

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



A little boy at Talia Yawbeko looking into his future.

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:

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

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

Tuesday, 30 March 2010



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

PRESS RELEASE NO. 21

RESTORING WOMEN'S DIGNITY: PRESIDENT ERNEST BAI KOROMA'S APOLOGY TO SIERRA LEONEAN WOMEN IMPLEMENTS TRC RECOMMENDATION

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone commends H. E. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, for implementing yet another Imperative Recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) by his public apology to women.

The recommendation at paragraph 317 of page 167 of Vol 2 of the TRC Report 2004, requires that 'the President as "the Father of the Nation" and as 'Head of State', should 'acknowledge the harm suffered by women and girls during the conflict in Sierra Leone and offer an unequivocal apology to them on behalf of the government and preceding governments in Sierra Leone'.

The long awaited public apology, to women, made by President Koroma, on Saturday 27th March 2010 was received with great emotion by the large crowd of women who had gathered in Moyamba, Southern Province from all across the country, for the annual celebration of International Women's Day.

The President, in his statement recalled the many indignities suffered by the Sierra Leonean Women- unlawful killing, rape, amputation and loss of family and property- noting that the country had failed its women folk especially by not protecting them during the eleven year civil war. The President asserted that unless the nation apologises for these wrongs 'we will not be able to move forward'.

The President apologised in his capacity as 'Head of State' for violations against women, as 'Commander In-Chief' of the Armed Forces for all the wrongs done to women by the Army and other warring factions, and lastly as 'Fountain of Honour and Justice' for the injustices suffered by women.

President Koroma gave the women assurances of non repetition of the harms inflicted and of State protection. He further called on his male compatriots as men, husbands and brothers - to provide security for women at all times. He restated his Government's commitment to implementing the Gender legislation to the letter and also committed to ensuring the 30% quota for women in decision making positions, another imperative TRC recommendation. HRCSL Commissioner Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff accepted the apology on behalf of the women.

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, which has relentlessly advocated for this Presidential apology, welcomes this bold and courageous move by Dr Koroma and calls on the women to respond positively to the President's call for Sierra Leonean women to work together with government to turn a new page so women can take their rightful place alongside with men to implement the terms of the Moyamba Declaration 2010, HRCSL renews its call for speedy and comprehensive implementation of all outstanding TRC recommendations.

Dated 29th March 2010

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone is an independent national human rights institution established by the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act No. 9 of 2004 with the mandate to protect and promote human rights

Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, 38 Wellington Street-Freetown, 69 Blama Road Kenema, 1 Old Railway Line Bo & 30A Wallace Johnson Street Makeni

Awoko Online

Friday, 26 March 2010

Professor Joko Smart damns ICC Court

Professor Henry Joko Smart has criticized the International Criminal Court for the action of a state in allowing its territory which it has placed at the disposal of another state to be used by that other state for perpetrating an act of aggression.

Professor Henry Joko Smart damned the ICC at a symposium organized by the Sierra Leone Institute of International Law held at the British Council Auditorium with funds provided by the Justice Sector of the United Nations Development Programme.

Professor Smart was speaking on the topic the role of Sierra Leone in international criminal justice and proposals for a provision on aggression elaborated by the special working group on the crime of aggression.

He said the International Criminal Court jurisdiction on the act of aggression in sending on behalf of a state which carries out acts of armed forces against another state of such gravity is intolerable. Professor Joko Smart also expressed the need to domesticate the ICC so that countries can be able to adjudicate some of the cases relating to ICC, additionally noting that only cases like genocide and other crimes against humanity should be conferred on the ICC.

Ambassador Alieu I Kanu of the Sierra Leone Institute of International Law spoke about the essence of the symposium to discuss issues relating to ICC and its jurisdiction as practiced in other countries. Ambassador Alieu I Kanu further spoke about a conference on the international criminal court review conference to be held in Kampala Uganda in May to June this year.

Anthony Salmon of the UNDP also spoke about the need to implement the Rome Statute into Municipal Law, while Lawyer Suleiman Banja Tejan Sie chaired the symposium.

The Attorney General and Minister of Justice delivered the keynote address in which he expressed government's determination to adhere to international treaties on criminal justice citing the Special Court for Sierra Leone as a model. The Sierra Leone Institute of International Law symposium ended yesterday.

