

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



Boats loading at Kent, with Banana Island in the distance.

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:

Monday, 29 October 2007

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

Monday, 29 October 2007

Sierra Leone soon to become arms-free

The national chairman of the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP), Larry Bassie, announced Friday that strides were underway to make Sierra Leone an arms-free zone.

He made this statement when he announced that ECOSAP together with the UNDP would be holding a national consultative conference this Wednesday on the theme "Affirmative action for an arms-free Sierra Leone for

peace, good governance and sustainable development" at the Kimbima Hotel in Freetown.

The ECOSAP chair said the consultative conference was to raise public awareness on the

prevention of arms proliferation into Sierra Leone and offer an opportunity to chart out a way forward for the nation to deal with the scourge.

Mr Bassie stated that, "the conference is also to serve as a harbinger to a country survey which will be conducted by consultants hired by the UNDP with the scope to determine small arms numbers within the country and also discerning the challenges to national arms and ammunition stockpile administration and management processes".

The ECOSAP chair pointed out that great strides had been made towards sustainable post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea

Bissau but that however, while the overall security environment had improved, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons continued to be of great concern.

He noted that according to the United Nations Security Council report on West Africa (March 2007), "there is increasing extension of illegal manufacture of firearms, trafficking in firearms and armed robbery in the sub-region". As a result of this situation, Mr Bassie said member states had jointly adopted a Harmonized Regional Small Arms And Light Weapons (SALWs)

Control Implementation Action Plan in Bamako, Mali, last year to determine among others the extent of SALWs problems in member states and in the sub region at large, to identify the societal distribution in terms of supply and demand of small arms including stockpile management and administrative processes and to determine the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of citizens on small arms control.

He noted that these steps were fundamentally important to enhance future political and economic sustainability, averring that the conference and the survey were follow ups to ensuring an arms-free Sierra Leone.

The Exclusive

Monday, 29 October 2007

Salone To Be Arms-free

By David A. Jabati Jnr. Leone arms-free, the Control Programme
In a bid to make Sierra ECOWAS Small Arms Contd. page 2

Salone To Be Arms-free

From front page

(ECOSAP) has in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Action on Small Arms (SLANSA), and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) briefed the press on efforts made in that direction. Speaking to Journalists at a press conference last Friday, ECOSAP'S National Chairman, Lawrence Bassie briefed the press about the efforts made by ECOSAP in campaigning against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and ensuring that ECOWAS states become arms-free.

"...While the overall security environment has improved, the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) continues to be of great concern," The Chairman stated.

Mr. Bassie further informed the press about a workshop held by the African Centre for Strategic Studies in collaboration with the government of Burkina Faso

and ECOWAS in Ouagadougou, last year in which strategies for tackling SALW proliferation were mapped out.

The participants at the workshop, according to the Chairman agreed that urgent measures were needed to enhance the capacity of ECOWAS member states to: "establish and consolidate multi-sectoral National Commissions; ratify and implement Ecowas Convention; adopt a National Action Plan on SALW; raise public awareness on the ratification of the ECOWAS Convention and on SAWL proliferation."

"As first step of achieving these objectives, the National Focal Committee is organizing a National Consultative Conference on Wednesday 31st October on the theme, 'Affirmative action for an arms-free Sierra Leone for peace, good governance and sustainable development.' At the Kimbima Hotel in Freetown," Chairman Bassie informed.

According to the Chair-

man, the main objective of the workshop is to raise public awareness on the ECOWAS Convention and to bring together technocrats to map out a comprehensive strategy on SALW.

In his contribution, the Director of Firearms and Licenses Bureau, ASP. Andrew Gbani, informed the press that 50 Chiefdoms in Sierra Leone have been declared arms-free.

"Our aim is to make the entire country arms-free," he stated. It could be recalled that the Sierra Leone Action on Small Arms (SLANSA) which is a local advocacy group has gone a long way in implementing these strategies in Sierra Leone. Through the efforts of SLANSA, Parliament past June, ratified the ECOWAS Convention.

