urged Hutus to "exterminate the cockroaches" in the wake of the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana on 6 April 1994.

Barayagwiza was also a leading member of the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) - a Hutu extremist party.

Ngeze was the editor of an extremist Hutu magazine called Kangura.

He was convicted for the publication's incitement to hatred but also for his role in the killings of Tutsis in his home town of Gisenyi.

The Tanzanian-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) originally sentenced the men in 2003.

The presiding appeal judge, Fausto Pocar, said the appeal tribunal had overturned the conclusion of the initial trial judges that there had been "an understanding" between the accused - RTLM, the CDR and Kangura with a view to committing genocide.

Since 1997 ICTR has convicted 29 genocide ringleaders and acquitted five people.

About 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered in just 100 days in 1994.

Voice of America

Thursday, 29 November 2007

ECOWAS Court Adjourns With No Ruling in Case Against Gambia

By James Butty
Washington, D.C.

The Community Court of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which is hearing a case brought against The Gambian Government about the disappearance of Gambian journalist Chief Ebrima Manneh has adjourned until January 2008. Manneh, a reporter at the Banjul-based Daily Observer newspaper, was arrested at the paper's premises in July 2006 allegedly by agents of Gambia's notorious National Intelligence Agency.

The Media Foundation for West Africa asked the ECOWAS Court to compel the Gambian government to immediately release journalist Manneh. Before adjourning Wednesday, the court heard testimonies from two Gambian journalists.

Professor Kwame Karikari is executive director of the Media Foundation of West Africa. He told VOA the journalists risked their lives to testify.

"There were two witnesses from The Gambia, both of them Gambian journalists. One of them gave witness as somebody who was a witness to the arrest of Chief Manneh by some plain-clothes secret police agents. The second witness, also a journalist, had actually seen Chief Manneh in a police station last year December," he said.

Karikari, who described Gambia's President Yahya Jammeh as a rogue leader, said the Media Foundation was not sure if the journalists would be able to leave The Gambia.

"One of them lived in The Gambia until last Friday when he left Gambia to come to Abuja in Nigeria for this purpose. The other one had lived in The Gambia until just about six weeks ago, and he has had to flee for his life. Certainly we were not sure we would get people so easily because of the situation. But luckily it appears to us that so many people are actually disgusted with the government's rule and also its arrest of journalists," Karikari said.

He said the Media Foundation of West Africa will help resettle the journalists since they cannot go back to The Gambia for fear they could get arrested by the government.

"We do know that these two gentlemen cannot go back to The Gambia. It means that the Media Foundation is now responsible for these guys in terms of insuring that they are safe and also have somewhere to live. Since they've left their jobs and their country, they are jobless. They must survive; they have families, and all of this has become the responsibility of the Media Foundation," he said.

Karikari said the Media Foundation has a lot of interest in the case because it wants to insure the freedom of Gambian journalists and citizens.

He said Gambia cannot claim sovereignty because it is a signatory to the ECOWAS Community Court.

"The Gambian government is signatory to the convention that established the court. And in any case the Gambian government has appeared in this court before in a case, which was a commercial dispute between West African citizens and the Gambian government. They appeared in that court and got the court to allow the case to be settled out of court. So it is not something that the Gambian government can say does not apply to the Gambia. If it does appear it is because the Gambian government is guilty," Karikari said.

Special Court Supplement

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