

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



Children examine the Independence Day lanterns at the Youyi Building.

**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:**

Wednesday, 30 April 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
Martin Royston-Wright  
Ext 7217

**Local News**

Legal Developments at the Special Court for Sierra Leone... / *Awoko* Pages 3-4

No Regrets? / *Standard Times* Page 5

**International News**

(Untitled) / *BBC World Service Trust* Pages 6-7

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / *UNMIL* Pages 8-9

Registrar of Hariri court to take up post this week / *The Daily Star* Pages 10-11



Awoko  
Wednesday, 30 April 2008

Wednesday April 30, 2008

Awoko Newspaper

Page 3

# Legal developments at The Special Court for Sierra Leone Hon. Justice George Gelaga King, GORSL President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone

On 12 June 2000, Sierra Leone's then-President H.E. Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah wrote a letter to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan requesting the United Nations to establish an international court to prosecute those responsible for atrocities during the civil war. The Government of Sierra Leone sought international judicial assistance in an effort to break the cycle of violence and impunity, and begin a system of accountability that could assist the process of reconciliation. On August 14, 2000, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1315, which requested "the Secretary-General to negotiate an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone to create an independent special court," to prosecute crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed after 30th November 1996. Importantly, the Special Court was designed to prosecute those "persons who bear the greatest responsibility ... including those leaders who, in committing such crimes, have threatened the establishment of and implementation of the peace process in Sierra Leone."

On 16 January 2002, the UN and Government of Sierra Leone signed an agreement establishing the Court, creating an international body that is independent of any government or organisation. The first indictments were issued in 2003, trials began in 2004, 2005 and 2007, and all judicial proceedings are expected to be completed in 2010.

The Special Court's judiciary is comprised of twelve judges, of which seven are Trial Chamber Judges (including an alternate Judge) and five are Appeals Chamber Judges. In each Trial Chambers, two Judges are appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and one is nominated by the Government of Sierra Leone. On the Appeals Chamber, three Judges are appointed by the Secretary-General and two are nominated by the Government of Sierra Leone. The Appeals Judges elect the President of the Special Court.

Despite being a relatively small international criminal court with a limited mandate, the Special Court has been responsible for numerous significant developments in international law. I will briefly describe three such precedents set by the Special Court. These are interpretations of the law made at the Special Court which are the first of their kind by any international court of law and which have been followed by other international criminal courts. I emphasize that I write in a personal capacity, not in my official role as a Judge or as President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The precedents I'll briefly describe are in the areas of (1) the inapplicability of national amnesty provisions for international crimes, (2) the recruitment of child soldiers, and (3) the limitations on head of state immunity.

As a preliminary matter, prior to discussing substantive legal developments, I should make a brief note about process. Judges at the Special Court have consistently endeavoured to satisfy themselves that the crimes charged in the indictments were crimes under customary international law at the time of their commission and were sufficiently defined under that body of law. This is because in most cases, treaty provisions will only provide for the prohibition of a certain conduct, not for its criminalisation, or the treaty provision itself will not sufficiently define the elements of the prohibition they criminalise and customary international law must be looked at for the definition of those elements. Thus, while binding conventional law that prohibits conduct and provides for individual criminal responsibility could provide the basis for the Special Court's jurisdiction, in practice the Special Court always ascertains that an applicable treaty provision is also declaratory of custom.

Let me turn now to the three selected legal developments. The first is our legal finding that amnesties provided in the Lomé Peace Accord do not affect the prosecution of an accused in an international tribunal for international crimes.

The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court delivered a decision on 13 March 2004 holding that the amnesty granted under Article IX of the Lomé Peace Agreement does not bar prosecution at the Special Court of accused persons for international crimes committed before July 1999.

Two defendants, Morris Kallon and Brima Bazzy Kamara, had filed motions arguing that the Government of Sierra Leone was bound to observe the amnesty by this Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF (Moinina Fofana and Augustine Gbao subsequently joined the motion). Kallon and Kamara argued that the Special Court should not assert jurisdiction over crimes committed prior to July 1999 when the amnesty was granted and it would be an abuse of process to allow the prosecution of any of

the alleged crimes pre-dating the Lomé Agreement.

