

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:

Friday, June 04, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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....it was much more devastating to realize that as horrible as the events of the 90s and early 21st century had been, the greater horror was that much of what happened to Sierra Leone during that period and for many years before had been quite predictable as long ago as the early 70s and no one had done anything effective to prevent it. Perhaps it was not preventable but it certainly behooves us all to think long and hard about what might have been done and how we can prevent it from happening again. Outgoing US envoy Chaveas

PRESIDENT AHMAD TEJAN KABBAH MAY BE THE HEAD OF STATE, BUT HE IS NOT SIERRA LEONE AND MUST ACCOUNT TO

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VOLUME 5 NUMBER 4

Editor: Victor Sylver

MAY 29, 2004

CHIEF HINGA NORMAN TRIAL BEGINS. ACCUSED OF HEINOUS CRIMES AND CANNIBALISM. SACKS ALL HIS LAWYERS.

HOME

What transpired at the opening session of the trial of Chief Hinga Norman and two other members of the Civil Defence unit, the Kamajors on Thursday June 3, 2004 could best be described as a setting for a court drama that is best seen in movies and/or television screens - the painful and sad difference being that this was for real with the prosecution claiming that it will produce eye-witnesses and others who had enough materials to nail the three accused.

The Sierra Herald reporter on the ground stated that at one stage of the opening presentation of the prosecution, one could hear a pin drop as ears were tuned, every auditory mechanism honed to near perfection as those in court and on national radio clung to every word that dropped from the lips of Chief Prosecutor David Crane who spoke for some forty minutes and Prosecutor Kamara who spoke for about an hour and a quarter.

Charges against the three defendants include unlawful killings, physical violence and mental suffering, looting and burning, terrorizing the civilian population and collective punishments, and the use of child soldiers.

Both men told the court that in time, they would bring forth evidence that would show that the three men Chief Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa were engaged in various serious crimes relating to the conduct of war and violation of human rights.

The BBC's Alastair Leithead, reporting from the Sierra Leone capital Freetown made this observation after the first salvo from the guns of the prosecution:

It was bad enough hearing the prosecutor describe case after case of murder, beheading, torture, enslavement, looting, burning and terrorising....It will be a lot worse hearing it from the people themselves - the witnesses who watched their loved ones being killed, the children brutalised into becoming soldiers, the thousands maimed by militiamen.

As if this was not dramatic enough, Chief Hinga Norman announced that he would not be needing the services of two of his Sierra Leonean defence lawyers, Blyden Jenkins-Johnston and Sulaiman Banja-Tejansie saying that he would conduct his own defence.

This raised quite a stir among legal minds who privately expressed alarm over the wisdom of Chief Hinga Norman taking on what is definitely a complex legal labyrinth that could best be successfully navigated by "fine legal minds".

Adding more intrigue to the broth, the Sierra Herald reporter on the ground said that although Chief Hinga Norman's move "appeared somewhat queer, I am convinced that Hinga Norman is no fool and that he has something up his sleeve".

Investigations by the Sierra Herald revealed that Chief Hinga Norman's sacking of his two Sierra Leonean lawyers was the last step in getting rid of all four defence lawyers that he had. Two from the United Kingdom, Quincy Whittaker and Tim Owen of Matrix Chambers left Sierra Leone a week before the beginning of the trial, fuelling speculations that all could not be well within Chief Hinga Norman's defence team.



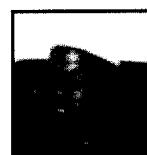
Is the President able and willing to tackle corruption?



When will ministers like Dr Prince Harding account to the people?



How did this man get into the Special Court?



When will Kanji Daramy face the ACC and the courts for his SALPOST corruption?

Nailing one of the many lies of Expo Times editor Ibrahim Seaga Shaw

Smashing the Expo Times web of deceit, lies and outright dishonesty

The Sierra Herald can now reveal that there was a crisis of confidence within his defence team and that there were grave differences of opinion in how best the team could have presented a formidable team to counter the charges of the prosecution.

The Sierra Herald can also reveal that the two UK lawyers did not see eye to eye with their Sierra Leonean counterparts and that their leaving the shores of Sierra Leone before the trial proper could begin pointed to serious differences that could have made a mockery of the defence team.

Come Tuesday June 8 when the court resumes, it would have the duty of commenting on Chief Hinga Norman's decision and to explain the ramifications within the legal framework of the court. If Chief Norman still insists on going it alone, it is believed that he would be given a chance to make his opening presentation as did the prosecution on Thursday June 3.

Under the rules of the Special court, **Article 17 Rights of the accused**, Chief Norman has certain rights and privileges that would ensure a fair trial, among them:

To be tried in his or her presence, and to defend himself or herself in person or through legal assistance of his or her own choosing; to be informed, if he or she does not have legal assistance, of this right; and to have legal assistance assigned to him or her, in any case where the interests of justice so require, and without payment by him or her in any such case if he or she does not have sufficient means to pay for it;

It would not come as a surprise if, when the court resumes on Tuesday June 8, to hear a call for adjournment as Chief Hinga Norman sets his team to take on Chief Prosecutor Crane and his team.

