

**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, 3 July 2009

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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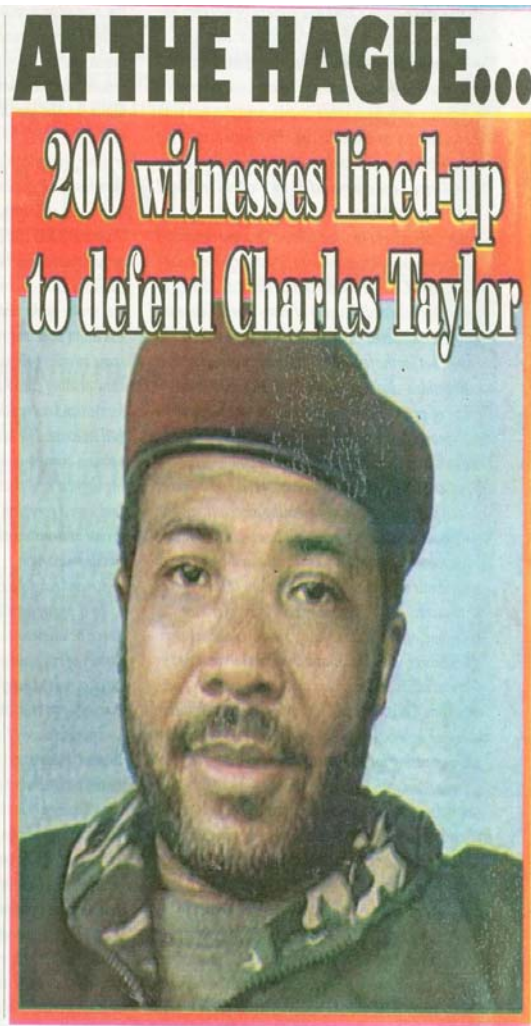
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Standard Times
Friday, 3 July 2009



200 witnesses lined-up to defend Charles Taylor

BY MOHAMED KONNEH

A total of two hundred and forty seven witnesses have been lined up by the Taylor Defence team to testify when the trial resumes on 13th July this year. This was disclosed by Clairia Hanciles head of principle Defender Special for Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor will take the witness box on 13th July this year marking the resumption of his case. The case is expected to last for about twelve months, by which time the defence team would have presented their argument before the court. Mr. Taylor is charged with eleven count charges, charges he has repeatedly denied. He has pleaded not guilty to all eleven charges.

In an interview with Clairia Carlton Hanciles she noted that her office is responsible for the hiring and payment of Lawyers, administer the court legal Aide scheme and act as duty council. The office she said is in close proximity with the accused persons in making sure the right under the international criminal law is respected and that they have access to all the facilities. The office also ensures that rules of detention are also in operation and that the office works in close collaboration with detention authorities. The Charles Taylor team headed by Curtney Griffiths will present two hundred and forty seven witnesses but that it is likely that they may not use all these witnesses. As the case progresses the Court she said will be able to know how many witnesses they will be presenting. The prosecution she maintained presented ninety one witnesses and that they concluded their case with fourteen witnesses testifying, noting that the defence is asking for only twelve months. This she said will not allow for the number of witnesses presented. Sierra Leonean witnesses are expected among this group noting that witnesses from

other sub regional countries are also included.

Highlighting on the credibility of the witnesses madam Hanciles noted that the issue of credibility is not for them as registrars of the Court but an issue for the Court and the Judges. The Special Court she said is divided into three organs namely, the prosecution, the registry and the Chambers. The chamber she noted is an independent and Autonomous organ comprising of Judges who normally sit on cases. The registry is to ensure that the trial goes on without hiccups.

In another related development, the Acting Registrar of the special court for Sierra Leone Binta Mansaray on behalf of the Special Court has signed an enforcement agreement with Finland that would allow the Special Court to send a convict to serve the remainder of his sentence in that Country. The agreement was signed on Monday by the Acting Special Court Registrar Binta Mansaray and the Ambassador to the Netherlands, Mikko Jokela.

With the signing of this agreement, the Special Court has entered into enforcement agreements with five Countries in Africa and Europe. The Court continues to seek additional enforcement agreements with the signing of these agreements.