The Prosecution argued that the Special Court is bound by Article 10 of its Statute, which states that amnesty shall not be a bar to prosecution in respect of international crimes, and that the Lomé Agreement, being an agreement between two national bodies, is not an international treaty and is limited in effect to domestic law. The Prosecution also submitted that under international law a government cannot grant amnesty for serious violations of international crimes.

The Appeals Chamber found that the Lomé Agreement created rights and obligations that are to be regulated by the domestic laws of Sierra Leone. Consequently, whether or not it is binding on the Government of Sierra Leone does not affect the prosecution of an accused in an international tribunal for international crimes.

The Appeals Chamber further found that Article 10 of the Court's Statute is valid, as it is an express statutory limitation on the discretion of the Court to decline jurisdiction on the sole ground that an amnesty has been granted to a defendant. Where there is such an express provision of a statute, a tribunal would be acting unlawfully if it circumvents this provision. Moreover, the Appeals Chamber concluded that an international tribunal, such as the Special Court, cannot be deprived of its jurisdiction to prosecute an offender by the grant of amnesty.

The second substantive legal development I wish to describe is the finding that recruitment of child soldiers is a crime in international law and that it incurs individual criminal responsibility.

Under Article 4 of our Statute, the Special Court has the power to prosecute persons who committed serious violations of international humanitarian law including, "Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups using them to participate actively in hostilities ('child recruitment')."

The defendant raised the question whether the crime as defined in Article 4(c) of the Statute was recognised as a crime entailing individual criminal responsibility under customary international law at the time of the acts alleged in the indictments against the accused, which date back to November 1996.

To answer this question, international conventions and international custom were scrutinized. The Appeals Chamber considered the Geneva Conventions and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, among other instruments, and determined that prior to November 1996, the prohibition on child recruitment had crystallised as customary international law, as demonstrated by the widespread recognition and acceptance of the norm prohibiting child recruitment in international law. The Appeals Chamber found this prohibition reiterated in the 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

The principal question therefore was whether the prohibition on child recruitment also entailed individual criminal responsibility by 1996, so that the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege* was not breached. The Appeals Chamber considered that the protection of children is one of the fundamental guarantees articulated in Additional Protocol II and reflected in the Special Court Statute. The Appeals Chamber also reflected on the fact that numerous reports of various human rights organizations verified that the practice of child recruitment results in the most atrocious consequences for the children. As has been found at the Special Court and the ICTY and ICTR, serious violations of the fundamental guarantees embodied in Article 4 of Additional Protocol II incur individual criminal liability.

Accordingly, the Appeals Chamber (with Justice Robertson dissenting) found that the recruitment of children was already a crime by the time of the adoption of the 1998 Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court, which codified and



Hon. Justice George Gelaga King

Continued on page 5



## Legal developments at The Special Court for Sierra Leone

### Hon. Justice George Gelaga King, GORSL President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone

ensured the effective implementation of an existing customary norm relating to child recruitment rather than forming a new one. Part of the finding that individual criminal liability pre-existed the 1998 Rome Statute was the determination that the norm need not have been expressly stated in an international convention for it to crystallize as a crime under customary international law. Furthermore, and importantly, it was not necessary for the individual criminal responsibility of the accused to be explicitly stated in a convention for the provisions of the convention to entail individual criminal responsibility under customary international law. Additional support for these findings is found in the national legislation of states which includes criminal sanctions as a measure of enforcement.

The Appeals Chamber reasoned, therefore, that child recruitment was criminalized before it was explicitly set out in treaty law and certainly by the time frame relevant to the indictments at issue. The principle of legality and the principle of specificity were both upheld.

A third significant legal development is our finding that Head-of-State immunity does not bar prosecution at the Special Court (or other international courts).

Article 6(2) of the Statute of the Special Court provides that "[t]he official position of any accused persons, whether as Head of State or Government or as a responsible government official, shall not relieve such person of criminal responsibility nor mitigate punishment.

