

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

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Monday, May 31, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
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Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248  
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AFRICA

War crimes court delays ruling on Taylor trial

Freetown, Sierra Leone

28 May 2004 14:19

The United Nations-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone, which was due to rule on Friday on whether former Liberian president Charles Taylor will stand trial on charges he aided rebels in their decade-long war in the West African state, has delayed its decision, a court spokesperson said.

Spokesperson Peter Andersen said the delay is administrative and that the judges are expected to make their decision public after a court session on Monday.

Taylor, who has been in exile in Nigeria since August, was indicted in March last year on 17 counts of crimes against humanity for allegedly arming and training the notorious Revolutionary United Front.

In exchange for his help, which is believed to have included the dispatch of Liberian fighters into Sierra Leone to back the rebel advances, Taylor was allegedly paid with so-called "blood" diamonds -- among the estimated \$400-million-worth of the precious gems smuggled from Sierra Leone during the war.

Taylor was served with the indictment in June of last year in Accra, Ghana, where he was engaged in negotiations to end Liberia's own 14 years of civil war that were sparked in 1989 by his rebellion against then-president Samuel Doe.

The court's timing infuriated regional leaders who were trying to broker the peace deal, including Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo, who eventually became Taylor's reluctant host in exile.

Since then Obasanjo has remained firm, even flying in the face of an Interpol warrant filed in December, that his guest will stay where he is, ensconced in a luxury villa in the oceanfront town of Calabar, until Liberia summons him home to stand trial.

He has, however, warned that should Taylor be found to be meddling in Liberia's reconstruction, all protection and immunity will be withdrawn.

Lawyer Terrence Terry filed a motion with the Freetown-based court in July demanding that the indictments be quashed. Taylor was a sitting president when he was indicted, Terry argued, and therefore immune from prosecution.

The attorney also raised "serious questions" about the court's jurisdiction and ability to try Taylor.

Oral arguments were heard in November and the decision has been pending since.

The anniversary of his indictment brought with it a search of his home and offices in Liberia, and court investigators have been seen numerous times in Liberia since December gathering information and potential witnesses

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to stack up against him.

A consortium of Liberian human rights groups was on Friday to petition the legislature to pass a law demanding that Liberian chairperson Gyude Bryant request Taylor's handover to the special court.

His prosecution "will also be a significant milestone in addressing the problem of impunity and human rights violations, corruption and the building of sustainable democracy in Liberia and other parts of the African continent", the consortium said in its petition. -- Sapa-AFP

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**SCOTLAND on SUNDAY**

Sun 30 May 2004

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## War crimes trial targets 'heroes' of Sierra Leone

**IAN MATHER**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

**imather@scotlandonsunday.com**

ON A pleasant hillside on the edge of the capital haunting images of Sierra Leone's civil war will unfold this week when a new war crimes tribunal begins its first case against the alleged ringleaders.

Three leaders of the Kamajors, an army of tribal hunters, face war crimes charges for killing, looting and terrorising the civilian population and for the use of child soldiers.

They will be tried in the Special Court for Sierra Leone, a purpose-built court backed by the United Nations.

Thirteen alleged ringleaders have been indicted so far for crimes committed in the 1991-2002 civil war that left 50,000 dead and countless more maimed. Eight are held in a new prison complex next to the court buildings.

The £60m court, paid for mostly by US and British taxpayers, has the shape of the scales of justice, symbolising Sierra Leone's "determination to solve problems by the force of argument and not by the force of arms", according to British judge Geoffrey Robertson, the court's first president.

But already it is dogged by controversy, including accusations that it will dispense "victors' justice" and that it is a tool of the Americans, who run the prosecution team.

The first surprise is that the prosecution has decided to try the leaders of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) first, since their indictments are the most controversial. The indictment alleges that Chief Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa "knew and approved the recruiting, enlisting, conscription, initiation and training of Kamajors, including children below the age of 15". The Kamajors, who are tribal hunters, were the backbone of the CDF.

It adds: "Civilians, including women and children who did not actively resist the RUF [Revolutionary United Front], were targeted by the Kamajors as collaborators, and were killed. Victims were often shot, hacked to death or burnt to death. Other practices included human sacrifices and cannibalism."