All of these are coming when the Special Court for Sierra Leone has already convicted three members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and three members of the Civil Militias commonly known as the Kamanjors. All convicted war criminals will have to serve their sentences outside Sierra Leone.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30th November 1996.

The Torchlight

Friday, 3 July 2009

Rwandan Cabinet Approves Transfer Of Special Court Convicts

The Rwandan Cabinet has approved a draft law that will see convicts from the UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) serve their prison sentences in Rwanda, Tharcise Karugarama, Justice Minister has told the Sunday Times.

The move follows an earlier agreement signed in March between Rwanda and the United Nations backed SCSL. Karugarama told the Sunday Times that the process 'will be done soon and by July [this month], we should be through with it'.

He said that following the signing of the agreement, there was need for a law justifying it, adding that the draft law has already been put to cabinet. The proposed law was discussed and approved at cabinet level on Friday, and will be taken to parliament for debate as the next stage.

Karugarama also said that 'once everything is in place; the transfers will be possible', adding that the prison is ready. The convicts once transferred, will be held at Mpanga prison where a new state of the art detention facility has been constructed by the government. He said the SCSL was satisfied with the standards of the prison.

Meanwhile, former Liberian President Charles Taylor is one of the several people being tried by the court. His trial is currently taking place in The Hague, Netherlands unlike other cases which have been held in Sierra Leone where the crimes were committed.

If convicted, Charles Taylor will serve his sentence in the United Kingdom. His trial is being held in The Hague for security purposes.

Asked what impact the transfers will have on possible transfer of those convicted by the Arusha based International War Crimes Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Karugarama said that it was better to wait for that impact once the transfers had been done, saying that these were two different cases

The Torchlight
Friday, 3 July 2009

Finland Agrees To Execute Special Court Sentences

On 29 June, Finland and the Special Court for Sierra Leone signed an agreement between them concerning the execution of sentences pronounced by the Special Court. The agreement was signed in The Hague by Finnish Ambassador to the Netherlands Mikko Jokela and Deputy Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone Binta Mansaray.

In accordance with the agreement signed on Monday, prison sentences pronounced by the court can be executed also in Finland, in case Finland agrees with the request for execution of sentence on the basis of a case-by-case deliberation. The Special Court is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. In all, thirteen indictments were issued by the Special Court, but three of the indicted persons have died and one has not been caught. It is estimated that the trials at the Special Court will be completed in 2010.

Finland has made a similar agreement also with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), trying crimes committed in the territory of the Former Yugoslavia. In connection with the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Finland also made a decision about its readiness to receive persons sentenced to imprisonment by the ICC. The agreement concerning the issue is currently being finalised with the ICC.

The Special Court for Sierra was set up by a joint agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations in 2002. The Special Court has also made agreements about execution of sentences with Sweden, Austria, Great Britain and Rwanda. The entry into force of the agreement signed with Finland requires an approval by the Finnish Parliament and the President of the Republic.

(Source - Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

BBC World Service Trust

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Report From The Hague

Early this year the Defence Team of Charles Taylor requested the government of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to televise the testimonies of the Former Liberian President from The Hague for the benefits of the Liberian People. But Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's government turned down the request and said it had different priorities. Taylor's Lead Lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths said the Liberian Government ought to have prioritized televising Mr. Taylor's testimonies. Joseph Cheeseman reports from The Hague.

CHEESEMAN: Mr. Courtenay Griffiths says Charles Taylor's testimonies in The Hague would be an integral part of the reconciliation process in Liberia.

Mr. Griffiths said if the Liberian government is committed to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission then it must pay attention to what Mr. Taylor says in The Hague.

GRIFFITHS: Well, one can understand why in a poverty-stricken country the government might balk at the idea of spending that kind of money on following the trial of Mr. Taylor. But nonetheless, it depends on what your priorities are. And if your priority, as is suggested by your setting up of the Truth and Reconciliation Council (sic.) is to try and bring closure to this period in the history of West Africa, and given that you also handed over your former president to be put on trial, it seems to me that this is a matter which ought to have been given priority. And indeed the Liberian government ought to have funded their own journalists to be in The Hague here, following the trial of one of the leading and most important figures in Liberian history.

CHEESEMAN: Taylor's lead lawyer also called on Liberians to prioritize the testimonies of their former President.