This provision was challenged by Charles Taylor, the former President of the Republic of Liberia, in a motion to quash his Indictment and to set aside the warrant for his arrest on the grounds that he is immune from any exercise of the jurisdiction of the Special Court by virtue of the fact that he was, at the time of the issuing of the indictment and warrant of arrest against him, a Head of State.

Mr. Taylor claimed entitlement to the benefit of any immunity asserted by Liberia against exercise of the Special Court's jurisdiction. On those relatively bare facts, the Appeals Chamber was called upon to decide whether it was lawful for the Special Court to issue an indictment and to circulate an arrest warrant in respect of a serving Head of State.

Although this issue had not been decided by another international court, the International Court of Justice had discussed it in the Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Belgium (Yerodia) case. In the Yerodia case, the International Court of Justice considered the immunities of ministers and, relying on customary international law, upheld immunities in national courts even in respect of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The ICJ found that the issuance of a warrant against the then incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC constituted a

violation of an obligation of Belgium towards the DRC; however, the IJC also opined in dicta that the statutes of the ICTY and ICC allowed persons holding high office, including Heads of State, to be prosecuted for certain offences "before certain criminal courts." Following the ICJ's reasoning in the Yerodia case, the issues raised on appeal by Mr. Taylor before the Special Court turned to a large extent on the legal status of the Special Court as an international court and not a court of the Government of Sierra Leone. The distinction would appear due to the principle that one sovereign state does not adjudicate on the conduct of another state; the principle of state immunity derives from the equality of sovereign states and therefore has no relevance to international criminal tribunals which are not organs of a state but derive their mandate from the international community.

The Special Court Appeals Chamber had previously determined in a decision on the constitutionality of the Court that the Special Court is not a national court of Sierra Leone and is not part of the judicial system of Sierra Leone exercising judicial powers of Sierra Leone. An analysis of the Special Court's constitutive instruments supports the conclusion that it is a truly international criminal court.

Accordingly, the Appeals Chamber held that the principle of sovereign immunity does not prevent indictment, arrest and prosecution of a state official by an international court. In this result the Appeals Chamber found that Article 6(2) of the Special Court Statute, which grants jurisdiction over persons in official government positions, is not in conflict with any peremptory norm of general international law and its provisions must be given effect by the Special Court. It bears mention that this is the first indictment and prosecution for international crimes brought against an incumbent African Head of State, and as everyone is aware, Mr Taylor is currently on trial by the Special Court in a chamber in The Hague.

Let me conclude by noting that the Special Court is providing a clear demonstration that if the international community works in partnership with local populations, a sustainable peace can be established. This sustainable peace is partly a consequence of the increased recognition of international armed conflict. The Special Court's success in forging and disseminating a record of the violations of the corpus of law will be a powerful signal to both Africans and the world that egregious abuses will no longer be tolerated and that the architects of war, regardless of their high positions, will be held accountable for their disregard of human rights and humanitarian international law.

# Standard Times

Wednesday, 30 April 2008

PAGE 2 STANDARD TIMES Wednesday April 30, 2008

## No Regrets?

In a BBC "Focus on Africa" programme which was broadcast on Friday, April 25, 2008, former President Kabbah emphatically stated that he did "not" have any regrets about his leadership of the Republic of Sierra Leone from 1996 to 2007. Dr. Kabbah was responding to the BBC correspondent's poser, "Do you have any regrets about your tenure of office?"

Before attempting any analysis of former President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's statement, this writer wishes to commend the former President for providing the appropriate leadership for bringing the nation's eleven-year brutal war to a relatively peaceful conclusion, sustaining the fragile peace and supervising the successful transfer of power from one civilian government to the other.

Regarding the transfer of power, Alhaji Kabbah should be lauded for not even trying to manipulate the nation's constitution in order to prolong his stay in office beyond the legal two five-year terms as some other African leaders have done. Dr. Kabbah should also be congratulated for not interfering into the outcome of the expressed will of the voters regarding both the Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The former President's party, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) and his favorite Presidential candidate lost to the opposition, All Peoples Congress (APC) party.