By Saidu Bah

Charlestaylortrial.org (The Hague)

Friday, 26 March 2010

Liberia: Prosecution Witness's Testimony Was Untrue, Charles Taylor Did Not Help Plan The Invasion Of Sierra Leone in 1991, Defense Witness Says

Alpha Sesay

A defense witness for Charles Taylor has told Special Court for Sierra Leone judges in The Hague that a prosecution witness lied in his 2008 evidence when he testified that the former Liberian president helped Sierra Leonean rebels to invade Sierra Leone in 1991, a war that lasted in the West African country for 11 years.

John Vincent, a former Training Commandant for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel group that Mr. Taylor is on trial for allegedly providing support for, testified that former RUF commander and prosecution witness Isaac Mongor's testimony against Mr. Taylor that the former Liberian president helped RUF leader Foday Sankoh to invade Sierra Leone in March 1991, is untrue. Mr. Mongor, in his 2008 testimony told the judges that shortly before the invasion of Sierra Leone in March 1991, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Sankoh met in the Liberian town of Voinjama, near the country's border with Sierra Leone. In his testimony yesterday, Mr. Vincent told the judges that he was part of the RUF fighters trained in Liberia, who invaded Sierra Leone in 1991. As he continued his testimony today, in his response to questions from defense counsel for Mr. Taylor, Morris Anyah, Mr. Vincent said that the former Liberian president did not play any role in the invasion of Sierra Leone.

"In the period when you were making your way to Sierra Leone in particular the days between the 22nd and 23rd of March, did you ever hear anyone say that Charles Taylor was in the vicinity of Voinjama?" Mr. Anyah asked the witness.

"Not at all. Had Mr. Taylor being in Voinjama and when Mr. Sankoh went for us, the last group, he would have told us. And when we got there, if at all he was there, I was going to see him too, but that did not happen," the witness responded.

Mr. Vincent also disputed Mr. Mongor's 2008 testimony that Special Forces from Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group moved from the NPFL base in Gbarnga, Bong County in Liberia to assist the RUF in invading Sierra Leone. According to Mr. Mongor, the NPFL fighters took with them a truck load of arms and ammunition for the invasion of Sierra Leone. Today, Mr. Anyah sought to verify these accounts and to ascertain Mr. Mongor's position as a training instructor for the RUF as stated in his (Mongor) testimony.

"Did you see any NPFL Special Forces that were there to provide support to the RUF?" Mr. Anyah asked the witness.

In his response, the witness said "no, not to my knowledge."

"Did you see any trucks containing arms and ammunition that was supplied by the NPFL to facilitate the RUF invasion of Sierra Leone?"

The witness responded with a resounding "NO."

"Whether at Crab Hole or at Camp Nama, to your knowledge, did Isaac Mongor train any men when your were there?" Mr. Anyah asked the witness again.

"Isaac Mongor did not train anybody. I continue to say that Isaac Mongor was a demonstrator," the witness said.

In leading their witnesses, Mr. Taylor's defense lawyers are making frantic efforts to discredit the evidence of prosecution witnesses. That is what Mr. Anyah and Mr. Vincent sought to do today with Mr. Mongor's testimony for the prosecution. Mr. Vincent is the seventh witness that has testified for Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Vincent's testimony continues on Tuesday. The courtroom will be used for other trials on Monday and therefore, Mr. Taylor's trial will only resume on Tuesday.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

ICC has no time to try Charles Taylor

The International Criminal Court in The Hague has no room to try former president of Liberia Charles Taylor. The trial will probably be moved to the Hariri Tribunal in the Dutch town of Leidschendam.

The Taylor case falls under the Special Court for Sierra Leone, but the case was handed over to the Netherlands in 2006 for security reasons.

At the time, the ICC had enough time to hear the case, but now that has changed. The trial against Jean-Pierre Bemba, former vice president of the Democratic Republic of Congo is due to begin in June.

The Hariri Tribunal is the first international terrorism tribunal.



Daily Observer

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

I Received No Bribe to Testify



Charles Taylor's defense witness denied that he was taking bribes in exchange for evidence.

The protected Gambian witness, whose evidence was suspended on March 10, 2010 to give prosecutors more time to prepare for his cross-examination, took the stand again recently. Prosecution counsel, Nicholas Koumjian, raised concerns about the amount of money the witness was receiving, and the possibility that the funds acted as an incentive for him to testify for the former president.

