SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

The Registrar briefs a group of eleven visiting Korean journalists
in the conference room on Tuesday 2 May 2006.

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

Wednesday, 3 May 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion please contact
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Concord Times
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

Because of limited facilities.

Taylor, Norman, others angry

Story: Tanu Jalloh

angry

Dr. Bubuake Jabbie, lead defen
counsel for the first accused, Sa
Hinga Norman in the Civil Defen
Forces (CDF) trail at the Speci
Court Tuesday, as a preliminar
notice to the court, complained
a Status Conference sayin
detainees, including Charles Tayl
and others are not happy wi
facilities.

"Detainees are complaining abo
their visitors, including relative
being harassed and embarrasse

Cont. page 3

Taylor, Norman, others angry

From page 1

whenever they pay a visit to the detention center. But whilst we intend to take the matter with the Chief Detention Officer and Registrar, we thought that such preliminary notification is important," he deduced.

Jabbie put it to the Presiding Judge, Pierre Boutet that telephone lines are no longer in their earlier better situation when one line was available to each set of indictees.

"Detainees are asking for an increase in the quantity of traditional diet (rice and potato or cassava leaves). They also need a clarification on the issue of compensation or labour fees as compared to international standard. They receive Le 3,000, which is far below a dollar, per day," Jabbie noted.

Also other concerns he raised with the Conference have to do with the general medical care, which needs to be improved upon.

"They are seeking more emergency care, particularly in the case of the first accused, Norman who sustained and still complains of pains to his hips. His doctor recommended his hospitalization with a view that it is now very necessary to take urgent actions with regards his situation," he pointed out adding that because of the inadequate availability of telephone lines Norman has to walk quite a long distance to receive a phone call which also worsens his pelvic pains.

He concluded saying counsels intend going into writing but because of the urgent nature of the situations they'd decided to use the opportunity accorded them by the Status Conference to make a preliminary notification.

UNPP wants Taylor tried in Salone

Story: Abdul Karim Koroma

United National Peoples Party (UNPP) Chairman United Kingdom/ Ireland Branch, Mohamed Ben Kamara in an email sent to this press says he wants former Liberian leader and indicted war criminal at the Special Court, Charles Taylor tried in Sierra leone.

"I will personally appeal to the international community to see justice been done and Charles

Cont. page 3

UNPP wants Taylor tried in Salone

From page 1

Taylor tried in Freetown and I am looking forward to the arrest and committal of others to come in the not too distant future," Kamara stated and added that the accused, Taylor should look at the faces of the survivors of his terror campaign and people will know if he has remorse for all what he has done.

He says Taylor's trail in Freetown would enable a lot of witnesses to expose his wicked agenda.

"I have been following the court case of Charles Taylor the man accused of committing or responsible for the atrocities in Sierra Leone during the ten-year war," he said and continued, "this shows that no man is above the law."

Local News

Prosecutor dismisses defense's comprehensive summary

Story: Tanu Jalloh

Chief prosecuting counsel in the Civil Defense Forces (CDF) trial at the Special Court, Desmond de Silver questions the relevance of certain portions of defense's summary.

At Tuesday's Status Conference, de Silver observed the comprehensive summary, ahead of the recommencement of tomorrow's trial, as submitted by the defense team is sixty to seventy percent either irrelevant, repetitive or unchanged.

"My Lord, portions in the defense's comprehensive summary, including Kamajors getting logistical support from outside sources; the command structure of the CDF that has already been explained by both the former Vice President, Joe Albert Dembi and Hinga Norman; and how Maxwell Khobe talked to the Kamajors are irrelevant," he submitted.

Interposed at this juncture was lead defense counsel for Norman, Dr. Bubuake Jabbie who suggested to the Conference that they did the summary with a view that it may not be necessary to do an illustrative summary. "Besides we do not want a situation where the prosecution can object saying the summary is scanty in which case the whole document would have to be tendered."

The prosecutor also catalogued as irrelevant issues such as a witness testifying and claiming he walked on foot from Kenema, Bo waterside to Liberia; also how a witness was appointed by Maxwell Khobe to attend a meeting with the war council in Lungi.

"It is painful to go through the summary because most of the matters I have pointed out as being irrelevant have been discussed already."

Presiding Judge, Pierre Boutet intervened at this stage saying the defense should not be deprived of the right of the manner in which the summary was done citing the issue of Khobe's visit and talk with the Kamajors as could mean emphasizing the good relationship that existed between them.

Awoko
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

Norman, others commence trial today

By Betty Milton

The three Special Court indictees of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofanah and Alieu Kondewa will today commence their defence trial.

They are facing an eight-count indictment which include unlawful killing, physical violence and mental

Contd. Page 2

Norman, others commence trial today

From Front Page

suffering, looting and burning, terrorizing the civilian population and collective punishments and the use of child soldiers.

Paragraphs 4 through 11 of the Individual Criminal Responsibility states that

Chief Norman at the time of the indictment was the National Coordinator of the CDF and as such was the principal force establishing, organising, providing logistical support and promoting the CDF.

He was also the leader and Commander of the CDF and as such had the command and control over the activities and operations of the Kamajors.

Moinina Fofanah on the other hand was the National Director of War who also acted as leader of the CDF when Norman was absent.