However, this writer wishes to call the attention of former President Kabbah to the following obvious issues which may be construed and perceived by constructively critical minded Sierra Leoneans to be failures. These, the critics maintain, may have tarnished his Presidency. While the late Frank Sinatra sang his favorite world famous hit tune, "I DID IT MY WAY" to the delight of all, former President Kabbah will continue to insist on singing his favorite, "NO REGRETS" tune much to the chagrin of many Sierra Leoneans.

In the first instance, Sierra Leoneans were definitely not amused when Dr. Kabbah publicly stated that he had been made aware by the security agencies about the alleged 1997 plot to overthrow his one-year old government several days before the coup actually took place. They were not amused because former President Kabbah failed to take the necessary proactive steps to protect their lives and property.

It should be recalled that the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) which was headed by Major Johnny Paul Koroma was most unpopular both nationally and internationally. The AFRC which invited the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to join them in the governance of the state unleashed terror and mayhem on innocent citizens. It is the perception of many that all of these brutal acts could have been avoided only if former President Kabbah had acted resolutely and decisively when he was initially informed about the alleged coup plot. Certainly, Dr. Kabbah must have some regrets about this episode and perceived leadership lapse.

While former President Kabbah was in exile in Guinea - Conakry, virtually all Sierra Leoneans refused to cooperate with Johnny Paul Koroma's renegade government. A democratically organized student demonstration led to the indiscriminate murder of many innocent students by the power and blood thirsty AFRC killer machine. Surely Dr. Kabbah must have some regrets about this fiasco.

The former President will surely agree with this writer that the killer machine of the RUF's invasion of Freetown and its surrounding areas on January 6, 1999 epitomized the worst violations of the human rights of innocent citizens. Sierra Leoneans have been informed that the former President barely escaped capture by the RUF mobsters at King Jimmy. Thousands of Freetonians were killed, mutilated, property worth billions was destroyed and thousands more were psychologically damaged. Without any doubt, former President Kabbah must have some regrets about this debacle.

Again, the civil society demonstrations against the intransigence of the late Foday Sankoh at his Spur Road residence resulted in the deaths of over twenty

innocent citizens. Incidentally all the demonstrators wanted were peace, security, stability, development and democratic governance. Surely, Alhaji Kabbah must have some regrets about his sad episode.

Incidentally, the floods which devastated the Pujehun district and the perceived lack of demonstration of the appropriate warmth and response by the former President were not appreciated by the WANJAMA citizens. The WANJAMA people were aware of the fact that their native sons S.U.M. Jah, Eddie Massallay, Francis Kaikai, Lawrence Kamara, Ansu Kaikai, Sillah and Rogers had played key roles in keeping the district in the firm grip of the SLPP and in destabilizing the activities of the RUF. The district appears to have been disappointed with former President Kabbah's very minimal rice contribution to the over three hundred thousand inhabitants of the area. The seeds of the strained political relationship between the SLPP and Pujehun district were perceived to have been planted at that time. Of course, the chickens came home to roost in the 2007 elections when the SLPP only managed to win two out of the five parliamentary seats. Certainly, former President Kabbah must have some regrets about the inconceivable situation in Pujehun.

The general perception is that former President Kabbah led the SLPP like his very own personal fiefdom, a behavioral pattern, which, some how claimed, created the environment for the disaster which has befallen the SLPP. Alhaji Kabbah is also alleged to have secretly supported Dr. S.S. Banya over Mr. M.C. Kallon for the position of national chairman, the late S.B. Marah over Dr. S. B. Saccoh for the position of Regional Chairman -North and Mr. Dixon Rogers over Jannah for the position of National Young Generation Leader. Surely, Dr. Kabbah must have some deep regrets about these decisions. Sadly, the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman while in the custody of the special court, though unexpected, was detrimental to the avowed claim of former President Kabbah that he was an advocate of human rights. The late Chief Norman was perceived by many Sierra Leoneans to be a REAL HERO because he helped to liberate them from the pangs of the RUF killer machine. Certainly, Dr. Kabbah must have some serious regrets about Chief Norman's circumstances and death if truly he put his thinking cap on.