The witness, prosecutors said, had received US\$11,000 in total from the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) provided to him by the court since he arrived in The Hague to testify for Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Koumjian also pointed out that the witness was lodged at one of the best hotels in The Netherlands.

The witness denied the prosecution allegation, saying that his DSA and accommodation should not be looked at as a bribe to testify for Mr. Taylor.

“To my knowledge, all what I am receiving is for my subsistence while I am here in The Netherlands and it is not money that has been given to me as a bribe,” the witness said.

“It is a fact that most of the witnesses that have come here do not stay in hotels,” Mr. Koumjian responded, prompting Mr. Taylor's defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, to object to the line of questioning on the grounds that the prosecution's suggestion 'is totally unfair and uncalled for'.

“Moses Blah, the Vice President of Liberia, stayed in the same hotel that Yanks Smythe [Mr. Taylor's first defense witness] stayed in and received DSA from the Witness and Victims Service (WVS).

“The suggestion that there is something, somehow, something improper about this witness receiving DSA, coming out of the mouth of Mr. Koumjian, in my submission, is totally erroneous and false,” Mr. Griffiths argued.

Mr. Koumjian also highlighted contradictions in the witness' testimony with that of Mr. Taylor, specifically about the arrest of nationals of contributing countries to the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) peacekeeping forces in Liberia.

In July 2009, Mr. Taylor testified that Nigerian nationals were picked up by his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group when ECOMOG forces started bombing NPFL territories in Liberia.

The current witness has told the court that no West African nationals were arrested by the NPFL. Mr. Koumjian sought to know who was telling lies between Mr. Taylor and the witness.

“So Mr. Witness, who is the liar: Mr. Taylor when he says he did begin the process of picking up nationals of contributing countries and targeting Nigerians, or you?” Mr. Koumjian asked the witness.

In his response, the witness said that “now, if Taylor is lying, you can prove him to be lying but what I am telling you is the truth and I want you to understand that.”

Before court adjourned March 19, 2010, the judges granted permission for the witness to visit Mr. Taylor at his detention facility after the conclusion of his testimony. While prosecutors did not object to the visit, they asked that a detention facility representative be present at the meeting between the two men.

Charlestaylortrial.org (The Hague)

Thursday, 25 March 2010

Liberia: RUF Trained At Camp Nama in Liberia, But Not With Assistance From Charles Taylor

Alpha Sesay

Sierra Leonean rebel fighters were trained in Liberia but not with assistance from Charles Taylor, a defense witness for the former Liberian president told the Special Court for Sierra Leone today in The Hague.

Mr. Taylor's seventh defense witness, John Vincent, told the court today that he was part of the original fighters trained as members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Liberia before the group attacked Sierra Leone in March 1991. Prosecutors have alleged that RUF rebels were trained at Camp Nama military training base in Liberia, with assistance from Mr. Taylor, whose National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group had already waged a war in Liberia in 1989. Witnesses have testified to RUF fighters undergoing training at Camp Nama under instructions from commanders belonging to Mr. Taylor's NPFL. The former president has denied helping in training RUF rebels in Liberia, telling the judges during his testimony as a witness in his own defense that he had no knowledge of RUF rebels being trained at Camp Nama.

Today, Mr. Vincent, testifying in defense of Mr. Taylor told the court that he was part of the RUF fighters who underwent training at Camp Nama but that such training was not done with assistance from Mr. Taylor. He told the court that RUF leader Foday Sankoh and some other people gave them military training at a particular section in Camp Nama called "Crab Hole." Under direct-examination from Mr. Taylor's defense counsel, Morris Anyah, the witness said that while they underwent training at Camp Nama, they never saw Mr. Taylor there, nor did they hear of him helping the RUF.

"During the entire period of time you were at Crab Hole, did you ever see Charles Taylor there?" Mr. Anyah asked the witness today.

"No, I did not even know him, not a day," the witness responded.

"During the time you were at Crab Hole, did you ever hear the name Charles Taylor mentioned?" Mr. Anyah asked again.

"At the time Bong Mines was captured, that was the first time I started hearing about the name Charles Taylor, and throughout Liberia at that time now, we used to hear the name, but there was nothing that was made mention of about Charles Taylor at Crab Hole, no," the witness explained.