As National Director of War, Fofanah allegedly had a direct responsibility for implementing policy and strategy for prosecuting the war, he also allegedly liased with Field Commanders, supervised and monitored their operations.

The third accused, Alieu Kondewa was also regarded as the High Priest and had supervision and control over all initiators within the CDF and was allegedly responsible for all initiations within the CDF.

The three indictees started their defence in January 2006 with Chief Norman being the first to testify in his own defence, followed by other prominent witnesses such as former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, former Vice President Dr. Albert Joe Demby and a British Commander Brigade Richards.

So far eight witnesses have testified out of a total of 100.

Spectator
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

Norman wants better detention facilities

By Joseph Kamanda

The Special Court indictees Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, Aliue Kondowa and Moininah Fofanah, who are currently facing trial for alleged war crimes, have Tuesday May 2nd through their legal defence team led by Dr. Bubuiakeh Jabbie, requested for what they described as better and improved detention facilities.

Making his submission during the Tuesday proceedings at the Court's Trial Chamber one Dr Jabbie underscored the fact that the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) detainees are "unhappy" about their detention condition and procedures that have been adopted.

"Their relatives and visitors are always being embarrassed whiles the telephone facilities which has been at their disposal has been aborted therefore urged the court to allocate a line to each of the accused detainees," Dr Jabbie said.

He told the Court to make

continued page 2

Norman wants better detention facilities

from front page

available a traditional diet which is rice especially for the first accused and added that there should also be additional labour fees.

Dr Jabbie further reiterated that the detainees are seeking medical care and requesting for computers as well.

"For Chief Norman in particular, his Doctor has recommended that he needs more hospitalisation," he said.

On relevant issues regarding what evidence the court has, Dr Jabbie said the prosecutor is concern about the exhibit and evidences that are presently with the court, whiles noting that the person who should give evidence should be proved since Chief Norman and former Vice President Dr. Albert Joe Demby were not active Kamajor combatants.

He said witness number four will however not testify in his crutail position in this court therefore; "we intend to communicate with him until we make available and we are still not yet in procession of the exhibit of witness number one who is President Kabbah."

The importance in witness number one Dr Jabbie said would make potential evidence as the matter now needs more witnesses.

New Vision
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

Charles Taylor Rejected

By Our Reporter

Denmark, one of the countries that have been rendering financial assistance to the UN backed Special Court has rejected a UN request to have Charles Taylor jailed in that country.

This brings to three, the number of countries to which the UN has advanced proposals for the incarceration of the ex-Liberia warlord Charles Dahkpannah Ghankay Taylor should he be found guilty of the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity levied against him by the Special Court.

Charles Taylor

Both Austria and Sweden have categorically refused without giving specific reasons to provide a jail for the former Liberian leader.. Taylor is expected to be put on trial in either Sierra Leone or at the Hague, Holland.

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Charles Taylor Rejected

Hopes were raised earlier last month, few days after the ex-Liberia chief executive made his first appearance at the special court during which the 11-count charges of war crimes were read out to him in Freetown.

Taylor however vehemently replied that he is not guilty of the charges, and also proposed the necessity to maintain his trial in Freetown other than in the Netherlands to avoid the difficulties in accessing his lawyers, family members, friends and witnesses during the course of the trial.

The Special Court had earlier indicated that Sweden was considering a request advanced by the court to accept the responsibility of providing jail facilities to Taylor should he be found guilty but Sweden later backed down. Speculations from the international media that Taylor has been transferred to Holland were later clarified by a source, which indicated that Taylor is still being held in special court cells while preparations for his trial are being finalized.

Meanwhile, in a related development the chief prosecutor at the special court Mr. De Silva has expressed his intention not to renew his contract with the court when it expires.

Standard Times
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

COMMENTARY

International justice must apply to all

BY A.Y. KALLAY

IN THE early hours of Wednesday, 29th March 2006 a Land Rover with Nigerian diplomatic number plates arrived at a border post connecting Nigeria with Cameroon. It passed through immigration and was on its way through customs when officials realized that among the passengers was one of the world's most-wanted war criminals, Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia.

FOR THOSE who care about justice, this was a remarkable moment, and one many believed could never come.

FOR ME, the news brought memories flooding back. I remembered May 1999 and a Sierra Leonean engineer called James Naujah, who described to me how, four months earlier, on the first day of a terrible offensive Taylor is alleged of backing, a rebel unit stopped the car in which he, his wife and their six children were fleeing.

AFTER SUSPECTING them of supporting the elected president, one of the rebels announced that he would "teach them a lesson," and went ahead to open fire on the people in the car with an AK-47 riffle, killing all six children and wounding both parents.

JAMES TOLD me how he begged his last child to stay alive, "David, promise me you will survive this thing," he said almost in tears. The boy replied, "Dad, I promise you," but he perished after a while.

I ALSO remembered when I was trying to know what had happened in a village called Nonkoba, and coming across a girl hobbling on grossly disfigured legs. She was seven and her name was Aminata. She told me how, months earlier, she had woken to the sound of gunfire but could not in the darkness, find her mother. She hid under the bed as men walked through her house, who later found her and bound her. They tied her to a stake, lit a fire under her feet and left.