For almost five years, the former President is alleged to have directed the VP, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs and Information Ministers to inform Sierra Leoneans that "YENGA WAS NOT AN ISSUE" because "YENGA" belonged to Sierra Leone. The former President is alleged to have been irritated with the former Ombudsman, Mr. Francis Gabbidon, for daring to publicly suggest a "BAKASSI Peninsula" type of strategy for resolving the YENGA problem. It is alleged that, Mr. Gabbidon, went on floors and apologized to the former President for his remarks on Yenga.

The former President has been out of office for approximately eight months and the Guineans are still occupying and firmly in control of YENGA. Certainly, Dr. Kabbah must have some regrets for leaving office with a strategic portion of the country under foreign domination.

Right or wrong, Heads of State are given credit when things go right. They are also criticized and condemned when things go wrong. Former, President Kabbah was in office when Sierra Leone experienced the worst air disaster (crash of Paramount Airlines helicopter) in which twenty-four nationals of Togo, Gabon and France lost their lives. Surely, Alhaji Kabbah, must have some very serious regrets about that incident otherwise, he would not have literally forced Dr. Prince Alex Harding to resign his position as Minister of Transport and Communications.

In at least three of the former Presidents statements to Parliament, Kabbah expressed his determination to minimize the incidence of corruption and to privatize over twenty parastatals. It is the perception of many Sierra Leoneans that very little was accomplished in the above two areas. Certainly, Dr. Kabbah must have some regrets about his dismal record in these areas.

## COMMENTARY



Kabbah... no regret



Norman... rewarded with death after fighting for SLPP  
Finally, Sierra Leoneans are very much aware of the former Presidents desire to have his almost eleven year legacy to be viewed most positively. That will be done where the record of accomplishment passes the good governance and development litmus test. The record will not be manipulated to please anyone only to have revisionist historians alter the record later.

### Standard Times Team

**AG. EXECUTIVE EDITOR**  
IBM Kamara

**STAFF WRITERS**  
Unissa Bangura  
Alhaji Saidu Kamara

**COPY EDITOR**  
John Koroma, Alias Talleyrand

**CORRESPONDENT**  
Project Syndicate

**REPORTERS**  
Edward Marrah  
Santigie Kamara  
Abu Bakarr Kargbo  
Mohamed Konneh

**SECRETARIES**  
Eleen Bangura,  
Saphie Aduke Kamara  
Fatmata Dumbuya

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**  
Augustine Issa

## BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 29 April 2008

By Alphonsus Zeon, in The Hague

The Prosecution witness in the war crimes trial of the former Liberian President Charles Taylor has told the Court that aside (from) military support to the rebels who fought the government in Sierra Leone, Taylor had also made public statements, threatening war in Sierra Leone.

Prosecution 23rd witness Alimamy Bobson Sesay said he initially joined the army after the threat by the former Liberian President that because ECOMOG fighter jets hitting NPFL targets were flying out of Sierra Leone, the country would taste the bitterness of war.

Journalist Alphonsus Zeon is watching the trial in The Hague for the BBCWST/SFCG.

**ZEON:** Sesay said he joined the Sierra Leonean army after President Joseph Momoh called on citizens to show up and get enlisted to take up arms against the rebels.

The witness's testimony supports prosecution charges that Taylor brought about the war and supported the rebels in Sierra Leone.

**SESAY:** Yes, the time I stated, 1991, when Charles Taylor went over the air I had not joined the army yet, but it was the same year, September '91, that I joined the army.

**MORRIS ANYAH:** And you told us what prompted you to join the army. You said Charles Taylor went over the air and I take it you meant the BBC, right, Mr Witness?

**SESAY:** Yes... he said that, which made the whole of Freetown to be panic stricken... March '91 or so, before the first invasion in Sierra Leone, Charles Taylor went over the air and said that - he said as long as Sierra Leone had established an ECOMOG base in Freetown we would taste the bitterness of war.

**ZEON:** Sesay and fellow soldiers of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council later joined the RUF rebels when they were driven out of State House in Freetown by ECOMOG troops after the soldiers initially seized power from President Tejan Kabbah.