The witness further said that during his entire time at Crab Hole, he never heard of Mr. Taylor visiting Camp Nama. The witness said when the RUF invaded Sierra Leone, he was appointed as the Training Commandant for the entire rebel group.

Also in his testimony today, the witness refuted claims by prosecutors that the RUF recruited and used children for combat purposes during Sierra Leone's civil conflict. Witnesses have testified to the use of child soldiers in both the RUF and the NPFL, and prosecutors have asserted that Mr. Taylor encouraged the use of children for combat purposes in both rebel groups. One of the charges in the indictment against Mr. Taylor is the recruitment and use of child soldiers in the RUF. Today, while maintaining that the NPFL had no relationship with the RUF, the witness, Mr. Vincent, told the court that the RUF did indeed train children under the age of 17 years at Camp Nama in Liberia but added that such training was not for

the purpose of being used for combat.

“What I mean here is that if I am here alone, maybe one of my family members has escaped and am going for training and I have my younger brother, I can’t leave him behind, he will be with me, we’ll train, and when am going for my assignment, he’ll stay at home. That was why those young ones were trained, for their own safety as well so in case of any danger, they’ll be able to get to their people but we were not using them as fighters,” the witness explained.

Mr. Vincent also refuted claims that RUF rebels amputated the arms and limbs of civilians in Sierra Leone. He explained that amputations in Sierra Leone were started by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), a group of soldiers in the Sierra Leone army who overthrew the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone in May 1997. The AFRC teamed up with the RUF to establish a government in Sierra Leone but were forcefully removed from power by West African peacekeepers in 1998. According to the witness, a female member of the AFRC, popularly known to date as “Adama cut-hand”, started the amputation of civilians in Sierra Leone. The RUF, he said, did not get involved in amputations.

Mr. Vincent’s testimony continues tomorrow.

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
29 March 2010**

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

International Clips on Liberia

Zambian firms withdraw bid to run Liberia utility

<http://www.theafricareport.com/last-business-news/3289066-Zambian%20firms%20withdraw%20bid%20to%20run%20Liberia%20utility.html>

LUSAKA (Reuters) - Zambian power companies Zesco and Copperbelt Energy Corp (CEC) have withdrawn their joint bid to manage Liberia Electricity Corporation, the CEC executive chairman said on Sunday. Zambian state utility Zesco and CEC, the largest distributor of power to the southern African country's mines, were shortlisted to manage Liberia Electricity Corporation, whose infrastructure was run down during the country's civil war. "We withdrew from the Liberian bid because Zesco opted to drop out citing huge challenges back home and we thought we should not proceed alone as CEC," Hanson Sindowe told Reuters. Power blackouts are a regular feature for domestic users in Zambia, who are frequently switched off as Zesco rations power to ensure a steady supply to key industries like the mines. Sindowe said Zesco and CEC withdrew after the Liberia Power Corporation had prequalified them to the next round of the bidding process whose tendering closed on March 16. "It is unfortunate that we had to withdraw from the race at such an advanced stage but we hope to work with Zesco on other international projects in future," he said. The other firms still in the race to manage the Liberia power utility are Canada's Manitoba Hydro International, NTE of Norway and Siemens.

23 crew members rescued from burning Liberian ship

<http://sify.com/news/23-crew-members-rescued-from-burning-Liberian-ship-news-National-kd1tObdhafc.html>

The Indian Navy and Coast Guard Saturday rescued 23 crew members of a Liberian cargo ship MV Maersk Miami, which had caught fire in the high seas off Goa Friday, an official said. The ship was heading for the Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Mumbai when a major fire broke out in its engine room. It sent out a distress call around 7.30 p.m. which was picked up by ICGS (Indian Coast Guard Ship) Subhadra Kumari Chauhan patrolling off the Tarapur coast of Maharashtra. The ship alerted the navy and Coast Guard regional headquarters both in Mumbai and Goa, and the international safety net was activated to alert ships plying in the area so that initial assistance could be provided, an official spokesman said here. Simultaneously, the navy sent a ship with a medical team from Goa and diverted two other naval ships to provide assistance. The naval and the Coast Guard ships reached the **Liberian** vessel by midnight and helped douse the fire.