Something worth thinking about in tackling the ills of Sierra Leone

Published fortnightly with updates between issues as necessary
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A plaintive cry
for justice and
the truth for
the people of
Mabaylla over
the
September
3/4 1997 acts
of murder

June 3, 2004

First War Crimes Trial Begins in Sierra Leone

By SOMINI SENGUPTA

REETOWN, Sierra Leone, June 3 — A closely watched international war crimes tribunal intended to try the ringleaders of this country's long and crippling conflict began here this morning with a call to slay what the court's chief prosecutor repeatedly called "the beast of impunity."

Yet missing from the opening-day proceedings of the Special Court for Sierra Leone was its most prominent suspect: Charles G. Taylor, the former Liberian president accused of fomenting this country's decade-long rebel insurgency.

Mr. Taylor, indicted more than a year ago on 17 counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, enslavement and the recruitment of child soldiers, has been given asylum in Nigeria; his hosts there have refused to turn him over to this United Nations-backed tribunal. The three Sierra Leonians accused of being his top collaborators have died, been killed or gone missing since their indictments.

The first defendants appearing before the court today were three men who led Sierra Leone's feared pro-government militia, chief among them the country's former interior minister, Sam Hinga Norman. The prosecutor, David Crane, accused Mr. Norman of having "perverted into a killing frenzy" the task of defending his nation. Mr. Norman's group, the Civil Defense Force, is accused of cannibalism, rape and indiscriminate killing of civilians, and Mr. Norman, as its national coordinator, faces eight counts of crimes against humanity.

"The ghosts of thousands of the murdered dead stand among us," Mr. Crane said in his opening statement. "They cry out for a fair and transparent trial to let the world know what took place, here in Sierra Leone."

Dressed in a long, flowing white West African suit, Mr. Norman, 54, today spent much of the morning, during Mr. Crane's opening statements, scribbling notes and occasionally looking up, with a faint, knowing smile. At the end of the day, he stood up and read a letter he had written to the three-member panel of judges, demanding that he be allowed to represent himself. The court adjourned abruptly, until next Tuesday, to consider his request.

The implications of this first trial go far beyond the borders of this small, tropical West

African country. The Special Court for Sierra Leone, created jointly by this government and the United Nations, represents the first time an international war crimes tribunal has been held inside the country of war; both the Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals are under way outside those countries. This is also the first time that the recruitment of child soldiers is being tried as a war crime.

The special court, expected to cost \$80 million, is held up as a cheap and efficient model of international justice — or at least one the United States government can stomach. (Washington is among the major donors to this court, and Americans fill some of the most important posts, including that of prosecutor.)

The special court has stirred debate both inside and outside this country about the value of an international tribunal. Some here see it as an unwelcome imposition from outside; others resent having an American prosecutor lecture them about war crimes; still others say the court would matter much more if it could snare the "big fish," namely Mr. Taylor.

"We expect Charles Taylor to account for his involvement," said John Caulker, a member of a human rights group here called Forum of Conscience. "We want to see him here in person and explain. It's embarrassing for the special court if Charles Taylor did not appear."

The spectators' gallery, separated from the courtroom by a glass wall, was packed early this morning with local journalists, defendants' families and ordinary Sierra Leonians whose lives had been upended by the war. Among them was a man in a long white robe, with steel claws for hands; both his arms had been chopped off during the war, a signature tactic of the rebel faction in this country. He said he hoped the court would set an example for the future.

"Even in your own private home, if there are no examples being set your children will get out of hand," is how he put it. "If an example is set maybe people will be afraid."

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/176349_sierra04.html

Sierra Leone's U.N. tribunal opens, missing chief suspect

Friday, June 4, 2004

By SOMINI SENGUPTA
THE NEW YORK TIMES

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone -- An international war crimes tribunal set up to try those responsible for this country's long and crippling conflict opened here yesterday morning, with vows from the court's chief prosecutor to slay what he repeatedly called "the beast of impunity."

Yet missing from the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone was its leading suspect: Charles G. Taylor, the exiled former president of Liberia and the man accused of fomenting the rebel insurgency in the 1991-2002 war that killed an estimated 50,000 people.

Taylor, indicted more than a year ago on 17 counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, enslavement and the recruitment of child soldiers, has been given asylum in Nigeria. Three men indicted as his top collaborators in Sierra Leone are dead or missing.

Instead, the first defendants appearing before the court yesterday were three men who led Sierra Leone's feared pro-government militia, including the country's former interior minister, Sam Hinga Norman. Norman's militia, the Civil Defense Force, is accused of cannibalism, rape and the indiscriminate killing of civilians. Norman faces eight counts of crimes against humanity.


"The ghosts of thousands of the murdered dead stand among us," David Crane, a U.S. prosecutor, told the three-judge panel in his opening statement. "They cry out for a fair and transparent trial to let the world know what took place, here in Sierra Leone."