Speaking on that, the SLANSA Coordinator, Horella Hazely stated that the ratification document on the ECOWAS Convention should be sent to ECOWAS before it is fully implemented.

Standard Times
Monday, 29 October 2007

Plein Tok

The role of men and boys in gender equality

At the 48th session of the Commission for the Status of Women in New York, a key topic of discussion was indeed the role of men and boys in gender equality. Despite this, the tireless efforts of inter-governmental initiatives to adopt UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security as far back as October 2000 have only just begun to emerge in practice. So how effective can an initiative to bring men and boys aboard the gender agenda be at translating complex policy into practice?

And why is the role of men and boys in gender equality so crucial to peace and security? Writes Emmanuel Saffa Abdulai. A young Kenyan University friend of mine, who in response to my suggestion that he ought to be more gender sensitive, just boasted: "I was born and raised to be an African 'man' so I will remain as such, why change a cultural habit of a lifetime?" I was stunned. His response was a clear indication that a significant number of men, boys and even women of African descent still think gender is a female preserve that they have little to do with. This can be partly attributed to the forces of masculinity, a socially force-fed emotional and physical masquerade which often thrives due to 'cultural' and 'biological' influences that make it necessary for men to assume certain roles but not others. Even at the cusp of a new millennium it is mostly men who wield political power at the national, regional and international policy-making level. This is certainly the case within post-conflict nations such as, Sierra Leone and Eritrea. In the former a considerable female frontline combatant and civilian population is now disproportionately represented within government. This hinders women's ability to engage in situations of ensuing, fully fledged and easing conflict. In the Sierra Leone, even the much promised gender equality by the new president saw less than twelve percent of women in his cabinet.

The United Nations system itself epitomizes a male-dominated structure where men still occupy many

high-level posts. So it becomes imperative to train and to get gender-sensitize divisions such as in the Department for Peacekeeping Operations on issues relating to peace and security before they embark on field missions. There are still men and women within African civil society who remain oblivious to the existence of policies on gender, peace and security, which could change gender relations between and among men and women. Aside from this, putting early socialization and education at the grassroots level into practice could make a poignant impact, enabling men and boys to engender peace and

death in income, forced migration, community level trauma, mistrust and a collapse in rural and urban kinship structures. Although local NGO's have the capacity to identify and to overcome the impact of gender based violence on women, there doesn't appear to be a great deal done to sensitize male perpetrators, the military and judicial officials towards gender aware post-conflict reconstruction methods. So in both policy and practice the role of gender in peace and security matters within Africa becomes increasingly important. The extent to which it is understood and implemented at both

Gender equality without men and boys is in fact like a skeleton without a spine. Socializing and educating the very men and boys who pose as fathers, brothers, sons and friends could help demystify the cultural myths binding war and masculinity

security and not to threaten it. It is solely by doing this that African civil society can begin to deconstruct the flawed inter-cultural link between wars and masculinities. Some questions still remain. How much of an effect has and will such practices have at the grassroots level and is there a sufficient amount of advocacy, training and capacity -building available to facilitate the inclusion of men and boys in this process?

Nowhere is such a question more appropriate than in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where some of Africa's most horrific scenes of post-conflict gender based violence have occurred. People now refer to the persistence of such violence particularly in Bukavu and South Kivu, as the 'war within a war'. What is devastating is that that judicial, government and civilian attitudes within these areas are still locked in a belief that such grotesque acts of inhumanity form a part of traditional male practice. The ramifications are often detrimental to society and the economy causing a

levels remains fraught. It is inevitably only the joint desire of men and women to create a culture of peace and gender equality within their communities that could sensitize civil society and governments towards such a goal.