International Clips on West Africa

Sierra Leone

**Sierra Leone doctors and nurses get massive pay rise
BBC**

Health workers in Sierra Leone say they will end their 10-day strike, after the president agreed in a late-night deal to increase their pay six-fold. Strike organiser Dr Freddie Coker told the BBC that doctors would now get a take-home salary of \$600 (£402) a month, up from \$100 (£67). The deal came after President Ernest Bai Koroma had told health workers to return to work by Monday or be

sacked. The stoppage has led to the closure of the country's main children's hospital. Several wards at the main maternity hospital in the capital Freetown have also been shut, while army and police nurses have been drafted in. The president has said that the industrial action may have led to some deaths in the country.

Ivory Coast

Ivory Coast Mid-Crop Cocoa Harvest May Decline 8.6%

March 29 (Bloomberg) -- Cocoa production in Ivory Coast, the world's biggest grower, may decline 8.6 percent in this year's mid-crop season because of poor rains, spurring global prices for the commodity. Output may drop to about 300,000 metric tons from 328,117 tons last year, said an official at the state-run Bourse de Café et du Cacao, or BCC. The official declined to be identified because the forecast hasn't been made public yet. Harvesting of the mid-crop, the smaller of two annual harvests, begins this week and ends in September. "The mid-crop should be quite influential in terms of setting the tone to see if we'll see a rebound" in prices, Sudakshina Unnikrishnan, a commodities analyst at Barclays Capital in London, said in an interview yesterday. "We're not expecting a big rebound, which should be supportive of prices."

Local Media – Newspaper

President Sirleaf Concludes Visit To Spain

[The Informer, In Profile Daily, The Analyst, The Inquirer, The News]

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, last Saturday joined several other leading women personalities from five continents, particularly from Africa, at the opening in Valencia, Spain, of a two-day meeting, which focused on four main issues.
- The issues included education, health care, female representation in positions of power – empowerment and economic development.
- "It is, indeed, true that we need the world to be better, as the meeting's name suggests, and women – especially women working together – have a vital role to play," Liberian President told the gathering in an opening statement.
- Such events, the President said, offer the chance for women around the world to reach out to each other, to unite and to be stronger in partnership.

President Sirleaf Strives To Revitalize MRU; Proposes Mini-Summit

[The Inquirer]

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is seeking for a strong, vibrant and proactive Mano River Union (MRU) Secretariat that would speed-up the work of the union.
- Meanwhile, the Liberian leader Thursday, March 25, 2010 dispatched Planning and Economic Affairs Minister, Amara Konneh to neighboring Guinea to deliver a strong message to the government of Guinea about the urgent need to strengthen the MRU.
- President Sirleaf earlier sent Minister Konneh to Sierra Leone to deliver similar message to the Government of that country.
- During his visit to Freetown, Minister Konneh highlighted issues concerning governance, the management of financial and other resources, and poor communication on the part of the Secretariat.
- Also on his agenda as his core mission to Freetown was the need to swiftly and carefully address the constraints that are slowing the revitalization process in the Union and renew call for member countries to commit themselves to fostering robust economic growth and development in the Mano River basin.

UNMIL Strengthens Corrections System

[Heritage, The Informer, National Chronicle, Public Agenda, The Analyst]

- United Nations Deputy Envoy, Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, said the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) remains committed to strengthening Liberia's corrections system and improving the overall justice delivery system of the country.
- Ms. Mensa-Bonsu made the statement at the graduation of 50 correction officers who underwent a five-month intensive training, jointly conducted by Ministry of Justice and UNMIL's Corrections Advisory Unit at the National Police Training Academy.
- Stressing on the significance of the rule of law sector, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Rule of Law said, "an effective Rule of Law sector is fundamental to the stability and prosperity of Liberia and so every effort should be made to nurture it."
- She added that "the inadequate number of correction officers in Liberia is hindering the ability of the correction sector to effectively play its role in justice delivery in Liberia."