Charles Taylor's lawyer, Morris Anyah, who led the Defence cross-examination, rejected this scenario. Anyah repeated that Taylor only got involved in the crisis in Sierra Leone as a peace mediator. He said in the past Taylor had acknowledged that Liberians were fighting in Sierra Leone, but not on the instruction of the Government of Liberia.

**ANYAH:** ...a press conference held by the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, for all the world to hear his views about Sierra Leone and Liberians fighting. It reads: "Liberian President Charles Taylor has offered to put pressure on RUF leader Corporal Foday Sankoh to help restore peace in Sierra Leone." To the next page. "Sankoh is currently in jail in Freetown appealing his conviction and death sentence on treason charges." Quote unquote... 'Sankoh is part of the problem in Sierra Leone and should be part of the solution.'.. He added that Sankoh is better alive than dead... Taylor said his government 'supports and recognises the government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and we do not support the rebel activities against President Kabbah in Sierra Leone in any shape or form, but we still believe that the way forward is a ceasefire on all sides and for President Kabbah to dialogue with the rebels rather than continue to fight them.'" Do you see that, Mr. Witness?

SESAY: Yes, my Lord.

ZEON: Taylor sat quietly as the lawyers argued his role in the war in the neighbouring country of Sierra Leone.

Sesay`s cross-examination continues, but after the five-day break as of the 29 of April for the celebration of Queen`s day here in The Kingdom of the Netherlands.

This is Alphonsus Zeon for the BBC World Service Trust and Search for Common Ground, in The Hague.

## **UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 29 April 2008**

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

### **Newspaper Summary**

#### **President Sirleaf disagrees with TRC over suspension of Commissioner**

(Heritage, Daily Observer, New Democrat)

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has given her personal view on the suspension of Cllr. Pearl Brown Bull as commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- Speaking to reporters Monday, Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Wleh Badio said the President believes that high level Presidential appointees confirmed by the Senate can only be dismissed upon her approval, a view that has been opposed by the TRC Chairman.
- TRC Chairman, Counsellor Jerome Verdier recently suspended Commissioner Bull for "conflict of interest" which he says violates the commission's Act.
- Cllr. Bull challenged her suspension and filed a writ of prohibition which was granted by the Justice in Chambers of the Supreme Court.

#### **Final Legal Arguments in Treason Trial due Today**

(National Chronicle, The Informer and The Inquirer)

- State prosecutors and defense lawyers in the ongoing treason trial are due to begin final legal arguments today at the Criminal Court "A" at the Temple of Justice. Both sides in the legal battle are expected to provide justifications why the court should rule in their favour. The two accused, retired army general Charles Julu and Colonel Andrew Dorbor, are held for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government of President Sirleaf.

#### **Executive Mansion Says the President is in Good Health**

(National Chronicle and The Inquirer)

- The Executive Mansion announced on Monday that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is healthy after a weeklong medical examination in the United States. According to Presidential Press Secretary Cyrus Badio, the medical check-up is routine and not a result of any diagnosis. The clarification follows speculations in some publications that the President is suffering from cancer.

#### **Armed Gang Harassing Peaceful Citizens in Northern Lofa County**

(The News)

- The News newspaper reported incidents of armed robberies in Lofa County, where a criminal gang is said to be harassing peaceful citizens. Lofa County Superintendent Galakpai Kortimai corroborated the information and disclosed that a group of men carrying cutlasses and other harmful objects recently attacked a video club in central Voinjama and made away with several valuables and money. The Government recently ordered rearming of the police to combat armed robbery while at the same time seeking a legislation to make armed robbery a non-bailable offense.

### **Radio Summary**



## **Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

### **Speakers at Anti-Robbery Hearings Proposed Death Penalty for Armed Robbers**

- Several speakers who attended yesterday's public hearing on the upsurge in armed robbery in the country proposed death penalty for perpetrators.
- The speakers said armed robbery is a "hideous crime" that falls directly under capital offense and must be non-bailable but urged speedy trial.
- Former Associate Justice, Cllr. M. Wilkins Wright called for an amendment in the Armed Robbery Act to remove cases in which the defendants are admitted to bail.
- Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Liberia Coalition of Human Rights Defenders, Cllr. T. Dempster Brown blamed the Ministry of Justice for its lack of willingness to persecute armed robbery, a claim Solicitor General Tiawon Gongloe dismissed.