We must not and indeed, cannot speak of the importance of gender in peace and security without acknowledging that men and boys must be a part of its construction. Gender equality without men and boys is in fact like a skeleton without a spine. Socializing and educating the very men and boys who pose as fathers, brothers, sons and friends could help demystify the cultural myths binding war and masculinity. This would then reduce the threat of further violence during armed conflict immensely, enabling men and boys to play a pivotal role in fostering peace and security and disabling their desire to violate the human rights of women and children whose lives are made difficult by the uncertainty of ferocious armed conflicts.

The News

Monday, 29 October 2007

Amnesty Launches Reparation Report

By Mohamed Koroma

Amnesty International will on November 1st, 2007 launch its report on Reparation for survivors of conflict in the Northern Provincial city of Makeni.

The launching is part of Women's participation in the discussion on reparation after the publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report.

In an exclusive interview with the Acting Section Director Amnesty International Sierra Leone, Mr. Bockarie Lansana said one of the specific demands of the Truth and Reconciliation working groups is to urge government to immediately establish the special fund for war victims. Mr. Lansana said women's organizations have added their voices in support of the implementation of the reparations program.

He said, as required under the TRC statute and in the TRC's

recommendation, Civil Society organizations such as the from of conscience and the Truth and Reconciliation Working group, (a coalition of civil society groups) advocating for the implementation of the reparation program including the amputee association have called on government to implement the reparation program in the TRC's report. The Human Rights Activist maintained that there is a need for women both individually, and collectively to organize and mobilize effectively to put pressure on the government to ensure that the reparation measures are implemented.

Lansana said MARWOPNET, a regional organization of women has on its agenda for the current year a symposium to help facilitate an action plan for the implementation of the recommendation of the TRC, including reparation.

He said other women's organizations have made a number of suggestions regarding the provision of reparation to victims of the war, adding that the government should facilitate centers for women throughout the country to provide counseling, resource, rapes crisis

interventions and general information on employment for women.

The Acting Director stated that the TRC recommended that for persons to be eligible for reparations, the event or injury sustained must have occurred between 23rd March 1991 and 1st March 2002.

He concluded that members from the International Human Rights Organizations like Amnesty International Secretariat in London will take part in the reparation launching.

The campaigner calls on the women to take part in the process.

Voice of America

Saturday, 27 October 2007

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Re-Launches Investigations

By Kari Barber
Dakar

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission has again started gathering testimony about atrocities committed during the nation's civil wars ending in 2003 and the years leading up to the wars. The commission began its work in October 2006, but had to halt the probe in November because of a lack of funds. Kari Barber reports from Dakar that while some say they are happy the commission is back in operation, others say a reconciliation commission is not enough, they want a war crimes court. Journalist Prince Collins in Monrovia contributed to this report.

Dozens of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) investigators have dispersed across the countryside to collect testimonies about abuses, murders and rapes that happened during more than two decades of civil conflict.

A year after their initial launch, the TRC was able to begin work again after receiving funds from the United Nations Development Program and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

TRC Executive Director Nathaniel Kwabo says now he just hopes Liberians will come forward.

"Now with the TRC process, it has given us the opportunity to really look the bull in the eye and tell ourselves, 'This is what we did. This is where we were in the wrong. Can we exercise the ghosts of the past and move ahead?'" he said.

Kwabo says the purpose of the TRC is to establish the groundwork for reconciliation and to face problems that have plagued the war-battered nation.

"We have always swept our problems under the rug," he added. "This is evident by the fact that we had 14 or more peace agreements since the war started. That means we never grappled, we never confronted the conflict."

Paul Solomon of Monrovia, a victim of the violence, came to give his testimony to the commission.

"My wife was killed right in front of me by those rebels, criminals," he said.

Solomon says the men who killed his wife still walk the streets free.

"I feel so bad and hurt, it pains me a lot to see them passing around," he added.

He says although giving his testimony helps, he wants the men who killed his wife to be punished.

"I hope justice can take its course and I will be happy, satisfied that those criminals who killed my wife - my beloved wife - will be brought to justice," he said.