Yet many in Sierra Leone, particularly in the diamond-rich east and coastal south, consider the CDF and especially Norman, to be heroes for having liberated Sierra Leone from the rebels.

The Kamajors used the bush skills and local knowledge of forest youngsters to combat the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which had seized power in 1997 aided by the RUF.

Under Norman's leadership, the CDF collaborated with UN peacekeeping forces and British troops, who were instrumental in ending the conflict.

Norman was later arrested while serving as internal affairs minister in the present government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

Three men accused of being leaders of the RUF, whose uprising in 1991 sparked the brutal war, will stand trial on July 5. The RUF, a ragtag brigade of often underage fighters, became infamous for looting, rape and amputating the limbs of civilians, including children.

Its leaders - Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustin Gbao - face 18 charges, to which "forced marriage" has just been added for the first time in legal history. The men are accused of the alleged abduction and rape of thousands of girls and women who became the 'bush wives' of the rebels.

David Crane, the American prosecutor, said: "These additional charges of crimes against humanity reflect the fact that women and girls suffered greatly during the war."

A third joint trial of three defendants representing the AFRC, renegade former soldiers who led a brief but bloody military junta in 1997 that sparked the second half of the war, has yet to be scheduled.

But a number of prominent names are missing. Of the 13 indictments issued by the court, those widely considered the worst culprits are either dead, missing or have found asylum.

The RUF's founder, Foday Sankoh, died of a stroke while in custody in 2002. His top field commander, Sam "Mosquito" Bockarie, was killed in May last year in a shootout in Liberia.

The court has also indicted AFRC leader Johnny Paul Koroma, who has not been seen since December 2002, and is also believed to be in Liberia.

The biggest name of all, former Liberian president Charles Taylor, who is accused of arming and training the RUF in exchange for 'blood' diamonds, fled into a luxurious exile in Nigeria last August to clear the way for the signing of a peace deal in his own country.

Prosecutors have lined up 138 witnesses to testify, with many appearing under a pseudonym or behind a curtain to ensure their security.

Unlike South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Sierra Leone's Special Court has the power to prosecute, charge and sentence those found guilty of war crimes. Critics say that the court may perpetuate civil war hatred.

The former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone during the war years, Peter Penfold, questions the value of a war crimes tribunal that cannot try the main perpetrators.

"It has outlived its usefulness as such and it should be disbanded," he said.

But according to President Kabbah: "The Special Court is good for Sierra Leone. It will enhance the promotion and protection of the fundamental rights of people everywhere."

**This article:**

<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=614642004>

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Terms: nigerian presides over sierra leone's special court (Edit Search)

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**May 28, 2004**

**LENGTH:** 290 words

**HEADLINE: NIGERIAN PRESIDES OVER SIERRA LEONE'S SPECIAL COURT**

**BODY:**

Freetown, **Sierra Leone** (PANA) - Justice Emmanuel Ayoola of Nigeria has been named Presiding Judge of the Appeals Chamber of the **Special Court** for **Sierra Leone**, a position which makes him President of the court.

He was named to the post Wednesday during the 5th plenary of the judges of the court to succeed Acting President Justice Renate Winter of Austria, court sources said here Friday.

Justice Raja Fernando of Sri Lanka was elected Vice President.

An amendment to rule 18 of the court provides that the presiding judge of the Appeals Court Chamber shall be elected for a non-renewable term of one year.

Justice Ayoola has served as a **Nigerian** Supreme Court Judge, President of the Seychelles Court of Appeal and Chief Justice in the Gambia.

A graduate of London and Oxford universities, Ayoola is a former Vice President of the World Judges Association and ex-editor of the Seychelles Law Digest, the Law Reports of the Gambia, and the **Nigerian** Monthly Law Reports.

He was appointed a **Special Court** Justice in December 2002.

Justice Fernando has been a judge in Sri Lanka since 1992, and was recently elected to the Supreme Court.

He was sworn in as a Justice of the **Special Court** on 10 March 2004.

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

To date, the Prosecutor has indicted 11 persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Nine of those indicted are currently in the custody of the court.