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

### **President Sirleaf Gives Position on TRC crisis**

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

### **Executive Mansion Clarifies President Sirleaf's "Ill Health" Report**

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

### **Forum on CDA Restructuring Opens in Monrovia**

- A three-day round-table conference aimed at rehabilitating and restructuring the Cooperative Development Agency opened in Monrovia yesterday.
- The Ministry of Agriculture said the conference will also discuss updating the cooperative laws to enhance the reactivation process of the sector and at the end of the conference; a policy document would be presented to the National Legislature for review and ratification.
- The Agriculture Ministry organized the forum in collaboration with four groups and brings together stakeholders from the fifteen political subdivisions of the country.

\*\*\*\*

## The Daily Star (Lebanon)

Wednesday, 30 April 2003

### **Registrar of Hariri court to take up post this week**

Robin Vincent will function as 'manager' of tribunal

By Michael Bluhm

Daily Star staff

BEIRUT: The establishment of the UN tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri has moved one step closer, as the UN announced on Tuesday that the tribunal's registrar was formally taking office this week. As registrar, Robin Vincent will function akin to the manager of the tribunal, preparing the premises of the tribunal in Holland's The Hague, recruiting administrative personnel and laying out the court's budget, said the statement issued by the office of UN chief Ban Ki-moon.

UN Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Nicolas Michel has said that when Vincent entered office, it would represent an "important sign" on the road to the creation of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

The statement added that Vincent would also be "coordinating the transition" between the commission investigating Hariri's killing and the tribunal, but a UN spokesperson said no one should interpret that as meaning the tribunal would arise in the near future.

"We are not saying it's going to be happening tomorrow," Radhia Achouri, senior communications adviser to Michel, told The Daily Star. "That's not our intention."

The wording about the transition referred to the eventual transfer of commission staff from their positions to new posts in the tribunal, she added.

"Definitely we don't mean that these people are going to be going immediately," Achouri said. Vincent, a British citizen, will continue working from UN headquarters in New York and should move to The Hague before summer, Achouri added.

The speed of the establishment has turned into a political issue, as the tribunal has assumed a major role on the political row that has polarized Lebanon for nearly 18 months, with the March 14 governing coalition leading the push for the tribunal's rapid establishment.

Justice Minister Charles Rizk proposed two weeks ago that the Cabinet approve the extension of the investigation commission's mandate past June 15 with the proviso that the commission's chief take up his planned role as the tribunal's prosecutor on the same date.

Rizk and his compatriots in the March 14 governing coalition have long been staunch backers of the tribunal and outspoken critics of Syria, whom many March 14 members blame for Hariri's assassination and the string of political violence that has plagued Lebanon.

Syrian President Bashar Assad has denied any involvement in Hariri's killing and has said Syria will not allow its citizens to appear before the tribunal, while some in Lebanon's Syrian-backed opposition have voiced concerns that the tribunal could be manipulated for political ends.

The investigating commission chief, Canadian prosecutor Daniel Bellemare, said in his April 8 report to the UN Security Council that he believed "political motivation" stood behind Hariri's assassination and that a "criminal network" had carried out the February 14, 2005 killing and remained active. Syrian relations with the US soured dramatically after the killing, and the US has kicked in \$14 million of the \$60.3 million pledged for the operations of the tribunal.

Vincent is putting the "final touches" on the tribunal's budget, which needs approval from the management committee overseeing the tribunal's operations, Achouri said. The management committee is composed of the UN, the host country and major donors to the tribunal, such as the US.

The budget will include money to refurbish the former Dutch intelligence building housing the tribunal, perhaps for the construction of one or two courtrooms, Achouri added.

Vincent, who also served as the registrar of the Special court for Sierra Leone, was appointed to his post at the Hariri tribunal on March 10 by Ban.