I ALSO recalled, too, entering a windowless hospital in Freetown, Sierra Leonean's capital, searching for victims of a recent rebel attack. As my eyes adjusted to the dark I saw a patient in the corner, a girl of about 15. Her lower arms were gone, wrapped in white gauze. Then I saw another patch of white, this one a young man whose arms were similarly wrapped. There were seven of them, all from one village, all victims of double amputations.

I VISITED them three times to learn the litany of horrors their village had endured. The 15 year-old teenager gave birth to a child she could not embrace.

AS THE UN helicopter landed in Freetown carrying Taylor to trial and, we hope, justice, I felt an extraordinary sense of relief.

THEN ANOTHER memory came. I remembered a conversation with a young man named Brima, whose father had been murdered in front of him by the same rebels who then hacked off his left hand. I asked if he thought the perpetrators should be put on trial, and Brima shook his head.

"JUSTICE IS not meant for people like us. It just makes things worse. If we threaten the men in charge with trials, they might punish or even kill more of us".

TAYLOR, the quintessential "big man", has made his first appearance before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The Court is backed by the UN, and if it is to make a difference, it must do more than pass judgement on the 11 people it holds currently.

IT MUST convince people like Brima, James Naujah etc., that no one, no matter how big, is above the law.

THIS WILL discourage anyone who wants to rule by the barrel of the gun like Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh, Savimbi etc.

"Charles Taylor May Be Poisoned at the Special Court or in The Hague"
… Lawyer Hassan Kamara

Mr. Kamara is a Sierra Leonean international lawyer based in Washington D.C. Lawyer Kamara was former student union president at FBC for the period 1971-73, and hails from Tonkolili district.

He is currently a member of the Special Court list of qualified lawyers to be appointed to defend Charles Taylor.

Below are excerpts of an exclusive interview with Lawyer Kamara on his arrival in Freetown.

Standard Times: How to contact you in view of this provocative nature of this interview by any body who may want to contact you

Hassan Kamara: Presently I am residing at Cape Sierra Hotel or you can e-mail me on Saybana@yahoobn or 076-776-428.

ST: Charles Taylor said he feared for his life and the safety of his family; what is your take on the issue of the safety of Charles Taylor and his family?

HK: President Taylor's fear for his health and the health of his family is well founded; it is a fear that is literally deadly serious. As horrendous as it is, the poisoning of prisoners is a fact of life in prisons the world over and more so in the East and West where knowledge of drugs and their potencies is advanced. The President of Liberia, His Excellency Charles Taylor is most likely going to be poisoned while detained at the Special Court or The Hague. Whether he remains in detention here at the Special Court or he is transferred to the ICC in The Hague, President Taylor will continue to be exposed to attempts on his life, psychological destabilization and mental poisoning.

Lest we forget, very recently the specter of poisoning reared its satanic head when the President of the former Yugoslavia, the late Slobodan Milosovich head when the President of Palestine, Yassir Arafat died…In both Western and Eastern countries alike many prisoner suicides and deaths have been suspected as covered- up murders committed by a number of culprits including the deceased prisoner's inmates acting in cohoots with prison guards and other prison authorities. Many suspicious deaths of little-known prisoners go unnoticed and uninvestigated.

President Taylor's fear for his life has been proven to be well-founded.

Given the methods used by Continental European and North American police, fire marshals and other governmental security forces and methods used by foreign forces in Sierra Leone during the war period, one could infer to a substantial degree of certainty that the recent explosion at the Special Court close to President Taylor's cell was either an assassination attempt or a continuing assignation attempt. If the latter is the case, it was meant to "break him", a term frequently used by law enforcement personnel to refer to the psychological destabilization of a prisoner by instilling fear and shock in him.

The explosion was also meant to unhinge him psychological and render him mentally disoriented. The trauma of that suspect explosion will proximately cause President Taylor a feeling of hopelessness, extreme fear, confusion and suicidal ideation; President Taylor who prior to his illegal arrest will now beings to develop psychosomatic illness which more likely than not will develop into psychical illness an ultimately death. The security of President Taylor in the Special Court jail has been breached. Although President Taylor has demanded that he be transferred to another cell, transferring him to another cell at the SCSL will not improve his security, as it is the entire SCSL security system that has been compromised. The Special Court is under a legal and ethical obligation to investigate the explosion as an assassination attempt.

ST: How are prisoners poisoned?

HK: The poisoning of prisoners is perpetrated by the police, prison authorities, the military, fellow prisoners and private individuals. Poisoning is carried out in many uncanny ways difficult to detect or even suspect and because poisoning is usually carried out in a conspiracy involving governmental officers (police and prison authorities) it is even more difficult to investigate. Unsuspecting and non-consenting prisoners are surreptitiously drugged with harmful drugs and medication. In some cases poisoning is in the