ECOWAS Ends Peace Confab In Monrovia

[New Democrat, Public Agenda, The Inquirer]

- The week-long International Conference on "Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: Achievements, Failures, Lessons" that took place in Monrovia ended Friday with a call on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to fast track the establishment of a Council of Former Heads of State and Governments in the region in order to enable them contribute more effectively to conflict prevention and peace building efforts.
- The Conference, hosted by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, brought together former Heads of State, the leadership and senior officials of the ECOWAS and the African Union Commission.
- The Conference was also attended by authorities of the United Nations, members of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, former ECOMOG and ECOMIL Commanders, officials of Governments from ECOWAS member states, practitioners, researchers, the civil society and the media.
- The participants in their 16-count declaration indicated that ECOWAS should strengthen its mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of the Constitutional Convergence Principles contained in the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.
- According to them, attention should be given to building the capacity of electoral organizations, political parties, parliaments and the judiciary.

Murder Charge - For State Prosecutor in Maryland

[Public Agenda, New Democrat]

- Reports from Harper, Maryland County, say a member of the county's prosecuting team, Cllr. Fulton Yancy, has been charged with murder following the discovery of human parts and bottles of human blood in his house.
- The arrest of Cllr. Yancy followed a decision by the County to invite a traditional doctor to identify suspected ritualistic killers in Maryland when a 7-month-old pregnant woman was found dead in a pool of blood.
- Meanwhile, Justice Minister Christina Tah arrived in the county on Sunday to verify the reports of the crime and take appropriate action.

World Bank Africa Region Vice President Arrives Today

[Heritage, The Informer, New Democrat, The Analyst, The News]

- World Bank Vice President for the West Africa Region, Obiageli Katryn Ezekwesili arrives in the country today to assess progress of implementation of West Bank assisted projects.
- As part of the visit, Ms. Ezekwesili will hold high level talks with the Government on various issues bordering on scaling up the implementation projects, particularly infrastructure, women and youth empowerment.
- The current World Bank Portfolio in Liberia consists of about 20 projects totalling more than US\$250 million in commitments.

Annual Red Cross Meeting Opens In Monrovia Monday

[The Informer, In Profile Daily, The Analyst]

- The Annual Focal Persons Meeting of the eight national Societies (8NS) African Initiative of members of the International Federation of Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies (IFRC) will open in Monrovia Monday under the aegis of the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS).
- The 8NS Africa Initiative focuses on the development and support of four African National Societies' organizational capacities.
- The national Societies are Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Mozambique.
- Under the Initiative, the organizational capacities of the four African National Societies are supported by the British, Canadian, Norwegian and the Dutch national Societies.

Liberia Elected Vice Chair Of WAEC

[In Profile Daily, The News]

- Liberia has been elected Vice Chair on the Council of nominees of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).
- The Liberian Government's Chief Nominee on the Council, Deputy Education Minister for Instruction, Hester Williams-Catakaw was elected at the just-ended 58th Council meeting of WAEC.
- Mrs. Williams-Catakaw succeeds Mr. Saeku Ahmed Tejan-Tamu of Sierra Leone.
- She is expected to serve the post of Vice Chairman on the WAEC Council for a period of one year.

Ducor Palace Hotel Renovation Starts May

[Heritage, The Inquirer]

- The Libyan Africa Investment Company has formally revealed plans for the rehabilitation of the Ducor Palace Hotel on Broad Street, Snapper Hill.
- A Representative of the Company, Mr. Eugene Peabody said all is now set for the commencement of construction work beginning early May this year.
- Mr. Peabody said the contract has already been awarded for the scrapping of the mechanical and electrical fittings on the building.
- According to him, all detail designs and architecture works have been completed on the facility.
- Mr. Peabody disclosed the cost of the construction and furnishing of the four-star modern Ducor Palace Hotel is put at a little over US\$55 million.
- He further said that modalities were being concluded for the compensation and proper relocation of residents within the vicinity of the Ducor Hotel.

Star Radio *(News monitored today at 09:00 am)*

Lofa Citizens Seek Replacement Of UNMIL Troops

- A petition has formally been submitted to the Legislature calling for the immediate replacement of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) troops in Lofa County.
- The petition was presented by a group of Christians under the banner Concerned Lofa County Ministers of God and Body of Christ in Liberia.
- The group claimed during the February 26 violence in Lofa, UNMIL troops were bias in handling the situation as reported by Superintendent Galakpai Kortimai.
- According to the group, UNMIL troops refused to intervene in the conflict on grounds they did not get instruction from Monrovia but chose to protect Mosques.
- Deputy House Speaker Tokpa Mulbah received the petition and promised to submit it to the Legislature which represents all Liberians and tribes.