Mr. Griffiths said July 13 would be Mr. Taylor's first opportunity to tell the world what transpired in Sierra Leone from 1996 to 2002.

GRIFFITHS: Now, more than at any other stage of the trial, it's imperative that every Liberian follows what's going on. We don't believe in doing justice in the dark. In order for everyone to see that justice is truly being done, it has to be done in the open where everyone can see and make up their own minds, and it's incumbent on every Liberian to show that they follow the progress of the case against their former president and hear what he has to say for himself in his defence.

CHEESEMAN: Mr. Taylor is not on trial for what happened in Liberia during his days as rebel leader and as President.

The former Liberian president is being tried on eleven count criminal charges for allegedly supporting rebel forces in Sierra Leone from 1996 to 2002.

Meanwhile a status conference between the parties is scheduled to take place here in The Hague on July 6. According to a court official, the July 6 status conference would set the stage for the commencement of the Defence case on July 13.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 02 July 2009

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

International Clips on Liberia

Immigrants sworn in as citizens in Philadelphia.

Source: McClatchy-Tribune Information Services Date: July 02, 2009

Jul. 2--As Moinma Kromah sat in the lobby of the Convention Center completing a voter-registration form -- one of her first acts as a new U.S. citizen -- she reflected on her decades-long journey from war-torn Liberia to Philadelphia. Kromah, 36, was one of more than 500 men, women, and children sworn in as citizens yesterday. The Chester resident lost about 20 relatives -- uncles, aunts, and cousins, she said -- to Liberia's civil war in the late 1980s and 1990s. She was sent by family to Sierra Leone to escape the war in 1990, only to face violent interrogation at school when another Liberian came in with a gun, she said. "It was very difficult for young people," she said. The United States offered "a better quality of life." She arrived in the United States in 2001. She works for a care-giving agency. After eight years of giving fingerprints, completing forms, being interviewed, and studying for a civics exam, she was granted citizenship. Liberia was one of more than 60 countries represented at the ballroom ceremony. Mayor Nutter and keynote speaker Jane Golden, executive director of the Mural Arts Program, joined immigration officials to welcome the new citizens.

International Clips on West Africa

Kandeh Yumkella for Second Term As DG, Unido

Jul 01, 2009 (Vanguard/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- UNIDO's Industrial Development Board has approved Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella of Sierra Leone to serve a second term in office as the Director-General of the Organization (UNIDO). The Board comprises 53 countries out of the 173 Member States. The approval was made during the thirty-sixth session of the Board which reviews the implementation of the Organization's work programme and the budget and makes recommendations to the General Conference on policy matters, including the appointment of the Director-General. Yumkella, who was appointed in June 2005 as the first Director-General from Sub-Saharan Africa, will be nominated for confirmation by the Organization's General Conference at its thirteenth session scheduled to take place in Vienna in December.

Local Media – Newspaper

Senate Strangled Passage of Threshold Again

(Daily Observer, Heritage, The News, The Inquirer, The Informer, New Vision, New Democrat)

- The "controversial" population threshold bill has suffered its fifth setback in the Senate with a defeat of a motion to pass the bill into law.
- In its Special Session Wednesday the Senate voted eleven for and fourteen against with one abstention preventing the passage of the bill.
- The votes followed a motion for the threshold to be set at 40,000 provided no County has less than two seats.
- Meanwhile, the President of the Senate Joseph Boakai says the Upper House is now holding the Country hostage with its failure to pass the threshold bill.

- The National Human Rights Centre of Liberia has also described as frustrating the continued delay in the passage of the population threshold bill saying it could interfere with the 2011 democratic transition.

World Bank Approves US\$24.2M for Liberia

(Daily Observer)

- The Board of Directors of the World Bank Tuesday, June 30 approved a total of US\$24.2 million to provide additional grants to Liberia for the Emergency Infrastructure Project (EIP), and Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Project.
- A World Bank press release said the additional grants will help finance the costs associated with over-runs and the scaling up of activities to enhance development impact.