To his right sat Norman, 54, scribbling notes on loose-leaf sheets and occasionally looking up with a faint smile. At the end of the day, Norman stood up and demanded to represent himself. The court adjourned until Tuesday to consider his request.

The outcome of these trials carries implications far beyond the borders of this small West African country. The Special Court, created jointly by the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations, represents the first time an international war crimes tribunal has been held inside the country where the conflict took place.

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Sierra Leone war crimes trial begins

by

Friday 04 June 2004 12:20 AM GMT

Three suspects in a landmark war-crimes trial in Sierra Leone have appeared before a UN-backed court, accused of masterminding one of modern Africa's most brutal wars.

Former Interior Minister Sam Hinga Norman and two other leaders of the feared pro-government Kamajor militia are accused of crimes ranging from human sacrifice and cannibalism to recruiting child soldiers during the decade-long war.



A former minister and two militia leaders are in the dock

In the capital city of Freetown on Thursday, the prosecution told a packed courtroom that witnesses would testify that Kamajor fighters paraded severed heads and ate the roasted flesh and intestines of their victims.

It said the three defendants, who have pleaded not guilty, were each personally liable for crimes carried out under their orders "as if they committed each and every crime themselves".

Smiling defendant

The war, in which 50,000 people were killed, shocked the world with its images of mutilated civilians and underage, drugged-up fighters carrying out atrocities.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial - to let the world know what took place here, here in Sierra Leone," US prosecutor David Crane said in his opening statement.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us."

As Crane spoke, Norman - the most senior government official to stand trial and a close associate of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah - took notes, occasionally looking up to meet the prosecutor's eyes, a smile on his face.

**and transparent trial -
to let the world know
what took place here in
Sierra Leone"**

Later, Norman said he now wanted to conduct his own defence, prompting the judge to adjourn the trial until next Tuesday.

David Crane,
US prosecutor

Mix of judges

Sierra Leone's special war crimes court was set up to try those bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict, declared over in 2002 after a huge UN peacekeeping force disarmed some 47,000 fighters.

It is the first of its kind to try suspects in the country where the crimes were committed and to be presided over by a mixture of UN-appointed and local judges.

"The Special Court sees itself and will continue to function as an important instrument of global justice and world peace," said court president Justice Emmanuel Olayinka Ayoola.

If successful, the model may be used for judicial proceedings in other parts of the world, such as the trial of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, court officials say.

Mastermind

The court's early days have been far from smooth and many victims in the dirt-poor former British colony say the outcome of the trial will make little difference to their lives.

Top suspects among the 13 it has indicted so far have either died or fled into exile, and the court has twice had to replace its president after accusations of bias.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor, indicted by the court for rape, murder, enslavement and pillage among other charges and seen as the mastermind behind a web of conflicts in West Africa, is living in exile in Nigeria.

Crane says he is confident Taylor will eventually be tried, but Nigeria has said it will not hand him over to the court.

Foday Sankoh, whose rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) became notorious for hacking off civilians' limbs, died in custody last year. Two other key suspects have been killed while at large.

The trial of the remaining RUF suspects is due next month. Members of a former



**A UN soldier guards the special
courthouse in Freetown**

military junta are also to stand trial.

Reuters

By

You can find this article at:

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/33BA0507-6E1C-4835-88D4-1941F88CCDDF.htm>

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CRIMES COMMITTED BY THE KAMAJORS WILL MAKE MEN OF CIVILITY AND REASON RECOIL- "--David Crane

Tamba Borbor reports from Freetown

Thursday June 5, 2004

The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court, David Crane, in his opening statement at the start of the trial against the leadership of the Civilian Defence Force (CDF) said that the crimes will be proven in large part by the people of Sierra Leone and the events will make men of civility and reason recoil.

"They will come before you one by one, damaged, proud, some afraid, yet still brave," he said. Crane promised that during the trial "we will focus on crime bases in Koribundo, Kenema, Base Zero in Bonthe District, Moyamba, Bo and Tongo ,where alleged criminal acts or omissions took place."

The Prosecutor revealed that throughout the trial children who fought in the CDF would be recounting stories of alleged horrors they committed as child soldier in Sierra Leone. He said that a witness will also testify how the CDF moved into the town of Bradford and began looting, how his wife was shot with her calling out his name and was robbed of her life savings. Others he went on will testify that in Tongo in 1997-98 the Kamajors allegedly picked people at random and hacked them to death a standard tactic.

Crane went on to say that a damaged and broken man would also testified in the court how around 65 people were taken behind a house separated into groups of three to four and shot with their bodies rolling down a hill into a valley. The CDF, to save bullets, began cutting the heads of the remaining. The witness who was the last in the group had his neck cut from behind and he rolled down the hill watching those in front of him die one at a time.

David Crane said that the case against these indictees is "about breach of duty perverted into a killing frenzy against innocent civilians, non

combatants, their own fellow citizens." He said that the CDF led by Norman and assisted by Fofana and Kondewa, largely supported by hunting society called Kamajors, was set up to counter internal threat of the RUF and later the AFRC. Their duty he said was to defend and protect the people of Sierra Leone, in the South and East in particular. "This duty was even more manifest by the fact that the indictee Norman was the Regent Chief in Koribundo, a located crime scene," he went on.