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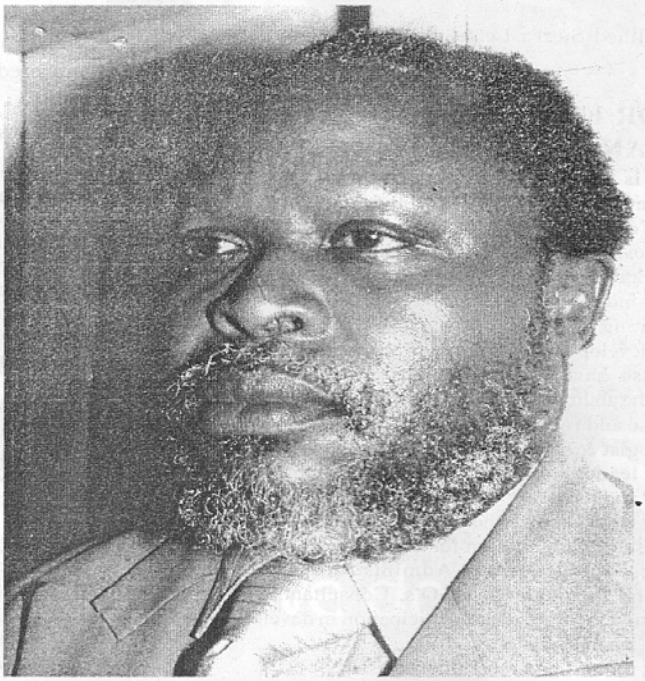

Mr. Hassan Abu Saybana Kamara

form of denial of medication and intentional over medication leaving the prisoner in excruciating pain. A wide range of drugs (some with legitimate clinical uses) are used to poison prisoners; these drugs include mood-altering drugs, insomnia-inducing drugs, suicide-including drugs and outright heart-stopping

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fatal drugs. The use of a drug popularly called the "truth serum" (sodium pentothal) on prisoners common. There has even been talk of partial and selective memory-erasing drugs.

To say the poisoning of prisoners is prohibited by law would the understatement of the ages. The poisoning of prisoners in any manner is an abominable criminal act that violates a number of the prisoners in any manner is an under international law instruments, state constitutions and case law. In some cases the poisoning of prisoners is plain and simple murder. The truth serum, for example violates among others, the prisoner's right to the privacy of his thoughts and his right to attorney-client confidentiality.

In the case of President Taylor, there must be in Continentals Europe (Britain is intentionally excluded), North America and Africa, powerful senior politicians, uppermost-echelon government officials, and senior corporate executives, not forgetting swindlers who are presently losing a lot of sleep in fear of President Taylor issuing subpoenas for the testify as witnesses in his trial. Their careers and their personal lives would be devastated. One could therefore infer that there are many powerfully individuals the world over who would want President Taylor dead or mentally incapacitated before his trial concludes.

ST: Are you an authority on prisons?

HK: No. However, in my capacity as defense counsel, I have visited accused defendants a total of over three hundred times in various incarceration facilities including; state government prisons, corporate correctional facilities, half-way houses, juvenile detention facilities and juvenile group homes. I have also read quite a bit about prison life in various countries.

ST: You continue to address Charles Taylor as the President of Liberia, His Excellency Charles Taylor; why don't you simply call him what he now is, the former President of Liberia.

HK: The present de facto and de jure political leadership in Liberia is recognized by the international community and must be respected by all. The fact still remains that His Excellency Charles Taylor was hounded out of the presidency of Liberia, forced into exile and subsequently illegally arrested and jailed by a racist international criminal conspiracy. President Taylor's removal was an assault on the constitutional right of the people of Liberia to freely choose their political leaders; it was a mockery of the sovereignty of the Republic of Liberia. It was also illegal under international law. I am gravely disturbed to see an African Head of State in handcuffs. President Taylor was elected by a wide-majority of Liberians in an open, free and fair election that was monitored by the international community including eminent international statesmen of the gravitas of Jimmy Carter, a former President of the United States, International law was meant to replace the law of the jungle. In this case the law of the jungle was the basis for the politically motivated indictment, the forcible removal of President Taylor from his rightful presidency, his exile, his illegal arrest and illegal imprisonment at the Special Court.

Personally, I find it repugnant and nauseating to think that this very minute in the year of our Lord 2006 a democratically-elected Black African Head of State is sitting in chains in a cell right here on the soil from which just yesterday whites chained and shipped millions of Black Africans to slavery in Europe and North America.

New York Times
Wednesday, 3 May 2006

The Dutch Try One of Their Own Over Links to Liberia

By MARLISE SIMONS

THE HAGUE, April 30 — They became partners during some of the worst convulsions in West Africa: Charles Taylor, the warlord and former president of Liberia, and Guus van Kouwenhoven, a resident Dutch businessman and lumber trader. Mr. Taylor, who was arrested in March for war crimes, is in an African prison still awaiting trial. But very different legal proceedings have already opened against his former business associate at a district court in The Hague.

Mr. van Kouwenhoven, 63, is also charged with war crimes. He is accused of supplying Mr. Taylor with militia fighters from his lumber companies. He is further charged with violating a United Nations embargo by smuggling weapons into Liberia. His trial, held under a new mix of national and international law, is drawing attention because it is the second time a Dutch court is prosecuting a Dutch businessman for being involved with human rights abuses on another continent.

Human rights lawyers say they hope the case signals a new trend. Domestic courts in Europe are increasingly taking on rights abuses that happened far away, but the accused have usually been foreign military or political officials, not businessmen who are their own citizens. But in December, a Dutch court sentenced a Dutch businessman, Frans van Anraat, to 15 years in jail for selling chemicals to Saddam Hussein. The chemicals were used in poison gas weapons that killed Kurdish villagers.

Desiree Leppens, a spokeswoman for the prosecution, said the cases were a Dutch initiative but were prompted in part by the opening here of the International Criminal Court, which aims to prosecute grave human rights violations. Soon after that court opened in 2002, its prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, said he hoped national prosecutors would join him in investigating the "criminal business" of war.