Police Inspector General Designate Rubbishes Claims of No Security Training

(Daily Observer, National Chronicle, The Analyst, The Inquirer)

- Police Inspector General Designate, Marc A. Amblard, has for the first time spoken publicly about his eligibility for the post.
- Mr. Amblard said contrary to media reports he was not a novice in the national security terrain citing his wealth of overseas training.
- He said in May this year he underwent Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) training and before that did courses on national security policy among others.
- According to the media, the Inspector General Designate of the LNP told lawmakers during confirmation hearings that he had no security knowledge apart from a stint at the National Security Agency.
- Prior to his appointment as Police Inspector General, he served as Deputy Director of the NSA.

President Sirleaf Makes New Appointments In Government

(Heritage, The News, New Democrat, The Inquirer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has made additional nominations in government pending confirmation by the Liberian Senate.
- Mr. Samuel Dakana was named Deputy Director /Deputy Inspector General Administration at the Liberian National Police replacing Colonel Asatu Bah-Kenneth.
- Other nominees include, Counselor George Wiles Jr., Resident Circuit Judge, 7th Judicial Court in Grand Gedeh County and Mr. Koryour Zulu, District Commissioner, Konobo District, Grand Gedeh County.
- Others are Mr. Arthur Z. Kahn, District Commissioner, Gboa Administrative District, Grand Gedeh County; Mr. J. Cheyee Banto, District Commissioner, Gbo/Plo District, Grand Gedeh County and Mr. Alfred M. Tarlue, City Mayor, Zleh City, Grand Gedeh County.

Representative Gbollie Condemns TRC report

(Heritage, The Monitor, The Inquirer)

- The House Committee Chairman on National Security, Representative Saah Gbollie has condemned the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) saying it was marred by flaws, impartiality and discrimination.
- Representative Saah Gbollie said the TRC process was marred by flaws, impartiality and discrimination.
- The Margibi lawmaker said he would not also appear before any criminal court based on the recommendation of the TRC.
- The condemnation by Representative Gbollie followed the release of the final report of the TRC which recommends criminal prosecution for serious violators, and a Palava Hut forum to address issues of impunity, peace and reconciliation.

Defense Ministry React to Media Reports of Defection in The Army

(Heritage)

- The Ministry of National Defense has denied media reports that there was mass defection within the Armed Forces of Liberia.
- In a press statement, the Ministry said there has been neither defection nor desertion saying the strength of the army remains at the official 2000 mark.
- A local daily reported defection within the new Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) saying unconfirmed figures put the strength of the army down to 1,930.
- The report said the new AFL had sometime ago reportedly passed its initial estimated strength of 2000 by a 100 men.

U.N Showcases Women Peacekeepers

(New Democrat)

- The U.N. is putting on a display the role of peacekeepers particularly those serving in Liberia.
- The U.N. visitors lobby is showcasing some of the female peacekeepers through August 4.
- Though India has deployed a 125-member female police contingent to Liberia but women are otherwise scarce in peacekeeping operations.
- The exhibit photos depicts women peacekeepers in action disseminating information to the public through the media or publicly speaking.

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

Passage of Threshold Bill Gets Fifth Defeat at Senate

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

TRC Releases Final Report, Recommends Prosecution for Violators

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has released its final report following three years of investigation into the root causes of the Liberian conflict.
- The TRC discovered that the conflict has its origin in the history and founding of the modern Liberian State.
- The Commission also identified poverty, greed, corruption, limited access to education and political inequalities as major root causes of the conflict.
- The report resolved that all warring factions are responsible for gross human rights violations in Liberia, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. It however placed the factions into categories of significant violators, and less significant violators among others.
- Significant violators include the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, Liberian Peace Council, and the Armed Forces of Liberia.
- The TRC recommends criminal prosecution for serious violators, and a Palava Hut forum to address issues of impunity, peace and reconciliation.
- Meanwhile, The House Committee Chairman on National Security, Representative Saah Gbollie has condemned the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC) saying it was marred by flaws, impartiality and discrimination.

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

Syndicate Uncovered at National Archives Centre

- The Centre for National Documents and Archives says it has uncovered a syndicate that is robbing the entity of thousands of dollars.
- The syndicate involves the forging of marriage certificates and land deeds.
- In an interview, The Director General of the Centre, Bloh Sayeh said nearly ten persons allegedly linked to the scam have been traced.
- She said the suspects have been turned over to the Justice Ministry for investigation and subsequent prosecution.