Crane said that they failed to do their duties and in their frustration turned on their own fellow citizens - the Mende people whom they declared as collaborators of the RUF and AFRC. He said that it was under the leadership of these indictees that they turned what should have been a just cause into an unjust effect, which are serious breaches of the law designed to protect humanity. Citing an example of this breach of duty the Prosecutor said that in February 1988 due to an attack by the Kamajors on Koribundo one of the witnesses will testify how he and his brother were taken to a Kamajor base, beaten and tortured.

He said that the man's brother's throat was cut in front of him and was told by the Kamajors to go back and tell the people of Koribundo what will happen to them if they collaborate with the Sierra Leonean Army. He said that the man returned to Koribundo and noticed a lot of graves and would recall that Hinga Norman himself came to the town as he was Regent Chief at that time and held a meeting. "At this meeting, allegedly Norman told the town people that they should not hold the Kamajors responsible for what they had done in the town, but they should hold his responsible, that they were acting on his orders," David Crane went on.

He said that the witness will reveal how Norman said he was not happy with the Kamajors because they did not kill every living thing as were told. Norman was also said to be disappointed that the Kamajors did not burn all and rebuked them for being afraid of killing.

According to him "no one deserves to live in circumstances like this, to die like this, to witness the horrors perpetrated by all sides and most certainly by these accused, who twisted a just cause to an unjust perversion. We will most assuredly show you through the witnesses the result of these unjust acts or omissions caused," he said.

<http://www.dailynewsinqurer.net/>

DAY OF DRAMA AS HINGA NORMAN AND CDF OFFICIALS GO TO COURT AT LAST

Thursday June 5, 2004

The long-awaited War Crimes trials of those deemed as bearing the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed during the Sierra Leone war kicked off with a big bang on a day of spectacular drama in Freetown today.

In the first stunning drama, former Co-ordinator of the disbanded pro-government Civil Defence Force (CDF), Chief Hinga Norman, fired his attorneys and opted to defend himself. He acted on his own behalf when the court session started, taking notes from the opening statements by prosecutors David Crane and Sierra Leonean-born lawyer Joseph Kamara.

The other surprise was the healthy and robust appearance of the CDF indictees. They looked too good to be men who had been in jail for 1 year and almost 3 months awaiting trial, after their indictment and arrest on March 7 last year, on charges of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

And Chief Prosecutor David Crane chose the most artistic and prosaic style of delivering the opening statement of one of the most historic trials ever held in Africa, in a legal presentation that was not only poetic and punctuated with remarkable figures of speech, but he even capped it all by closing with an interesting poem on the war, written recently by Sierra Leone's Sydnelle Shooter, entitled "Songs that pour from the heart".

The CDF will be tried first followed by the others, the RUF and AFRC, and today's opening session highlighted the drama that will transfix Sierra Leone for the next one year as the long road to justice begins in a country where impunity had become a way of life. SEE MORE REPORTS OF TODAY'S OPENING SESSION ELSEWHERE IN THIS PAPER.

The New York TimesPRINTER-FRIENDLY FORMAT
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June 3, 2004

Sierra Leone War Crimes Court Opens First Case

By REUTERS

Filed at 11:04 a.m. ET

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (Reuters) - The first three suspects in a landmark war crimes trial in Sierra Leone appeared Thursday before a U.N.-backed court prosecuting the masterminds of one of modern Africa's most brutal wars.

Former Interior Minister Sam Hinga Norman and two other leaders of the feared pro-government Kamajor militia are accused of crimes from human sacrifice and cannibalism to recruiting child soldiers during the decade-long war.

The prosecution told a packed courtroom in the capital Freetown it would produce witnesses testifying that Kamajor fighters paraded severed heads and ate the roasted flesh and intestines of their victims.

The war, in which 50,000 people were killed, shocked the world with its images of mutilated civilians and underage, drugged up fighters carrying out atrocities.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial -- to let the world know what took place here, here in Sierra Leone," U.S. prosecutor David Crane said in his opening statement.

As Crane spoke, Norman -- the most senior government figure to stand trial and a close associate to President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah -- took notes, occasionally looking up to meet the prosecutor's eyes, a smile on his face.

DEAD OR EXILED

The prosecution argued the three defendants, in their quality as leaders of the Kamajors, are each personally liable for crimes carried out under their orders "as if they committed each and every crime themselves."

All three have pleaded not guilty.

Sierra Leone's special war crimes court was set up to try those bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict, declared over in 2002 after a huge U.N. peacekeeping force disarmed some 47,000 fighters.

It is the first of its kind to try suspects in the country where the crimes were committed and to be presided over by a mixture of U.N.-appointed and local judges.

"The Special Court sees itself and will continue to function as an important instrument of global justice and world peace," said the court's president Justice Emmanuel Olayinka Ayoola.