Chairman for the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crimes Tribunal Mulbah Morlue says a truth commission does not go far enough to bring justice to the victims. The commission is not a court and is not designed to judge those who have committed crimes.



President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf looks at the logo of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 22 June 2006

He says those guilty of war crimes and human rights abuses should face trial.

"The TRC cannot put in place a deterrence measure that will avert the occurrence of war," he explained. "We are not only talking about crimes that were committed in the last several years of decadence, but we are concerned about putting an end to the impunity so that we can live in perpetual peace and a stabilized democratic environment."

The TRC, styled after a similar commission in South Africa, was part of a 2003 peace agreement. After gathering testimonies, the next step for the commission will be to hold public hearings to allow people to talk about what they have done and what they have suffered.

Former Liberia President Charles Taylor is on trial for war crimes in The Hague. Taylor is accused of masterminding and funding Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone's intertwined civil wars through the use of conflict diamonds.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 26 October 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberian President Pushes for Multi-Lateral Debt Relief

PRESS RELEASE - Washington, D.C., October 25, 2007 - Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf told the Voice of America (VOA) yesterday that President Bush is committed to cancelling Liberia's debt. In an exclusive interview, the African leader said, "The debt we're really fighting with now is the multi-lateral debt, particularly the debt with the IMF." She continued, "Treasury Secretary (Henry) Paulson of the U.S. has been very firm in reiterating the fact that President Bush's commitment to resolve this debt problem is firm, it's unwavering, and that it may take a little bit longer than we anticipated, but it will get done." President Sirleaf recounted that President Bush told her in their meeting yesterday that he would like Liberia to qualify for the Millennium Challenge Account. She observed that Liberia has already met seven of the 19 threshold indicators, which include measures of ruling justly, investing in people, and encouraging economic freedom. In the interview broadcast on radio today, President Sirleaf reiterated her support for the U.S. military command known as AFRICOM, a position criticized by many other African leaders. "I think it has several advantages for the training of our troops to prepare us for interventions, since we must take primary responsibility for that," Sirleaf said.

International Clips on West Africa

Bangladesh police team to join peacekeeping mission in Cote d'Ivoire

DHAKA, Oct 26, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- A 90-member police team leaves here by a United Nations chartered flight late Friday night to join the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Cote d'Ivoire. The latest team is part of the 249-member contingent of Bangladesh Police, private news agency UNB reported Friday. Earlier, 159 members of Bangladesh Police have joined the Cote d'Ivoire mission.

Sierra Leone youths loot Lebanese stores over rape

FREETOWN, Oct 25 (Reuters) - Youths went on the rampage in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown on Thursday, attacking and looting Lebanese-owned shops after reports a Lebanese man had raped and killed a local woman. Police fired tear gas to disperse crowds of young men who broke into shops in the impoverished and densely populated east end of Freetown, walking out with mobile phones, generators, TVs and radios, a Reuters reporter said. The violence followed reports that a man of Lebanese origin in the diamond-trading town of Kenema raped a local woman who later died in hospital.

Local Media – Newspaper

Reporters Without Borders Unhappy with Chief Justice Lewis

(Daily Observer, Public Agenda and The Monitor)

- In a letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia, His Honor Johnnie N. Lewis, an international media group, Reporters Without Borders viewed as a threat and an abuse of authority the Chief Justice's warning that he would imprison for 30 days any journalist who misspells his name, gives him inappropriate titles and pastes his photos to stories that have nothing to do with him. He thought this last resort was necessary to end the continuous violations of the freedom of speech on the part of Liberian journalists. The group suggested the need for Justice Lewis to stop buying newspapers that bother him instead of threatening journalists in the Country.

Government Demolishes Makeshift Structures for Major Road Works

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

- Correspondents said that the Ministry of Public Works yesterday commenced the demolition of makeshift structures along the Somalia Drive beginning with the Freeport of Monrovia area, for a major road reconstruction including the building of side walks and drainage channels.
- Also, according to *The Analyst* newspaper, the Liberia National Police has issued its final warning to residents along the Roberts International Airport highway to voluntarily demolish their structures as of tomorrow, Saturday for a similar major road reconstruction which is expected to commence on the highway soon.