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

Over LD\$3M Marijuana Turned Over to DEA

- Two security officers have turned over one thousand fifty kilograms of processed Marijuana to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

- The officers from the Liberia National Police (LNP) and the National Security Agency (NSA) turned over the drugs worth over LD\$3 million.
- Though it is not yet clear when the drugs were arrested and from whom, DEA Director James Jaddah commended the officers for turning it over.

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

PPCC Plans Audit of Government Ministries and Agencies

- The Public Procurement and Concession Commission says there are plans to carry out procurement audits of government ministries and agencies.
- The Chairman of the PPCC, Mr. Kieth Jubah says the audit will establish how government ministries and agencies are expending money in their budgets for procurement.
- The PPCC chairman spoke Tuesday during the induction into office of the commission's new Executive Director.

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Defense Ministry React to Media Reports of Defection in The Army

(Heritage)

Star Radio

Friday, 3 July 2009

TRC releases list...President Sirleaf, others, barred from public office for thirty years

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has finally released the listing of people recommended for prosecution and public sanction.

Those recommended for prosecution include Charles Taylor of the defunct NPFL, Prince Johnson of the INPFL and Alhaji Kromah of ULIMO K.

Others are George Boley of LPC, Thomas Yaya Nimely of MODEL, and Sekou Damante Konneh of LURD.

The TRC also recommended Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Isaac Nyenabo, Kabineh Ja'neh, Toga McIntosh Gayewea and Joe Gbala to be barred from holding public office for 30 years.

Cllr. Lavala Supuwood, Weade Kobbah Wureh, Grace Minor, Vamba Kanneh, Tarnue Marwolo, Byron Tarr, and Archie Williams are also barred from holding public office.

The Truth Commission named Lewis Brown, Oscar Cooper, Coocoo Dennis, Cora Peabody, Emmanuel Shaw and Edwin Snowe as those who committed economic crimes.

Mr. Benoni Urey, Charles Taylor, Lonestar Communications, Firestone Corporation are also among people and institutions accused of committing economic crimes.

Under its further investigation column, the TRC wants Daniel Chea, Peter Coleman, Cyril Allen, Siaka Sherif and others to be further investigated.

Voice of America

Friday, 3 July 2009

Liberia's TRC Recommends Blocking President Sirleaf and Others from Holding Future Offices

By James Butty

Liberians and perhaps the rest of the world are still trying to come to grip with the political impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) final report recommendations.

The Commission was established in 2003 to identify the root causes of the Liberian civil war and determine those who were responsible in committing domestic and international crimes against the Liberian people.

Among its recommendations, the TRC suggested that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and 51 others be blocked from holding public offices in Liberia for 30 years for helping to form and finance warring factions.

President Sirleaf is out of the country attending the African Union summit in Libya. But Information Minister Lawrence Bropleh says the government has no comment on the Commission's recommendations because President Sirleaf has yet to officially review the report.

TRC Information Officer James Kpargoi told VOA Liberia is a signatory to United Nations protocols on war crimes and warring factions.

"In the minds of the Truth Commission this time around we thought that those who financed the conflict, although they did not participate in the command and control of the factions, also bear the responsibility for the atrocities that were committed," he said.

In February this year, President Sirleaf testified before the commission. She said she had endorsed former president Charles Taylor's rebellion against President Samuel Doe but had never been part of the rebel group

The president admitted, however, to being a part of a group of exiled Liberians who lent their support to Mr. Taylor without being aware of his true intentions.

Kpargoi said it would be up to civil society groupings, political parties and ordinary Liberians to make sure that the commission's recommendations are adhered to.

"It think it's all incumbent upon all Liberians to ensure that this TRC process, which was to be the road map to restore to the country to peace, justice, and reconciliation to ensure that those recommendations are fully implemented," Kpargoi said.

He confirmed that some members of the TRC have been receiving threats.

"That has been made public for some time now. As you know the leader of the erstwhile Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (Prince Y. Johnson) made some threats during the course of the commission's final determinations," he said.

Kpargoi said a former member of Charles Taylor's former rebel movement Sahr Gbollie who is now a member of the national legislature of Liberia from Margibi County also made threats against members of the TRC.

The Truth Commission also recommended that about 98 individuals considered to be notorious perpetrators of gross human rights violations and war crimes be prosecuted in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Prince Y. Johnson, leader of the former Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia rebel movement was named in the TRC report as a 'notorious perpetrator'.