If successful, the model may be used for judicial proceedings in other parts of the world, such as the trial of

former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, court officials say.

The court's early days, however, have been far from smooth and many victims in one of the world's poorest countries say the outcome of the trial will make little difference to their lives.

Top suspects among the 13 it has indicted so far have either died or fled into exile and the court has twice had to replace its president after accusations of bias.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor, indicted by the court for rape, murder, enslavement and pillage among other charges and seen as the mastermind behind a web of conflicts in West Africa, is living in exile in Nigeria.

Crane says he is confident Taylor will eventually be tried, although Nigeria has said it will not hand him over to the Sierra Leone court.

Foday Sankoh, whose rebel Revolutionary United Front became notorious for hacking off civilians' limbs, died in hospital last year. Two other key suspects have been killed while at large.

The trial of the remaining RUF suspects is due next month. Members of a former military junta are also to stand trial.



S Leone war crimes trials begin

The first trials of suspects accused of committing atrocities during Sierra Leone's civil war have started.

Pro-government militia leaders Moinina Fofana, Allieu Kondewa and Sam Hinga Norman are facing the UN-backed war crimes tribunal.

Among the charges are the forcible conscription of child soldiers - the first time the crime has been prosecuted under international law.

About 50,000 people were killed, and many more maimed and raped in the war.

The hearings were later adjourned until next Tuesday after Sam Hinga Norman sacked his defence counsel, saying he wanted to defend himself, the BBC's Alastair Leithead reports from Freetown.

Court officials estimate up to 500,000 people are direct victims of the violence meted out in the 1991-2002 conflict.

One particularly abhorrent feature of the conflict was the frequent hacking off of limbs, ears and lips of civilians, including children.

Severed heads

The three suspects, who face eight counts of committing war crimes, all belonged to the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), or Kamajors, a group that fought alongside the Sierra Leone army against rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

Mr Hinga Norman was deputy defence minister.

Prosecution lawyers told the court the defendants were personally liable for crimes carried out under their orders "as if they committed each and every crime themselves".

They said they would produce witnesses testifying that Kamajor fighters paraded severed heads and ate the roasted flesh and intestines of their victims.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial - to let the world know what took place here, here in Sierra Leone," US prosecutor David Crane said in his opening statement.

The BBC's Lansana Fofana, who was in court, said Mr Norman, wearing a white flowing gown and matching hat, made notes while the prosecution made its case, at some points nodding his head.

Our correspondent says the prosecution will call on witnesses who will explain the barbaric nature of the Kamajor operation and for now they are keeping their witnesses away from the public until the trial proper commences.

Test cases

The case against the three CDF men is particularly controversial in Sierra Leone, as much of the populace regards them as heroes for having helped repel the RUF, well known for their brutal

treatment of civilians.

Next month, it will be the turn of the former rebels to appear in court.

But in the capital, Freetown, many think the rebels should have faced the court first.

Thirteen indictments have been issued so far, among them the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, accused of backing the RUF in exchange for diamonds.

The trials follow more than two years of investigation into crimes carried out during the bloody decade-long conflict and are seen as a test of whether the court, a combination of international and domestic law, can provide justice.

"We're expecting [the court] to give us a picture of who bears the greatest responsibility, so the others will see it and not go back to war," 20-year-old Debati Mamba, who had his right arm lopped off just below the elbow in January 1999 told the *Washington Post*.

The special court is the first of its kind to sit UN-appointed judges alongside local judges, in the country where the crimes were committed.

Story from BBC NEWS/
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/pt/fr/2/hi/africa/3772053.stm>

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Sierra Leone: War Crimes Court Begins First Trial

Nico Colombant

Abidjan

03 Jun 2004, 13:33 UTC



- Listen to Nico Colombant's report (RealAudio)
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A special war crimes court in Sierra Leone has begun the first trial of suspects accused of committing atrocities during the country's 10-year civil war.



The trial of three former pro-government militia leaders got under way in Freetown Thursday morning, after a delay of several hours because of problems with the sound system at the special U.N.-backed war crimes court.

The three defendants, former interior minister Sam Hinga Norman, and two former leaders of the CDF, Civil Defense Forces, Allieu Kondewa and Moinina Fofana, face charges of unlawful killing, torturing, forced conscription of children and other crimes against humanity.

Opening trials for Special Court for Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's civil war was marked by brutality by all sides, including the maiming of civilian victims and the use of child soldiers.

In his opening statement, chief prosecutor David Crane said that one of the issues that will be his main focus is child soldiers.

"Throughout the trial, we will bring in children who fought in the CDF, who will recount story after story of alleged horrors they committed," he said. "Part of a lost generation on both sides of this conflict, they will bravely come forward to tell the world the tragic tale of the child soldier in Sierra Leone."



AP

David Crane

Before the trial started, defense lawyer Sulaiman Bajan Tejan-Sie said that, if his client, Mr. Norman, who led the CDF militia, is found guilty, it could set a bad precedent for West Africa, where rebel insurgencies are frequent.