Independent Observer

Monday May 31, 2004

After being in detention for over a year now, the trial of those indicted by the Special Court starts full swing in the next 72 hours at the Court House, Jomo Kenyatta Road in Freetown.

On Thursday 3rd June, Sam Hinga Norman and two others from the Civil Defence Force will make their appearance. And two days later Issa Sesay and two others from the RUF will appear. Then they will

# Hinga Norman, Issa Sesay, others trial start Thursday

be followed later by the others from the AFRC. About a month ago when a trial conference was held at

which defence lawyers had the opportunity to report on the health of their clients, it was reported the Augustine Gbao was suffering from heart problem.



The News

Monday May 31, 2004

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### WHERE IS TRC REPORT ?

Motuba is now a worried man for the simple fact that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC's) final report has not been published.

The TRC, set up with the aim of healing the wounds of the war, and to unite war-weary Sierra Leoneans, has not done its work satisfactorily.

Since the commission ended its work about a year ago, promising to present its final recommendations to president Kabbah, it has not lived to the expectation of that promise.

Motuba is made to understand that experts from other countries have been invited to come and help the commission in the preparation of the final report.

Motuba wonders why the chairman of TRC and staff members had to shout above their voices for funds and after receiving enough, they sit down and are not delivering the goods.

Apart from that how on earth should anyone expect a man of God who heads the TRC to abandon his own people?

Motuba knows Humper does not in any way reconcile because if he does possess the spirit of reconciliation, then he should have listened to the cries of members of the King Memorial

United Methodist church.

Motuba is appealing to Bishop Humper and his staff to present the final report to the people of this country.

It is shameful indeed to delay the report. Lonta.

WILLIAMSON, LONTA



## **War Victims Haunt Taylor**

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

May 28, 2004

Posted to the web May 28, 2004

When exiled former Liberian president, Charles Macarthur Taylor, flew from the Roberts International Airport on August 11, 2004, to Lagos, on to Abuja, and finally to Calabar City in eastern Nigeria under the "protective custody" of the presidents of Nigeria, South Africa, and Namibia, little did he know that he would be haunted indefinitely.

Until the Sierra Leonean Special Court demanded his extradition last November, Taylor had counted on the gentleman agreement reached between his exile host, Nigeria, and the international community that "Nigeria will not be harassed when she provides asylum to Liberia's fugitive president." But now the situation has changed with enormous pressure being mounted by the Sierra Leonean court on the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to send Taylor to Sierra Leone to face war crime charges for his role in that country's decade-long mayhem. Additional pressure came initially from UK-based Amnesty International and US-based Human Rights Watch; but now, local groups both in Nigeria and Liberia are throwing in their weights to have Mr. Taylor extradited for trial in Sierra. As The Analyst Staff Writer reports, the Civil Society Organizations of Liberia (CSOL) has launched an anti-impunity campaign and is using the extradition of Mr. Taylor as a litmus test.

The Civil Society Organizations of Liberia (CSOL), a conglomeration of pro-democracy and rights advocacy grouping in the country, has launched what it called a 3-month anti-impunity campaign to raise the consciousness of the Government of Liberia to the reality of justice.

The campaign, which begins in solidarity with a law suit filed in the Nigerian high court by two victims of the Sierra Leonean war against the continued stay of Mr. Taylor in Nigeria, is being simultaneously launched in the Americas, Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa, according to an CSOL press statement issued yesterday under the signature of Steering Committee Chairman J. Aloysius Toe.

As a boost to yesterday's launch, the CSOL said it plans to present a petition to the NTLA this morning to request it to authorize Chairman Gyude Bryant to demand custody of Mr. Taylor from President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

The organization said it intends to persuade the government through words and peaceful actions to cause her to demand custody of Mr. Taylor from the Nigerian government.

The 3-month campaign is expected to achieve four cardinal objectives, amongst them, "to denounce at all times, acts of committing crimes with impunity; for the Liberians society to remain steadfast, focused, and courageous in taking ownership of the fight against impunity; and to encourage and remind state institutions (i.e., police, justice system) to be responsive to criminality and bravado gansterism, through the provision of indiscriminate justice to victims." According to the CSOL, the early extradition of Mr. Taylor to face his accusers in Sierra Leone is a good beginning of efforts to eradicate the culture of impunity in Liberia because it is absurd to mention impunity without first ensuring that Mr. Taylor is brought to justice.