He has been recommended for prosecution for alleged killing, extortion, massacre, destruction of property, force recruitment, assault, abduction, torture and force labor and rape.

Johnson told VOA that he and others are exempt from prosecution by a law enacted by the Liberian legislature.

"In 2003, there was a law that was passed by the national legislature of the Republic of Liberia granting general amnesty to all persons within the jurisdiction of the Republic of Liberia. So I don't know why the TRC decided to make recommendations of persons to have them prosecuted," he said.

Johnson denied making any threats against members of the TRC. But he reiterated that the commission did not have the power to recommend for prosecution people who he said had been amnesty by act of the national legislature.

Radio Netherlands

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Bosnian Serb gets 14 years jail for wartime massacre



*The Hague,
Netherlands*

Bosnia's war crimes court sentences a former Serb policeman to 14 years in jail on Thursday. He was convicted for crimes against humanity in a massacre of more than 200 Muslims and Croats early in the country's 1992-1995

war.

The 39-years old Damir Ivankovic had struck a plea bargaining deal with the court confessing to participating in the killing in central Bosnia that occurred on Augustus 21 in 1992 and pledging to testify in future proceedings.

"Ivankovic was found guilty of taking part in the execution on Mount Vlasic of more than 200 civilians. They had been taken off the buses that transported them from a Prijedor area detention camp to the central town of Travnik," the court said.

The mass killing was part of the ethnic cleansing that occurred when rebel Bosnian Serb forces clashed with Croats and Muslims during the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.

The victims, all men, were told they were being released in a prisoner exchange and were driven from the Trnopolje detention camp to some woods in central Bosnia. There, the prisoners were forced to kneel by the edge of a ravine and shot. A dozen survived by tumbling or jumping down the cliff.

Former Bosnian Serb policeman Darko Mrdja, who confessed to taking part in the Mount Vlasic massacre, was jailed for 17 years in 2004 by the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Bosnia's war crimes court was set up in 2005 to allow the ICTY to focus on the most serious cases from the conflict in which around 100,000 people were killed. It is currently trying seven other Bosnian Serbs for the Mount Vlasic massacre.

Reuters

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Bosnian Serb policemen arrested on war crimes charges



Prijedo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnian police on Wednesday arrested a Serb policeman suspected of taking part in a massacre of more than 200 Muslims and Croats early in the 1992-1995 Bosnian war, the state prosecutor's

office said.

Sasa Zecevic, 39, was arrested in a police station in the northwestern town of Prijedor and will be handed over to the prosecutor's office, the office said in a statement.

The mass killing in central Bosnia occurred on August 21, 1992, as part of an early wave of ethnic cleansing as rebel Bosnian Serb forces clashed with Bosnian Croats and Muslims during the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.

"Zecevic is suspected of taking part in the execution on Mount Vlasic of more than 200 Muslim and Croat civilians who had been taken off the buses that transported them from a Prijedor area detention camp to the central town of Travnik," the statement said.

The victims of the massacre, most of them men, were told they were being released in a prisoner exchange and were driven from the Trnopolje detention camp to some woods.

Former Bosnian Serb policeman Darko Mrdja, who confessed to taking part in the massacre on Mount Vlasic, was jailed for 17 years in 2004 by the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Bosnia's war crimes court was set up in 2005 to allow the Hague-based tribunal to focus on the most serious cases from the conflict in which around 100,000 people were killed.

It is currently trying eight Bosnian Serbs for the massacre of Mount Vlasic, of whom two have confessed.

(Source: Reuters)

Soumen Kuvalehti

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Cambodia Genocide Tribunal



In this Thursday, July 2, 2009 image made from video released by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, Norng Chan Phal, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge's main prison, testifies at a U.N.-backed trial in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Norng Chan Phal, now a 39-year-old father of two, was eight when the Vietnamese stormed the capital, Phnom Penh.

He was held at the S-21 prison, where some 16,000 men, women and children

were brutally tortured before execution.

The New Times (Rwanda)

Wednesday, 1 July 2009

Rwanda: Nshogoza Judgment is Today

Gashegu Muramira

Arusha — The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) will today render a judgment in the case of embattled defence lawyer Léonidas Nshogoza.