The CDF were seen as heroes, those who stood for their communities and those who defended democracy. If for any reason they are found guilty, then that would be a bad omen, because no one in the future will stand up to fight against any rebels, if the situation would occur again, because everybody would be reluctant to sacrifice.

"The group trial of three former rebel leaders, who started the war in 1991, begins on July 5, while three former renegade soldiers who staged a coup in 1997 will be tried later," said David Crane.

The main suspects, however, are not being tried. Two of the leading rebel leaders, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, who were also indicted, died last year, while the 1997 coup leader, Johnny Paul Koroma, has not been seen since December 2002.

The prosecution's Number-One target is former Liberian leader Charles Taylor, who is accused of being the main backer of the Sierra Leonean rebels, but he is now living in exile in Nigeria. Prosecutors say foreign governments are negotiating with Nigerian authorities to try to have Mr. Taylor handed over to face his own trial.



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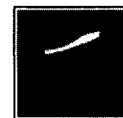
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On this day

Today is Friday, 4 June.
News24's feature highlights the history on this date.



Lip Service

A selection of quotes about southern and S published in the media past week.

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War criminal gains popularity

03/06/2004 13:13 - (SA)

Freetown - For many in Sierra Leone, particularly in the east and south, justice will come only when Sam Hinga Norman is put in his proper place in the west African state - the president's office.

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But for prosecutors at the UN-backed war crimes court, justice will be served when Norman is jailed for life for crimes against humanity he committed as head of the pro-government Civil Defence Forces (CDF).

Norman was a traditional chief for an eastern district when he began in 1994 to mount a militia of traditional Mende hunters known as the Kamajors, one of the many ethnically-based factions who fought beside the national army in the war against the Revolutionary United Front that raged from 1991-2001.

Under Norman's leadership, the Kamajors racked up a string of major military victories that helped stem the rebel advances on the capital Freetown as well as in the southern city of Bo, Sierra Leone's second city.

But the dominance of the Kamajors over the national army once Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the presidency in 1996 caused a rift within the pro-government forces, sparking bitterness among army generals who believed the Kamajors were able to commit crimes, even against soldiers, with impunity and government approval.

Norman was also one of the more outspoken critics of the RUF and vehemently opposed the decision to grant them amnesty due to horrific acts of rape, mutilation and murder that made the Sierra Leone war among the most brutal in modern history.

May 2000 massacre

His criticism of the RUF mounted in the aftermath of a May 2000 massacre that effectively squashed peace accords reached less than a year earlier in the Togolese capital Lome, and earned great currency as he rose through the ranks of the government to be appointed minister of internal affairs in the 2002 election that returned Kabbah to power.

His indictment on eight counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the charge of conscription of child soldiers that was upheld on appeal on Monday, has shocked Sierra Leoneans, many of whom consider him a hero for having freed them from the clutches of the notorious RUF.

In the 16 months since he was imprisoned, Norman has become more and more



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popular in Sierra Leone, with many suggesting he could be the next president once Kabbah steps down in 2007 - should he be out of jail and free to present himself as a candidate.

Also facing trial from Thursday are Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa, two of Norman's top lieutenants in the CDF who joined the Kamajors as young men when it was primarily involved in human rights, not war.

Fofana, Norman's second in command, was known as a brilliant strategist who rose through the ranks to become national director of war for the many-tentacled CDF.

Kondewa's background was in farming and herbalism before joining the Kamajors as a young man, becoming the CDF high priest responsible for the initiation of new recruits into the fighting force.

Edited by Tori Foxcroft

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Minister ordered killing frenzy, court told

By Claire Soares in Freetown

04 June 2004

The former minister Sam Hinga Norman presided over a "killing frenzy against innocent civilians", whose heads were cut off, spiked on sticks and paraded in dances around villages as a warning, Sierra Leone's war crimes tribunal heard yesterday.

Opening the case against the man who served as deputy defence minister in the final years of the civil war, the prosecution said Mr Norman had become as ruthless as the rebels he was supposed to stop.

"The just cause of a civil defence force in Sierra Leone, set up to defend a nation, became perverted and was twisted beyond measure," the chief prosecutor, David Crane said.

The 10-year civil war, declared over at the beginning of 2002, pitted Mr Norman's Civil Defence Force (CDF) against the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF). It killed an estimated 75,000 people and left thousands more missing legs, arms, lips, ears and eyes.

Some in Sierra Leone see Mr Norman as a hero who helped put down the rebels and restore democracy. But yesterday the prosecution promised a stream of witnesses to prove that Mr Norman and his right-hand men - Moinina Fofana and Allieu "King" Kondewa - were guilty of eight counts of crimes against humanity.

Boy soldiers made to believe they were immune to bullets. Women were raped and forced into sexual slavery. A man attacked by militiamen trying to save ammunition, who was rolled down a hill after having his neck cut but lived to tell the tale. All would take the stand.

But before any witnesses could be called, Mr Norman sacked his lawyer, forcing the court to adjourn until Tuesday.