"In the first instance, allowing Mr. Taylor to go to Sierra Leone is not an automatic guilt but an opportunity being provided him to exonerate himself of charges leveled against him," the CSOL release noted, arguing that by going to court, Taylor would be enjoying an opportunity he denied Sam Dokie, Noah Flomo, David Toe, Charles Brown, George Yealleh, ECOMOG soldiers, and countless victims of massacres and mass murders before and during his reign of terror..

It said not only will the trial of Mr. Taylor exact retribution for crimes against humanity and set the basis and pace for the prosecution of war criminals in Liberia, but that it will also allay the fears of Liberians that Taylor is planning another war against them.

"Moreover, this will be a great and significant step which will serve to reinforce the fight against the culture of impunity and will help to lay the groundwork for future efforts to bring perpetrators to justice for crimes committed in Liberia," the statement reiterated.

Meanwhile, a high court in Nigeria is reportedly hearing a case brought before it by two victims of the Sierra Leonean civil war in an effort to compel the Nigerian government to turn Mr. Taylor over to the Sierra Leonean special court.

The identities of the plaintiffs were not disclosed, but it is believed that they are exiled Sierra Leone nationals seeking sanctuary in Nigeria.

It may be recalled that recently, members of the Nigeria Bar Association and the Journalism Union of Nigeria protested the hosting of Mr. Taylor in Nigeria after murdering three Nigeria journalists in Liberia in the early 1990s.

Notwithstanding the continuous pressure on the Nigeria government to let Taylor face justice in Sierra Leone, President Obasanjo of Nigeria is said to be contending that he would only turn Taylor over to an elected Liberian government.

The earliest Liberians are expected to have an elected government is January 2006.

In a related development, the Special UN Court in Sierra Leone has been hearing legal arguments by lawyers representing Mr. Taylor that he can not be tried because he was indicted in on June 4, 2003, while still serving as the President of Liberia.

The defense counsel is arguing that Mr. Taylor should therefore be covered by presidential immunity from arrest and trial, especially by a foreign court that has no jurisdiction over him.

Observers say whether Taylor is extradited to Sierra Leone to face trial or not will be determined by the outcomes of the defense contention in Sierra Leone, the Nigerian high court decision, and the pressure now being initiated from home to compel the NTGL to request the custody of Mr. Taylor.

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## Court lifts Pinochet's immunity

**A Chilean court has stripped former military leader Augusto Pinochet of his immunity from prosecution.**

The surprise move paves the way for his trial on charges of human rights abuses during his 1973-1990 rule.

Unlike previous cases, the latest lawsuit against Gen Pinochet refers to what was known as Operation Condor.

This was a co-ordinated campaign by the Latin American military governments of the 1970s and 1980s to crack down on their suspected opponents.

Previous attempts to prosecute General Pinochet in Chile have been dismissed on medical grounds, with judges persuaded that he is suffering from dementia.

His lawyers are expected to make a similar argument when they appeal against the ruling at the Supreme Court within the month.

### 'Surprise'

The court voted 14-9 to lift the immunity the 88-year-old enjoys as former president.

The BBC's Clinton Porteus in the Chilean capital Santiago says the decision came as a big surprise, provoking gasps - and cheers - in the courtroom.

He adds that a recent lengthy interview given by Gen Pinochet to a US television station might persuade judges that he is not mentally unfit to stand trial.

Prosecution lawyer Francisco Bravo said: "This ruling makes the relatives of the victims and the whole Chilean society again trust Chile's justice."

Lorena Pizarro, head of an association of the relatives of people who disappeared during Gen Pinochet's rule, said: "We are happy now, but we remain alert because the next step must be for the dictator to go to jail and pay for all the crimes of which he is responsible."

In 1998, Gen Pinochet was arrested in Britain after Spain requested his extradition on torture charges.