Nshogoza who worked as an investigator for the Defence is accused of two counts of contempt of court.

The judgment to be broadcast live via the ICTR satellite will be rendered by the Trial Chamber III composed of Judges Khalida Rachid Khan, Presiding, Lee Gacuiga Muthoga and Aydin Sefa Akay.

During the course of the trial, prosecution requested court to render a serious and deserved sentence to Nshogoza arguing that this would deter others from committing similar offences.

A person convicted of contempt of court at the ICTR faces a maximum sentence of five years or a fine of US \$ 10,000 or both.

Nshogoza is accused of trying to bribe prosecution witnesses to give false testimony that would favour former minister of Education and Culture, Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda.

Kamuhanda has since been sentenced to life imprisonment and was late last year transferred to Mali from where he is serving his sentence.

Early this year, a witness revealed that Nshogoza promised to give him 'something' in return for giving the court false evidence that would mitigate Kamuhanda's Genocide case.

The prosecution concluded its case on February 18 after presenting five witnesses whereas the defence fielded 11 witnesses, including the accused.

Born in 1961 in Muhanga, Southern Province, Nshogoza surrendered to the Tanzania-based UN court in February 2008. He was immediately placed under ICTR custody.

Agence France Presse

Thursday, 2 July 2009

ICC Kenyan minister to discuss election violence: court

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Kenya's justice minister will discuss the 2007 post-election violence there with the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague on Friday, the court said.

"The Kenyan Minister of Justice, Mr Mutula Kilonzo, will pay an official visit to the ICC tomorrow, July 3, 2009," a court statement said Thursday.

"The prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo will hold private consultations with the Kenyan Minister of Justice on alleged crimes committed in the context of post-election violence."

The court did not provide any further details on the nature or content of the talks.

Kilonzo and a delegation would also be received by ICC president Sang-Hyun Song, said the statement.

"President Song will take the opportunity to show his appreciation of Kenya's sustained commitment and co-operation to the work of the Court since ratifying the Rome Statute."

Some 1,500 people were killed in a matter of weeks following presidential polls in December 2007 in which the then opposition chief Raila Odinga accused President Mwai Kibaki of having stolen the vote.

Odinga is now prime minister under a power-sharing deal.

The government has yet to act on the recommendations of its own inquiry last October that a special tribunal be set up to try those thought responsible.

In June, former UN chief Kofi Annan called for Kenya to set up a special court to try suspects, or have them face justice before the ICC.

The same month, Amnesty International accused the government of having done nothing to end the impunity enjoyed by police and security forces for abuses they carried out during the post-electoral violence.

The ICC is the world's only independent, permanent court with the jurisdiction to try genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The Standard (Kenya)

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Poll chaos: Team to meet ICC prosecutor

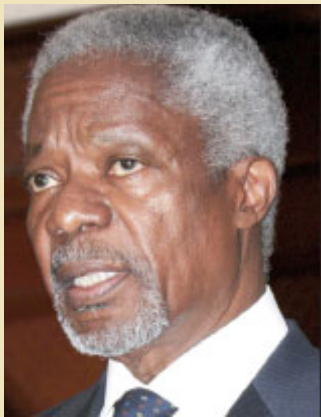
By Standard Team

Chief mediator Kofi Annan's meeting with Kenya's delegation on post-election violence in Geneva was inconclusive as he asked them to meet International Criminal Court Chief Prosecutor Louis Moreno Ocampo first.

The news filtered along with revelation the Cabinet already is toying with a 'Third Option', which sidesteps a hostile Parliament and could lead to creation of a special division of High Court to handle post-election violence cases.

Annan opened the door for the team as 30 African Heads of State meeting in Sirte, Libya, among them President Kibaki, said they "shall not co-operate" with the ICC "for the arrest and surrender of indicted personalities".

The position awaiting formal ratification by the African leaders could widen the split between Parliament and the Government on whether to go for The Hague or a local tribunal.



**Chief mediator
Kofi Annan**

Already, Parliament has once stopped a bid for a local tribunal by President and Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

Sources reveal the meeting with Annan took about four hours of highly guarded discussions on Kenya's request for extension of the August deadline. Annan ruled further talks would only take place after their familiarisation tour of The Hague court today.