Earlier, in the still unfinished courthouse, protected by UN troops, the three judges from Canada, Cameroon and Sierra Leone heard how still-warm corpses had been mutilated under directions from the CDF leadership. "Intestines were removed from the stomach, then roasted and eaten," assistant prosecutor Joseph Kamara said. Prosecutors say the three defendants were responsible for the criminal acts committed by tribal Kamajor warriors lower down the chain.

But Mr Norman's daughter Juliet disagreed. "He was indicted for political reasons. The government of Sierra Leone betrayed him," she said.

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Three charged at landmark atrocity trial

By Tim Butcher, Africa Correspondent

(Filed: 04/06/2004)

The first three suspects in a landmark war crimes trial in Sierra Leone appeared in court yesterday charged with cannibalism, human sacrifice and rape.

All were senior militiamen in a conflict that cost 200,000 lives and shocked the world with its images of mutilated civilians and drugged child soldiers.

The trial is backed by the United Nations. In a packed courtroom in the capital Freetown it was described as a seminal event in international justice.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us," said David Crane, a former American paratrooper and the chief prosecutor. "They cry out for a fair and transparent trial to let the world know what took place in Sierra Leone."

But for many victims, including those who had limbs hacked off by drug-crazed rebels, there is little hope that their tormentors will be brought to justice.



Sam Hinga Norman: former interior minister

The court has focused on only the strategists and leaders of the warring factions - the big fish, or kakatua, in the local Krio language - not the foot soldiers who committed the atrocities.

Kadiatu Fofanah, 44, a woman whose legs were chopped off at the thigh, said: "The guns have been taken from the children and you don't hear gunshots now. But the commanders are still out there. They continue to survive."

The three defendants - Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa - were members of the civil defence forces known as the Kamajors. But while the prosecution argues that they are war criminals, many people in Sierra Leone support them, as they fought for the government to defeat the rebels from the Revolutionary United Front.

President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was so pleased with the Kamajors that he rewarded Norman with the cabinet post of interior minister two years ago. Norman was arrested at his ministerial office last year.

While insiders praise the setting up of the court, many will harbour doubts about its effectiveness until Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia, appears in custody.

Taylor, blamed for arming, supporting and encouraging the RUF, is living comfortably in a villa in southern Nigeria, part of a peace deal agreed last August to remove him from power.

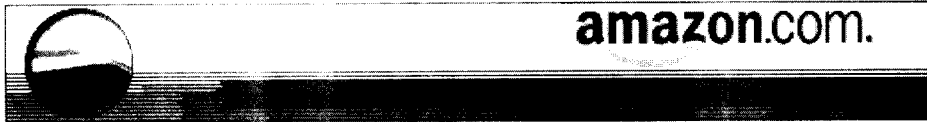
Only 13 people have so far been indicted by the court and three of them are either dead or believed to be dead. They include Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader, who died in custody from natural causes last year.

The court, which is smaller and less expensive than the UN tribunals for the Balkans and Rwanda, is seen by many as the template for the tribunal that will try Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Its workings will be scrutinised closely to ensure that it proves to be fair and efficient as a testing ground for international justice.

Britain, which sent 800 soldiers to Sierra Leone to defeat the rebels in 2000, has a key interest in seeing the country return to normality. While almost all British troops have left, a large United Nations peacekeeping force remains.

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War crimes trials open in Freetown

Andrew Meldrum
Friday June 4, 2004

The Guardian

Sierra Leone's first war crimes trials began yesterday to bring to justice the perpetrators of one of Africa's most brutal conflicts.

The UN tribunal will try those it thinks are most responsible for atrocities committed in the 10-year civil war in which 50,000 people were killed.

Court officials estimate that up to 500,000 people are direct victims of the violence in the 1991-2002 conflict. "The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial - to let the world know what took place here, here in Sierra Leone," the US prosecutor, David Crane, was reported as saying by Reuters.

The charges include the forcible conscription of child soldiers. The war also became notorious for the hacking off of limbs, ears and lips of civilians, including children.

The court in Freetown is the first of its kind to try suspects in the country where such crimes were committed and to be presided over by a combination of UN-appointed and local judges.

If successful, the model may be used for judicial proceedings in other parts of the world, such as the trial of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, court officials say.

The trials began yesterday with charges against the former interior minister Sam Hinga Norman and two other leaders of the feared pro-government Kamajor militia.

They are accused of crimes including human sacrifice and cannibalism as well as recruiting child soldiers.

The case against the three government officials is controversial in Sierra Leone because many people regard them as heroes for having helped repel the rebels of the Revolutionary United Front. The rebels are to appear in court next month.

The prosecution is confident that former Liberian president Charles Taylor, now in exile in Nigeria, will also stand trial.

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Sierra Leone war crimes trial opens

The first three suspects in a war-crimes trial in Sierra Leone appeared yesterday before a UN-backed court prosecuting the masterminds of one of modern Africa's most brutal wars.

Former interior minister Sam Hinga Norman and two other leaders of the feared pro-government Kamajor militia are accused of crimes from human sacrifice and cannibalism to recruiting child soldiers during the decade-long war.