Ms. Leppens said, "We want to demonstrate that our government is also willing to prosecute such crimes. This is also becoming an international priority."

Mr. van Kouwenhoven's trial offers glimpses into the network of collaborators and companies that Mr. Taylor and his cohorts used to organize and finance conflicts across West Africa, leaving at least 300,000 people dead. Prosecutors here have said that Mr. van Kouwenhoven became a critical player in the Taylor network because he traded Liberia's valuable hardwood for weapons on the international market.

He was arrested in 2005 while visiting the Netherlands from his home in France, apparently unaware that Dutch prosecutors were investigating his activities in Africa. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges, but could face a long prison sentence if convicted.

In the small sober courtroom where the trial opened on April 24, Mr. van Kouwenhoven, in a dark suit and tinted glasses, made light of his dealings with the former Liberian president. He said he was part of a circle of businessmen "who had direct contact with Taylor" and had met with him

regularly. "I wasn't his friend in the sense that I did not go swimming with him and never even ate at his home," he said.

But prosecutors painted a darker picture. They said Mr. van Kouwenhoven, who initially ran a car import business, a hotel and a casino in Monrovia, Liberia, established ties with Mr. Taylor in the 1990's and became the director of two large lumber companies. One of those, the Oriental Timber Company, was Liberia's largest. It operated under different names and used its own fleet to export tons of tropical hardwoods as far as France and China. Human rights groups have said that Mr. Taylor was co-owner of the company.

The timber ships brought back weapons and ammunition, which were unloaded during the night in the port of Buchanan, prosecutors said. The weapons came from a Russian arms dealer, a Serbian company and other sources, they said.

Although the smuggling operations reportedly began earlier, Mr. van Kouwenhoven is being prosecuted for weapon deliveries between 2001 and 2003, in violation of the United Nations arms embargo of Liberia. The United Nations issued an international travel ban on him in 2001, calling him an "arms trafficker."

Cinder Reeves, an associate and relative of Mr. Taylor and the first man on the witness stand here, told the court that he was one of the people who took deliveries of weapons at the timber company, perhaps 20 to 30 times.

"They gave us documents to sign for delivery and a list of the weapons in the containers," said Mr. Reeves, whose nickname is Sunshine but who was darkly disguised in the courtroom and wore a black wig and dark glasses for security reasons. "I saw ammunition, grenades, rocket launchers," he told the court. Weapons were sometimes stored directly beneath Mr. Taylor's residence, White Flowers, Mr. Reeves said.

He also told the court that he had regularly made appointments for Mr. van Kouwenhoven to see Mr. Taylor at White Flowers to discuss arms imports and the course of the war.

Mr. van Kouwenhoven told the court he had never seen Mr. Reeves.

Two lumber companies sent many of their security guards to fight along with Mr. Taylor's militia, according to the prosecution. Militias from the companies "participated in slaughter among the Liberian population wherein nothing and no one was spared, not even babies," a prosecution statement said, adding that Mr. van Kouwenhoven provided the weapons.

Defense lawyers and judges have agreed that Mr. Taylor himself should testify in the case. Dutch investigators, who have questioned witnesses in Africa and Asia, may return to Sierra Leone, where Mr. Taylor is awaiting trial in a cell of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, a tribunal backed by the United Nations.

Both Liberia and Sierra Leone have asked that Mr. Taylor be transferred to The Hague so he can be tried on the premises of another international court, arguing that he poses a risk to the region's stability. But the United Nations Security Council is still debating the terms of his transfer. He may not arrive in The Hague before Mr. van Kouwenhoven's trial ends later this month.

Ms. Leppens, the prosecution spokeswoman, said Dutch investigators had received much assistance from the Sierra Leone court and from Global Witness, a British group that investigates the use of natural resources to finance conflict and human rights abuses.

Investigators are now negotiating with Mr. Taylor's lawyers to have him testify via video link or to make a sworn statement in his cell, she said.

Washington Post
Tuesday, 2 May 2006

Impunity on Trial in Africa
In Cases of Ex-Leaders, Justice Shifts From Soldiers to Courts

JOHANNESBURG -- The arrest in March of former Liberian president Charles Taylor was the latest in a series of tentative steps toward holding political leaders in Africa accountable for alleged crimes including corruption, rape and genocide.

After decades in which senior government officials were largely beyond the reach of national and international law, prosecutors recently have pursued Taylor for war crimes committed in Sierra Leone, a U.N.-backed tribunal has tried former leaders in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and international investigators have been invited into four other African countries.

Facing a U.N.-backed tribunal in Sierra Leone, former Liberian president Charles Taylor, right, pleaded not guilty to crimes against humanity.

National courts have also become increasingly aggressive. In Zambia, former president Frederick Chiluba is battling corruption allegations, as are several top officials in Nigeria, Kenya and Malawi. In South Africa, former deputy president Jacob Zuma, accused of raping a family friend half his age, is awaiting a court judgment.

"There is a very important shift in the way people conceive of power and want to do things on the continent," said Claude Kabemba, who monitors governance issues across Africa for the Human Sciences Research Council in Pretoria, South Africa. "Impunity in many instances is not allowed as it was a decade ago."