He was eventually allowed home in 2000 after he was adjudged too ill to stand trial.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/3758005.stm>

Published: 2004/05/28 15:44:43 GMT

Monday May 31, 2004

## Guest Writer

By E.D. MATHEW

# Liberians begin to cherish newfound peace

Less than a year ago they were all bitter foes, wielding AK47s and other deadly weapons, wreaking havoc among the Liberian population and creating a massive humanitarian crisis. But last week, 45 leaders of Liberia's three former warring factions - "Generals" as they are called - sat together in Monrovia in a workshop, this time armed with pens and notebooks.

The generals of former President Charles Taylor's forces, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) were brought together to this extraordinary roundtable by the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to seek their renewed commitment to peace, and their help to take the message of disarmament and reintegration to their former fighters.

Viewed against the gravity of Liberia's civil war that has ripped the country apart, this coming together of faction leaders would have sounded like fiction a year ago.

Liberia's protracted civil war is one of the bloodiest chapters in Africa's history. For 14 years Liberia, the oldest republic on the African continent, was in turmoil. An estimated 250,000 people lost their lives in the civil war, at least half of them civilian non-combatants. Characterized by forced conscription, recruitment and use of child soldiers, indiscriminate targeting of civilians and widespread violations of human rights such as rape and sexual violence, Liberia's civil war is a study in brutality.

Nearly one million Liberians - almost a third of the population - are displaced. In addition to more than 500,000 internally displaced persons, over 300,000 Liberians are refugees in neighbouring countries. With an unemployment rate of 85 percent and a national debt of \$2.3 billion, the country

today is among the world's poorest.

The regional dimension of Liberia's civil war is yet another story.

"The conflicts in this part of West Africa are interconnected, not only in terms of the fighters involved, but also in terms of the number of weapons that are now awash in the region and the humanitarian and refugee crises as a consequence of instability," says Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UN Operations in Liberia.

Despite this bleak scenario, Liberians today are optimistically looking forward to a better future. After Charles Taylor left for exile in Nigeria, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed by the warring factions in August last year and soon a national transitional government took over.

The UN Security Council promptly authorized a robust peacekeeping mission in Liberia and swiftly began deployment in October, with Kenya's Lt. General Daniel Opande as the Force Commander. Today, with over 14,000 soldiers and 725 civilian police officers from 47 countries, Liberia hosts the largest UN peacekeeping mission in the world.

UNMIL has so far disarmed over 33,000 former fighters - approximately 65 per cent of the estimated ex-combatants. Four purpose-built disarmament sites spread across the country each take in an average of 250 former fighters daily and offer cash incentives and access to education and job training aimed at reintegrating them into their communities. As of last week, over 15,000 weapons and 3.7 million rounds of ammunition had been collected.

Amid the secure environment provided by UN peacekeepers,

schools are being rebuilt and children are beginning to go back to the classrooms. Recruitment is on for a new Liberian police force. Commerce is reviving. Slowly, Liberia is inching back to normalcy.

Along with Liberia, the rest of Africa - currently hosting the largest number of peacekeeping missions - is witnessing the end of a number of protracted civil conflicts. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Burundi are well on their way to durable peace.

Today, as the world celebrates the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, there are 15 UN-led peacekeeping missions on three continents with some 52,000 soldiers and police personnel from 94 countries. The numbers could rise to 70,000 or more by the end of this year with new peacekeeping missions planned for Haiti, Burundi and Sudan.

While the work of the 'blue helmets' - as the UN peacekeepers are popularly known - is bringing renewed hope to millions of war victims in Africa and elsewhere, the traditional role of peacekeeping has changed dramatically over the years.

"Today, UN missions engage in such tasks as assisting political transitions, building institutions, fostering the spread of the rule of law, supporting economic reconstruction, supervising elections, disarming militias and former combatants, facilitating humanitarian aid programmes and resettling refugees and displaced persons," says Secretary-General Kofi Annan in a message to UN peacekeepers.

"Peacekeeping missions can never end wars by themselves. But they do offer the best possible way of ensuring there is a sustainable peace."

That neatly sums up the vision for which nearly 2,000 peacekeepers have laid down their lives in the line of duty ever since the UN first began peacekeeping operations in 1948. (END)

The writer is Head of Publications Unit, Public Information Section, United Nations Mission in Liberia.