(Also reported Radio Veritas, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Hans Williams' Team Submits Bill Of Exception

- Reports say Criminal Court "B" has received the bill of exception of the defense team in the Angel Togba murder trial.
- The reports say defense tendered the 45-count exception bill Friday ahead of the legal deadline of next Wednesday.
- It is expected to contain a legal critique of Judge Blamo Dixon's verdict which sentenced Hans and Mardea Williams to death by hanging.
- The verdict condemned the couple last Friday for killing little Angel Togba in November 2007.
- Judge Blamo Dixon is now expected to peruse the bill of exception and sign it.

- According to the reports signing the exception bill gives the Supreme Court jurisdiction over the matter.

UL Launches Investigation In Fake Graduation

- The University of Liberia (UL) has launched an investigation into fake graduation.
- UL President Dr. Emmett Dennis said five graduates of the university are currently under investigation.
- Dr. Dennis said the reports of fake graduation prompted the investigation and vowed to revoke the credentials of those found culpable.

Land Commission Holds Consultative In Grand Gedeh County

- An official of the Land Commission has arrived in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County for a one day consultative meeting.
- The Land Commissioner for Outreach Affairs Suzanna Vaye said the meeting will bring together chiefs, women groups and other stakeholders.

Liberia Elected Vice Chair Of WAEC

Maryland University Students On Harper Arrest

- The Pleebo University Student Union says it is troubled by reports of arrest of several persons in Harper, Maryland County in connection with ritualistic activity.
- According to the students the incident reminds them of similar events or incidents in 1979 and 1986 in which several high-profile local leaders were arrested.
- The University student union wants speedy investigation into the matter to bring the perpetrators to book.

(Also reported Radio Veritas, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Maryland Traditional Doctor Invited To Bong County

- Several citizens of Bong County are calling on the traditional doctor operating in Maryland County to extend his operation to their county.
- The citizens believe the extension of the traditional doctor's operation to Bong County will help expose people allegedly involved in ritualistic activities.
- The citizens said Bong County was infested with secret ritualistic killers and the perpetrators are never identified.
- They named the brutal murder of little Sunnyboy Kollie, Jacob Mulbah and Mary Kolleh as some of the secret killings that have taken place in the County.
- The citizens, mainly women said the arrest of government officials in Maryland County suggests that those at the centre of the secret killings are powerful people in authority.

Ducor Palace Hotel Renovation Starts May

Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 09:45 am)

Government Sends Blood Sample To Ivory Coast, Charged Cllr. Yancy

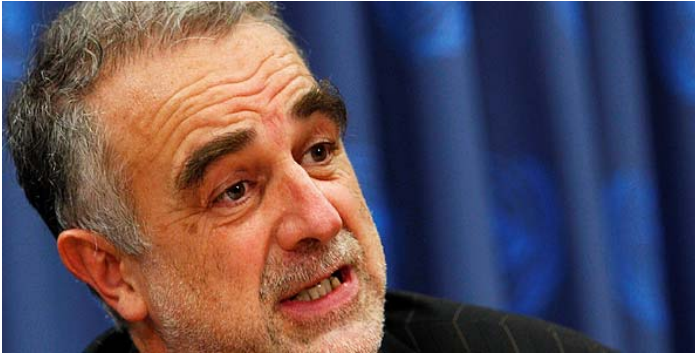
- Reports from Maryland County say Justice Ministry authorities have sent to the Ivory Coast a sample of blood found in the home of Cllr. Fulton Yancy to determine whether it is a human blood.
- The police in the county has charged and sent to court Cllr. Yancy on suspicion of ritualistic killings.

Daily Nation (Kenya)

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

Hague court report on Kenya to be made public

By NATION Correspondent



*ICC chief prosecutor Louis Moreno-Ocampo.
Photo/ FILE*

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A confidential report prepared by the International Criminal Court on victims of the post-poll violence is to be made public any time now.

Judges handling the Kenyan case at The Hague last week ordered the court's registrar to release the report by the close of business on Monday.

The document is expected to contain details of the victims' testimonies about what happened during the violence that led to the killing of 1,133 people and displacement of 650,000 others from their homes.

The report was filed by the Victims Participation and Reparations Section on March 15 in confidence.

Wellbeing

The Pre-trial Chamber says that having reviewed the report they are satisfied that the basis for keeping it confidential no longer exists.