Liberia and France Sign Agreements for Budgetary Support

(The Informer and The News)

- A release issued in Monrovia yesterday said that Deputy Finance Minister Tarnue Marwolo and French Ambassador Jacques Gerard have signed two conventions under which France will grant Liberia 1.2 million Euros amounting to US\$1.7 million, to support the fiscal budget of Liberia.

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

International Media Group Differs with Chief Justice Lewis

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

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.

United Nations

Thursday, 25 October 2007

Promoting the rule of law central to UN's mission, says Migiro

25 October 2007 – Advancing the rule of law at both the national and international levels is at the very heart of the United Nations' mission, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro said today, appealing to Member States to support the world body's efforts in that regard.

“The principle that everyone – from the individual right up to the State itself – is accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, is a driving force behind much of the UN's work,” Ms. Migiro told delegates in the General Assembly's legal group, also known as the Sixth Committee.

Respect by States for the rule of international law is crucial to the maintenance of international peace and security, to the peaceful settlement of disputes, to the promotion and protection of human rights, and to sustainable development and prosperity, she said.

This is equally true at the national level, she added, noting that respect for the rule of law is fundamental to achieving a durable peace in the aftermath of conflict, to the effective protection of human rights, and to sustained economic progress and development.

She pointed to the large number of rule of law activities carried out by the UN system, as well as by non-UN actors, both governmental and non-governmental.

“This is a crowded field where a lack of strategic planning and coordination has to date produced duplication and a less than optimal use of scarce financial resources,” she said, stressing the need to strategically plan rule of law activities in partnership with recipient States and coordinate their execution among all actors.

It was to achieve coordination, and in response to calls made at the 2005 World Summit, that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon established a Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, which Ms. Migiro chairs and is supported by a small substantive Rule of Law Assistance Unit.

Since the full range of rule of law issues can only be addressed collectively by the UN system, and not by any individual department or agency, the role of a central unit is essential to ensure that the UN assists Member States in the most coordinated and efficient manner possible, she said.

The Unit, which is functioning on an interim basis, has started working with the various departments and agencies to develop a joint UN system work plan to reduce overlap and duplication, and is also working on developing UN system-wide guidance and best practices. It has also begun to develop partnerships with non-UN rule of law actors, both governmental and non-governmental, to maximize resources.

United Nations

Friday, 19 October 2007

International Criminal Court signs protocol deal with Central African Republic

19 October 2007 – The International Criminal Court (ICC) has entered a protocol agreement with the Central African Republic (CAR) setting out the cooperation and protection that the Government will provide to court officials investigating whether war crimes have taken place in the impoverished country since 2002.

Bruno Cathala, the ICC registrar, signed the agreement with the CAR Justice Minister Thierry Maleyombo during a meeting yesterday in the capital, Bangui, according to a press statement released by the Court. Prime Minister Elie Doté was also present.

The agreement covers the conditions of operations for ICC teams – including investigators, security officials and witness protection officials – while they are working in the CAR and coincides with the opening of an ICC field office in Bangui.

Earlier this year the Government referred the issue of possible war crimes to the ICC, saying the national justice system was not capable of carrying out the complex investigations and proceedings necessary to launch prosecutions.

In May ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo announced his office would investigate, as it believed that “grave crimes falling within the jurisdiction of the Court were committed,” particularly rape, during 2002 and 2003.

When the violence peaked in those two years during an armed conflict between the Government and rebel forces, civilians were killed and raped and homes and stores were looted, the ICC said, citing a preliminary analysis. The conflict was characterized by widespread use of rape, and the investigation marks the first time the Prosecutor is examining a situation where allegations of sexual crimes far outnumber alleged killings. Mr. Moreno-Ocampo said he would also monitor the current situation in the CAR to determine whether more recent events warrant further investigation.