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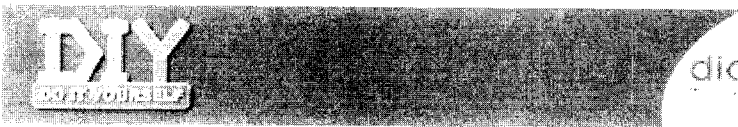
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AFRICA : NEWS



**Liberia inching towards peace**  
28/05/2004 19:17 - (SA)

Rome - Liberian transitional government officials and rebels promised Friday to stick to a peace pact signed in August that halted 14 years of bloodshed and power struggles in the West African nation.

President of the transitional parliament George Dweh signed a declaration of commitment to peace with leaders of two rebel factions - Sekou Conneh of the Liberian United Reconciliation and Democracy and Benjamin Taylor of the Movement for Democracy in Liberia. The agreement came after a two-day meeting organized by the Catholic Sant' Egidio organisation.

The meeting follows recent tensions in Liberia over the disarmament process, which sparked riots in the capital Monrovia involving fighters loyal to ex-president Charles Taylor.

"We can be assured that the disarmament process will continue," Conneh said on Friday.

The declaration states the need to implement last year's peace agreement "without delays or reservations, in order to attain the social and economic reconstruction of our country."

A national-unity government arranged under the peace pact is to lead Liberia until late-2005 elections, supported by the United Nations' largest peacekeeping mission, now nearing its targeted 15 000 strength.

Taylor launched Liberia into crisis with his 1989-1996 insurgency before winning elections in 1997. Rebels who took up arms against him in 1999 besieged Monrovia in June, helping drive him into exile in early August.

*Edited by Tisha Steyn*

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## **LIBERIA: Over 35,000 combatants disarmed, UNMIL**



© IRIN

**UN peacekeepers collecting weapons**

MONROVIA, 28 May 2004 (IRIN) - An official of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) announced in Monrovia on Friday that more than 35,000 combatants have been disarmed so far, though uncertainty remained over the number of them still carrying weapons.

Clive Jacknik said since December when the UN first launched its disarmament demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme, which was later suspended and re-launched in mid April, a total of 35,756 fighters have participated from the various warring groups.

"With 44 days of operation since 15 April, 22,266 former fighters have been disarmed in all of the four disarmament and cantonment centres around Liberia amounting to 35, 756 since December," he said.

Clive said all had qualified under the disarmament programme, as they had handed in either weapons or ammunitions. In return, fighters receive US\$300 in two tranches as well as one week in a cantonment centre and vocational or educational training.

"We are very pleased it is going on in an orderly and progressive manner, as planned," Clive added.

Initially the UN estimated there were around 40,000 combatants in Liberia, however Clive disclosed on Friday that UNMIL is now working on a figure between 38,000 to 53,000 combatants, although this was not a limit, said Clive.

"If we have to go up beyond 53,000 combatants to complete disarmament, we will do", Clive said.

Late last month, the head of Liberia's disarmament commission Moses Jarbo estimated between 55,000 and 60,000 combatants expected to be disarmed based upon preliminary estimates gathered from former fighting forces during meetings held in Monrovia.

UNMIL tried unsuccessfully to launch a disarmament exercise in the capital Monrovia in December. However, rioting by former government soldiers demanding cash up front for handing in their weapons and the failure of the single cantonment centre created at the time to cope with demand, forced the United Nations to put DDR on hold for four months.

Well-informed Liberians in Monrovia have told IRIN that some non-combatants are

colluding with former fighters to take part in the DDR programme in order to claim the US\$300 resettlement grant payable to all those who demobilise.

Genuine fighters have been giving these non-combatants weapons and ammunition to hand in as they register themselves at the cantonment sites, they said.

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*Africa News May 28, 2004 Friday*

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Africa News

**May 28, 2004 Friday**

**LENGTH:** 688 words

**HEADLINE:** West Africa;

West Africa: Major **Military** Exercise to **Boost Ecowas Forces**

**BYLINE:** UN Integrated Regional Information Networks

**BODY:**

Some 1,200 West African soldiers are scheduled to hold a major **military** air, sea and land simulation exercise to enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of the Economic Community of West African States (**ECOWAS**) in Benin next November, **military** chiefs said in Ghana on Thursday.