However, the Registrar has been asked to edit the document "in order to protect the safety, physical and psychological wellbeing, dignity and privacy of victims".

The judges have also said that a decision on the extension of a time limit issued by the chamber in December be made public.

BBC Online

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

Serbia debates Srebrenica massacre apology

Serbia's parliament is debating a resolution condemning the Srebrenica massacre in 1995 - the worst incident of the Bosnian war.

The text apologises that Serbia did not do more to prevent the tragedy.

The killing of more than 7,000 Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) was carried out by Bosnian Serb forces - allies of then-Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

It is thought the resolution has enough support to pass, though nationalist parties say they will vote against it.

The resolution comes after years of denial in Serbia that the Srebrenica massacre even took place, says the BBC's Belgrade correspondent Mark Lowen.

The pro-Western government in Belgrade now believes this resolution would help paint the country in a new light, he says, determined as it is to face its past and aiming for regional reconciliation and EU membership.

In an attempt to win over Serbian nationalists - who see the resolution as perpetuating an unjust portrayal of Serbs' role in the war - the government has promised another future resolution, condemning all crimes in the former Yugoslavia.



Several mass graves have been discovered near Srebrenica

Capital News

Monday, 29 March 2010

ICC to decide Kenya fate on Wednesday

BY JUDIE KABERIA



NAIROBI, Kenya, The International Criminal Court (ICC) Pre-Trial Chambers is expected to give a ruling on the Kenyan situation on Wednesday.

A source told Capital News that the judges will either accept or reject ICC Prosecutor Moreno Ocampo's application to commence investigations into the 2008 post-election violence.

If he gets the go ahead, Mr Ocampo will launch investigations to establish the main suspects out of the list of 20 he handed over to the chamber when he was asked for more evidence last month.

Kenyans have been expectantly awaiting the judges' answer amid complains that the court was taking too long raising people's anxiety. Mr Ocampo has been determined to file a case against the Kenyan perpetrators while the government remains non committal in the formation of a local tribunal.

The judges' ruling will take the Kenyan situation to the second stage, according to the ICC procedures.

Should there be a case, Kenya will enter the second phase which will be investigations followed by issuance of the arrest warrants or summons, then enforcement of arrest warrants and surrender of suspects to the ICC.

Owing to the fact that the ICC has no police, it entirely hopes suspects will surrender themselves or the affected countries will cooperate and arrest suspects. This has been the worst dilemma for the ICC since governments - most of who are signatories of the Rome Statute - have failed to help in the arrests.

Once the suspects are apprehended, the initial appearance at the court is next followed by the confirmation of charges then a trial.

After the trial, sentencing is issued and it is at that point that suspects can appeal.

Looking at the process, Kenya still has a long way to go (probably several years) should Mr Ocampo get the go-ahead to act.

On Saturday, International Centre for Transitional Justice head Njonjo Mue urged Kenyans to manage their expectations after the ruling since ICC processes are not immediate due to the kind of crimes committed.

Daily Monitor

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National>

ICC to redefine state aggression

By Ismail Musa Ladu

Kampala

The International Criminal Court wants more powers to prevail over “errant” states that militarily invade other sovereign nations, Daily Monitor has learnt.

The legal advisor on ICC matters in Uganda yesterday confirmed the development.

“At the moment the ICC does not have the mandate to handle nations that invade others without justifiable reason,” Mr Duncan Muhumuza said.

“But after the redefinition of the crime of aggression, the ICC’s responsibilities will be well cut out.”

He said before the ICC takes its new role that will most likely see it clash with some countries, partner states must agree on what tantamounts to unjustifiable aggression.

“This is a sensitive matter, so all the partner states have to redefine what constitutes crime of aggression before ICC begins to handle it,” Mr Muhumuza told reporters ahead of the ICC review conference, beginning in May.

Other issues to be discussed will include the plight of LRA victims basing on a report being compiled by four countries, including Uganda and Argentina.

The ICC review conference will also re-examine the role of partner states in enforcing its obligations that will allow the court to operate smoothly.

Commitment needed

“Delegates will have to show their commitment when it comes to matters such as enforcing arrests,” the Programme officer, No Peace Without Justice, Ms Niamah Gibbons said. Scholars define crime of aggression as a war sanctioned without the mandate of the UN Security Council.