In the Kenyan delegation out to buy more time to set up a local tribunal, or else Annan would pass the matter to ICC, were Land Minister James Orengo, Mutula Kilonzo (Justice), Attorney General Amos Wako, and Justice Assistant Minister William Cheptumo.

August deadline

The team meets Ocampo this morning even as Annan remained non-committal on whether he would extend the August deadline for handing over the 'envelope'.

Issues discussed with Annan included modalities for establishing a special tribunal, as recommended by the Justice Phillip Waki Commission on post-election violence.

A joint statement from African Union Panel of Eminent African Personalities said: " They agreed, in particular, to be in touch again after the Kenyan delegation has had an opportunity to meet with Ocampo."

In Sirte African leaders discussed a drastic new decision against ICC that would, in practice, give Sudan President Omar Bashir impunity from prosecution for war crimes at The Hague. African officials said the surprise new draft was circulated by Libya, which is hosting the 13th African Union summit.

The draft decision obtained by Associated Press provides that AU countries "shall not co-operate" with the ICC for the arrest and surrender of African indicted personalities".

Annan and the Kenyan team agreed to continue interacting on the establishment of a special tribunal in the coming days, with a view to reaching an understanding on the matter.

The Standard has learnt Mutula floated the 'Third Option' to the Cabinet. The option is borrowed from a similar arrangement in Uganda between the Government and Lord's Resistance Army.

special courts

If it takes off, the special courts are to be established by the Chief Justice who has powers to do so under the Constitution.

According to the new arrangement the special courts shall be established to try individuals who are alleged to have committed serious crimes during post-election violence. Some lawyers have argued it could be abused. They have also asked Annan not to tolerate impunity by conceding to demands of the Government, which they dismissed as time buying tactics.

Central Imenti MP Gitobu Imanyara warned MPs would block all attempts to create a local tribunal or a special division of the High Court. Imanyara argued the Government lacked political goodwill to implement it because its members were implicated.

"No amount of excuse would be allowed again. Let Annan hand over the envelope to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court at the Hague," Imanyara added.

Senior Counsel Paul Muite says attempts to create a special division could only be backed by amendments to the Constitution. "There is no short-cut and I doubt if Parliament is in the mood to pass the new law," Muite said.

If the special courts are to be established they shall have their own registry and as the case was in Uganda they shall facilitate protection and participation of witnesses, victims, women and children.

Sources said Mutula and Wako were preparing a Bill on the 'Third Option' to be tabled in Parliament when it reconvenes a week to August. It is expected that the special court will operate under the current laws, only that it would deal specifically with suspects of post-election violence.

Also to be established are a special appeals courts that would hear appeals for those who would be dissatisfied with the rulings by the special court.

Human rights lawyer Haroun Ndubi said the special division of the court would run into problems of prosecutorial powers, which are vested in the Attorney General, and only a change of Constitution can address it.

Sources at the Justice Ministry said prosecutions should focus on individuals alleged to have planned or carried out widespread, systematic or serious attacks directed against civilians or who are alleged to have committed grave breaches in accordance with the Rome Statute to which Kenya is a signatory.

The New Vision (Uganda)

Thursday, 2 July 2009

Kony could be tried in Uganda

By Josephine Maseruka and Isabel Pike

LRA Rebel leader Joseph Kony could be tried in Uganda by the International Criminal Court (ICC) if arrested.

Kony, together with his commanders, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen, could also be tried by Ugandan courts, if the ICC is convinced that the country has the capacity and will to conduct a fair trial, an executive member of the Parliamentarians for Global Action, said on Tuesday.

Dr. David Donat-Cattin, an expert in international law and human rights, was a facilitator in a two-day workshop for Ugandan MPs on the implementation of the Rome Statute and the ICC Bill.

“Uganda voluntarily referred Kony’s case to the ICC and it cannot withdraw the case. Instead, the ICC can come to Kampala or even Gulu and try him if he is captured here,” Cattin stated.

“Trying Kony in Uganda is cost-effective in terms of producing victims and access to necessary information.”

He advised Kony to hand over himself to the Hague, arguing that his rights would be more protected than in Uganda where some people may want to kill him.

If the ICC Bill is domesticated by September as planned, Ugandan courts will be able to try international crimes like genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and aggression, which are not provided for in the national laws.