The recent series of legal proceedings across the continent has the feel of victors' justice to some observers. Taylor's arrest was facilitated by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a former political rival. The case against Chiluba has been pushed by his successor. And Zuma, a populist once widely expected to be South Africa's next president, has blamed his legal troubles on a conspiracy to block his ascent to power.

Despite the political flavor of many of the cases, however, analysts, legal experts and human rights activists say the court actions mark a new era in which African disputes increasingly are being resolved by judges rather than soldiers. It may be a necessary first step, these advocates say, toward a more advanced variety of the rule of law in which all citizens -- regardless of political power -- are treated equally by impartial courts.

"What's wrong with victors' justice if this is a better form of justice than was there before?" said Desmond deSilva, chief prosecutor of the U.N.-backed tribunal trying Taylor. De Silva recently announced his resignation from the post but said he hoped to return to the job to lead Taylor's prosecution.

Taylor now waits in a jail cell in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, for trial on 11 counts of war crimes, including crimes against humanity for backing a rebel group that relied heavily on child soldiers and was known for mass rapes and severing the limbs of civilians. He has pleaded not guilty.

The rise in international tribunals began in the 1990s after the genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia. The movement gained strength with the creation of the International Criminal Court in The Hague in 2002.

The Bush administration opposed the international tribunal, instead supporting special courts such as the one that is trying Taylor. It argued that a permanent international court with broad authority could infringe on U.S. sovereignty and put its citizens in improper legal jeopardy.

Despite U.S. opposition, support for the International Criminal Court is strong throughout most of the world, and it is widely seen as a way to bring the world's worst human rights violators to justice. The idea has grown popular enough in Africa that national leaders, who traditionally have jealously guarded their sovereignty, have turned to the international court for help.

The presidents of Ivory Coast, Congo and Uganda asked the International Criminal Court to investigate the actions of armed groups that control parts of their countries, and in Uganda and Congo arrest warrants have been issued for militia leaders.

Liberian Times
Tuesday, 2 May 2006
http://www.theliberiantimes.com/article_2006_05_2_2814.html

Liberia: Former Liberia President TAYLOR Refuses 1.00 DAILY ALLOWANCE, FOOD

The Defense Counsel at the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone has reported that the UN war crimes convict, former Liberian President, Charles Taylor and his collaborators have refused to accept a proposed daily allowance of one United States Dollars. The Liberian former President is currently behind bars on war crimes charges in Freetown, Sierra Leone,

According to a Star Radio Correspondent report, the Defense Counsel said the prisoners including former President Charles Taylor are to receive the equivalent of one United States dollar daily as allowance, but the Defense Counsel of Mr. Taylor and others argued that the one-dollar daily allowance is not enough for the seven accused war crime indictees.

The counsel complained during a news conference held in Freetown, according to the Star Radio Correspondent, that the prisoners are not given enough African food in their feeding. The defense counsel also complained about the one telephone line provided for the war crime indictees and said the telephone was far from the prisoners.

Relatives and friends of Taylor in Monrovia said they were unhappy of the news coming out of Freetown, "we knew this would have happened, can you imagine a former president to be treated like a common man.....what is one dollars to be given to a man like our former President", one of the relatives, Clara Taylor told the Liberian Times in Monrovia.

Several others spoken to by our correspondent are calling on the UN backed Special Court in Sierra Leone to speedily carryout the trial without pre-condition, "Mr. Taylor and others involved must be given a free and fair trial", Amos Walker, a former aide to the detained former Liberian President said.

In another development, The Liberian government said it is considering freezing the assets of some former government officials as mandated by the United Nations. Liberia's Justice Minister Francis Johnson Morris said Liberia laws in the country were not in compliance with international treaties as they relate to these former government officials.

Minister Morris said when we demonstrate total compliance to the treaties, the government would definitely freeze the assets of those individuals.

The Tribune
Monday, 1 May 2006

Taylor's escape: Arrested police officers released

ALL the security agents that were arrested in the wake of the escape of the former Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, in Calabar, Cross River State, have been released.

The security agents, including 22 policemen and some operatives of the Department of State Security Services (SSS), were arrested on the orders of President Olusegun Obasanjo when Mr. Taylor suddenly disappeared from Calabar where he had been staying for about three years along with over 100 aides and members of his immediate family.

A presidency source told the Nigerian Tribune in Abuja on Sunday that the order for the release of the security agents was given since Mr. Taylor had been apprehended.

All the affected security officers had since returned to their initial duty posts, the source further hinted.

The source said that both the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and the SSS were still carrying out internal investigations on their personnel with a view to finding out whether or not they were culpable in the escape of Mr. Taylor.

"As far as I can tell you now, all the security guards attached to Mr. Taylor before his escape that were picked up have been released, but their individual organisations are still investigating them," the source declared.

New York Times (Business Day)
Tuesday, 2 May 2006

SECOND TAKE - The New York Times

NORTHERN European countries, so quick to congratulate themselves on their generally good global citizenship, have been falling over one another lately to make sure that they don't get stuck with Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president turned indicted war criminal. That's a shocking disappointment, given the European commitment to making poverty history in Africa. The continent cannot progress without regional stability and justice for those hurt by Africa's worst warlords.

Taylor laid waste not only to his home country, Liberia, but also to Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone during his 13-year reign of terror.