The exercise is expected to guide the handling of future crisis situations in a sub-region, where there are currently four peacekeeping operations underway, in Cote d'Ivoire, Western Sahara and the UN's biggest missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"**ECOWAS** should have a Rapid Reaction **Force** for quick deployment into crisis situations. It is the way forward. It is always better to intervene early," RECAMP Project Officer, Colonel Philippe Beny, told IRIN on Friday.

At the closing session of RECAMP 4, Brigadier-General Elhadji Kandji, Deputy **Military** Advisor at the UNDPKO, said African peacekeeping operations were crucial in complementing the UN's role, particularly when the UN was not in the position to deploy rapidly enough as was in the case of Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire.

The November exercise forms the tactical **military** component of a just-ended major international peacekeeping and training seminar in the Ghanaian capital Accra, dubbed 'RECAMP 4'.

RECAMP - Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capabilities - is a French security and defence policy, aimed at helping African states under the umbrella of sub-regional organisations to acquire **military** capabilities that would enable them to conduct peacekeeping operations on the African continent.

RECAMP intervened in Central African Republic and Guinea Bissau in 1997 and 1999, and also in Ivory Coast to support the **ECOWAS** and UN peacekeeping missions after the failed coup in September 2002.

The US government has a similar policy, American African Contingency Training Assistance (ACOTA) that is has been operating in Anglophone West African countries.

An Initial Planning Guidance (IPG) document was presented on Wednesday that will direct the theatre of operations in Benin. It has been submitted to **ECOWAS** Chairman of Defense

Staff, Lieutenant-General Seth Obeng.

The IPG is expected to be further fine-tuned at a strategic conference scheduled to be held in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, next month.

Though it is envisaged that training exercises initiate novel ways in which peacekeeping missions are conducted, RECAMP officials insisted that they are basically reinforcing the capability of **ECOWAS** countries to handle crisis situations themselves.

"We must be realistic: this is not new training for the troops," Colonel Beny told IRIN.

"What we are doing is to create an imaginary crisis situation, share our experiences and then harness the common capabilities and procedures of both Anglophone and Francophone countries in the sub-region to tackle conflicts," he said.

"We are all together in this exercise. Officers from France, Britain and the US are all part of the Joint Staff to help **ECOWAS** channel its **military** capabilities in the same direction and with similar goals," Beny added.

International organisations and the donor community have echoed boosting the capabilities of sub-regional bodies like **ECOWAS** rather than individual countries as a way forward to tackle the myriad of conflict situations afflicting the African continent.

A special facility, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, opened in Ghana last November to providing peacekeeping training for **military** officers in the region.

According to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO), there are currently seven UN **military** peacekeeping missions in Africa.

For France, the evolution of the RECAMP programme to the changing situations is a permanent concern to tackle the new needs of African countries.

"RECAMP is not competing with other programmes but is adapted to the stakes of peacekeeping on the African continent," said Deputy Head of the French Defense **Forces**, Rear Admiral Coldefy.

"It is perfectly in tune with the defense and security policy of the African union and should be continued," he added.

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# West Africa's Security Challenges: Building Peace in a Troubled Region

*Adekeye Adebajo and Ismail Rashid, editors*

Among the world's most unstable regions, West Africa in the last decade has experienced a web of conflicts with profound and wide-ranging effects. *West Africa's Security Challenges* is the first comprehensive assessment of the resulting mix of setbacks and progress.

The authors provide a context for understanding the region's security dilemmas, highlighting the link between failures of economic development, governance, and democratization on the one hand and military insecurity and violent conflicts on the other. The role of key regional and external actors in foiling-and sometimes fueling-conflicts is also examined. The result is an analysis that is not only academically rigorous, but relevant to current policy debates.

**Adekeye Adebajo** is executive director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution at the University of Cape Town. Previously director of the Africa Program at the International Peace Academy, he is author of *Building Peace in West Africa* and *Liberia's Civil War* and coeditor of *Managing Armed Conflicts in the Twenty-first Century*. **Ismail Rashid** is assistant professor of history and Africana studies at Vassar College. His research focus includes Pan-Africanism and social conflicts in contemporary Africa.

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