He was finally handed over last month to the United Nations-backed Special Court, set up in Sierra Leone to try those bearing the most responsibility for the carnage, which included terrorizing civilians by chopping off their arms, legs, ears and lips.

Taylor still has supporters in west Africa, where the affected nations are trying to maintain a fragile peace. So it's no surprise that Sierra Leone wants to get him out of Freetown, where the special court is based, as soon as possible. Nor is it a surprise that Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, doesn't want him coming home to stand trial either.

The special court asked that Taylor's trial be moved to The Hague, and the government of the Netherlands agreed, but attached so many strings it might as well have said no. Another country must agree to imprison him if he is convicted. When asked, Austria and Sweden declined, and Denmark joined the list of rejecters this week.

The European Union and the US were the ones to press Johnson-Sirleaf to ask Nigeria to turn over Charles Taylor to face justice, and there's a general consensus that America's role in the special court is already so great that any further involvement would be unadvisable. That leaves Europe. Promising to serve as Taylor's jailer over the long run would certainly be a burden, but it's one that any number of nations that profess to be friends of Africa could easily manage to sustain. New York, April 28

Awareness Times
Monday, 1 May 2006

Sierra Leone's Special Court Prosecutor reveals his 1969 link to Hinga Norman as he steps down

The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Desmond de Silva QC has revealed his 1969 link to detained Kamajor Chief, Hinga Norman, in a release dated Friday, 28th April 2006 in which he stated that he has notified the Secretary-General of the United Nations that he will not seek to renew his contract when it expires on 30 June this year.

Desmond de Silva

Mr. de Silva originally joined the Special Court as Deputy Prosecutor in August 2002 after being nominated for the post by the Government of Sierra Leone.

As Deputy Prosecutor, Mr. de Silva headed the Appellate Section of the Office of the Prosecutor, where he oversaw the successful Prosecution response to the many legal challenges to the Court's jurisdiction and existence which were brought by the Defence.

Some of these cases, Mr. de Silva observed past Friday, resulted in landmark legal decisions which will have a considerable impact on the development of international jurisprudence in years to come.

In July 2005, upon the departure of then-Chief Prosecutor David M. Crane, the Secretary--General of the United Nations appointed Mr. de Silva as Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court.

"At a press conference in Freetown shortly after I took up the post of Prosecutor, I pledged to Sierra Leoneans that I would 'strain every nerve and every sinew to bring Charles Taylor to trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone," Mr. de Silva said, adding, "I leave the Court with that pledge fulfilled."

When he leaves at the end of June, Mr. de Silva will be the longest serving international member in the Office of the Prosecutor.

In his letter to the Secretary-General, Mr. de Silva indicated that, after four years in Sierra Leone, he now wishes to spend time with his family in England and also to attend to matters at his Chambers in London.

Mr. de Silva further informed the Secretary-General that, when Charles Taylor comes to trial, whether in Freetown or elsewhere, he would be willing to be considered for reappointment were that the wish of the Secretary-General. By Statute, only the Secretary-General can appoint a Prosecutor of the Special Court.

"When I joined the Special Court four years ago, I was no stranger to Sierra Leone," Mr. de Silva said, pointing out "I was called to the Bar in Freetown back in 1969 when I served as defence counsel in Sierra Leone's first treason trial. One of the defendants in that case, in which my colleagues and I finally prevailed, was Samuel Hinga Norman, who is now one of the defendants facing trial before the Special Court. Such is the wheel of fate!" He said.

After being called to the Bar at the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple in 1964, Mr. de Silva entered the famous London Chambers of the Rt. Hon Sir Dingle Foot, QC, MP. In 1984 he was appointed one of Her Majesty's Counsel.

Mr de Silva's own legal practice has made him not only the adviser to Governments and Heads of State, but has also taken him to many jurisdictions in which he has appeared for the prosecution, the defence, or in an advisory capacity. Apart from Sierra Leone, they include The Gambia, Tanzania, Gibraltar, the Bahamas, Ghana, Kenya, Botswana and South Africa.

"I believe the dedicated team I leave behind in the Office of the Prosecutor, which consists of both Sierra Leoneans and internationals from many countries, is a shining example of the way in which international criminal justice should be administered by the Prosecution," Mr. de Silva said.

United Nations Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 2 May 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Times Magazine | **Leaders & Revolutionaries** Posted Sunday, Apr. 30, 2006
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
Africa's First Female President
By LAURA BUSH

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is a magnificent leader and an amazing woman. In January I attended her inauguration in Monrovia, where she delivered a moving and inspiring address that spoke directly to the women of Liberia, of Africa and of the world. From her service as a Liberian Cabinet Minister in the 1970s, senior United Nations administrator in the 1990s and now Liberia's President, Johnson-Sirleaf, 67, has never stopped working for democracy for her country.

UNMIL plane crashes in Zwedru, occupants unharmed - reports

Source: Dpa English Date: May 02, 2006

Monrovia_(dpa) _ Reports reaching the Liberian capital Monrovia on Tuesday said a United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)-chartered plane crashed Monday while landing at the Zwedru airport in the south-eastern county Grand Gedeh but all on board escaped unharmed. According to media reports, one of the engines of the DASH-7 plane caught fire. But all 40 Ethiopian peacekeepers on board as well as the plane's crew escaped unhurt.

The Washington Post 5 February 2006
Impunity on Trial in Africa; In Cases of Ex-Leaders, Justice Shifts from Soldiers to Courts

By Craig Timberg

JOHANNESBURG - The arrest in March of former Liberian president Charles Taylor was the latest in a series of tentative steps toward holding political leaders in Africa accountable for alleged crimes including corruption, rape and genocide. After decades in which senior government officials were largely beyond the reach of national and international law, prosecutors recently have pursued Taylor for war crimes committed in Sierra Leone, a U.N.-backed tribunal has tried former leaders in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and

international investigators have been invited into four other African countries.

International Clips on West Africa

Murder of journalists is blow to press freedom, says IPI

Source: Dpa English Date: May 02, 2006

Vienna_ (dpa) _ The murder of journalists means not only a loss of human life but also vital public information, said the International Press Institute (IPI) on Tuesday. Sixty-five journalists were killed across the globe last year in a statement to mark Wednesday's World Press Freedom Day. Although many of the journalists died reporting in conflict zones, others were killed for their reporting on governments in Belarus, Libya and Sierra Leone, protests in Haiti and Somalia, drug trafficking in Mexico, local corruption in the Philippines and Thailand and illegal drag racing in Russia

Local Media – Newspapers

American Magazine Lists President Selected Among 100 People Shaping the World

(The News, The Analyst and New Democrat)

- Time magazine recently listed President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf among 100 great leaders, revolutionaries and personalities of the world, including U.S. President Bush, Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Pope Benedict VII. In an article she authored in Time magazine, First Lady Laura Bush described President Johnson-Sirleaf as a magnificent leader and an amazing woman who serves as an inspiration to her and women around the world.

President Orders Ministers to Oust Corrupt Staff

(The Analyst and The Diary)

- Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio told journalists over the weekend that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had ordered all cabinet ministers and heads of government agencies to expel corrupt staff or be prepared to face the consequences of their inaction. She noted that corruption still exists in the government.

UNMIL Concludes Deactivation of Special Security Services

(The Informer)

- As part of the security sector reform in Liberia, UNMIL recently concluded the deactivation process of the Special Security Services (SSS), an UNMIL press release said. With funding from the U.S. government, UNMIL provided buy-out packages to 841 former SSS members with approximately 120 persons failing to meet the requirements for receiving the package.

Former Presidential Aspirant Wants a United Opposition

(The Inquirer and The Informer)

- Addressing supporters in Monrovia yesterday defeated Coalition for Transformation of Liberia (COTOL) presidential candidate Varney Sherman said that he would strengthen relations with the Congress for Democratic Change to constructively engage the government to bring meaningful change to Liberia.

No Passengers Harmed in UNMIL
(The News and The Inquirer)

- All occupants remained unharmed after a plane hired by UNMIL crash landed over the weekend in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County. UNMIL Acting Spokesman Paul Egunsola confirmed the incident and said that a team of investigators had been dispatched to the scene.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

President to Intervene in Row between Branches of Government

- Speaking to journalists yesterday, Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio said that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was concerned about the disagreement between the Executive and Legislative Branches of government and has scheduled a meeting with them to thrash out their differences.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Shipload of Seeds and Farm Implements Arrive from China

- According to an Executive Mansion press release, China has sent the first consignment of agricultural tools and seeds to be distributed to 150,000 farming families throughout Liberia. The consignment is part of a US$1 million in aid which the government of Mainland China has pledged to Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Defeated Presidential Candidate Announces Close Ties with George Weah's Party

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Elections Commission Burns Used Ballot Papers

- Performing a symbolic burning of used ballot papers at Brewerville, yesterday, National Elections Commission (NEC) Chairman James Fromoyan instructed elections officials throughout the country to burn the more than 1 million ballot papers that were used for the October 11 elections in keeping with provisions of the Elections Law.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Supreme Court Wants Law School Graduates to Serve in Rural Liberia

- In an interview yesterday, an official of the Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA) said that the Supreme Court has commenced an exercise for beneficiaries of its scholarship program to fulfill their commitments by serving the rural courts.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

National Budget Bureau Publicizes Recast Budget

- The Bureau of the Budget has released the recast fiscal budget of US$44 million for 1 February to 30 June, 2006. Security was allotted 9 percent of the budget, education, 7.6, health, 6.7 and the National Legislature, 7.3, percent, Budget Director Augustine Ngafuahn said yesterday.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

U.S. Allocates US$120 Million to Support Liberia's Fiscal Budget

- Briefing the press in Monrovia yesterday, Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio said that the United States government has allocated US$120 million to support Liberia's budget for 2006.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

Lawmaker Wants Kinsmen to Vote Wisely in By-Election

- In a recent press interview, Rivercess County Senator George Moore said that eligible voters should be left alone to vote their conscience during the ensuing by-election. Senator Moore said that voters in the county were being misinformed that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf favors candidate Elizabeth Williams.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

US-Based Road Engineers Win Contract in Liberia

- A US-based engineering firm, Stanley Consultants, is to assess major road links in the country after securing a contract from the World Bank to conduct a technical design of the roads in Liberia, the company's Vice President Shaka Dennis said yesterday.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)

STAR RADIO *(News culled form website today at 09:00 am)*

Widows of Soldiers Complain of Unpaid Benefits

- About 200 widows of soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia yesterday complained that they were yet to be paid their benefits even though they have passed all the processes for payment.