The prosecution told a packed courtroom in Freetown that witnesses would testify that Kamajor fighters paraded severed heads and ate the roasted flesh of their victims.

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Sierra Leone war crimes' court opens first case

By Michael Peel in Freetown

Published: June 4 2004 5:00 | Last Updated: June 4 2004 5:00

Sierra Leone yesterday launched a landmark series of court cases aimed at promoting post-conflict justice while avoiding some of the complications that have undermined other war crimes trials in Africa.

A special court set up jointly by the government and the United Nations is trying nine people deemed most responsible for a brutal 1991-2002 civil war that led to tens of thousands of deaths and helped destabilise the surrounding region.

The court's limited mandate, its choice of targets and its continued pursuit of Charles Taylor, Liberia's warlord former president, have all provoked international debates about how to balance justice with issues of postwar political stability.

"Despite the obvious political dimension to this conflict, these trials . . . are about crimes," David Crane, the court's American chief prosecutor, told the hearing. "The issues before you are not, cannot be, political."

The court, which is operating out of still-unfinished complex in Freetown, the capital, began work two years ago for an initial three- year period.

The court's mandate to try only those with the greatest responsibility for war crimes was intended to avoid generating the huge and time- consuming workload experienced by the UN tribunal on the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The Sierra Leone court is looking only at offences committed after November 1996, which officials say gives a better chance of finding living witnesses in a country which has one of the world's lowest life expectancies.

The approach has proved controversial, with some Sierra Leoneans and outsiders arguing that it offers impunity to people who have committed dreadful crimes. Those people may be back in their communities, living alongside relatives of their victims.

Another controversial innovation behind the court was to finance it using voluntary bilateral contributions rather than United Nations money, potentially creating less bureaucracy than if all funding had to be released by the UN.

But donations from countries such as Britain and the US proved insufficient, leaving the UN to bail out the court with an emergency funding agreement earlier this year.

Other less foreseeable issues include the deaths in the past couple of years of rebel leaders including Foday Sankoh, whose troops were notorious for hacking off civilians' limbs.

The absence of Sankoh and other senior rebel figures means that one of the highest-profile people accused is Samuel Hinga Norman, a former deputy defence minister accused of committing war crimes while heading a pro-government militia.

Aware that Mr Norman's prosecution is unpopular with many government supporters, Mr Crane described Mr Norman as a man who "twisted a just cause into an unjust perversion".

Perhaps the court's most profound impact may be in its as yet unsuccessful pursuit of Mr Taylor, who fled to exile in Nigeria last year with the consent of the international community.

While many human rights groups are keen for Mr Taylor to stand trial, some diplomats and other observers argue that extraditing him now would be seen as reneging on a deal and would set a bad precedent for any future attempts to dislodge dictators peacefully.

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War crimes trials open in Freetown

Andrew Meldrum
Friday June 4, 2004

The Guardian

Sierra Leone's first war crimes trials began yesterday to bring to justice the perpetrators of one of Africa's most brutal conflicts.

The UN tribunal will try those it thinks are most responsible for atrocities committed in the 10-year civil war in which 50,000 people were killed.

Court officials estimate that up to 500,000 people are direct victims of the violence in the 1991-2002 conflict. "The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial - to let the world know what took place here, here in Sierra Leone," the US prosecutor, David Crane, was reported as saying by Reuters.

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If successful, the model may be used for judicial proceedings in other parts of the world, such as the trial of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, court officials say.

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The prosecution is confident that former Liberian president Charles Taylor, now in exile in Nigeria, will also stand trial.

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FACTBOX-War crimes trials begin in Sierra Leone.

317 words

3 June 2004

14:29

Reuters News

English

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FREETOWN, June 3 (Reuters) - **Sierra Leone's** U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal began trying ringleaders accused of atrocities in the West African country's 10-year civil war on Thursday.

Here are some key facts about the court:

- * It was established on January 16, 2002, days before the war was declared over, when the United Nations and **Sierra Leone's** government signed an agreement vowing to try those most responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- * It is the first court of its kind set up with the agreement of the country concerned and to sit where the crimes were committed. Some 50,000 people died in the war, notorious for amputations and the use of drugged-up child soldiers.
- * It is the first such mixed tribunal, comprising judges appointed both by the U.N. and **Sierra Leone's** government.
- * It has indicted 13 people, both loyalist militia and rebel leaders. Several top suspects have either died or live in exile. Former Liberian President Charles Taylor lives in Nigeria while rebel leader Foday Sankoh died in hospital last year.
- * It must try all the initial suspects by December 2005.
- * One of the first suspects to stand trial is Sam Hinga Norman, former interior minister and national coordinator of the pro-government Civil Defence Forces (CDF).
- * The indictment states the practices used by the CDF, of which Norman and two other militia leaders on trial were all top leaders, included human sacrifices and cannibalism.

* The court employs 268 staff, some 140 of them from the former British colony.

* The total budget for the court is expected to be \$80-85 million for its three-year mandate, less than annual costs for either the U.N. tribunal for Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia.

* The court is funded with donations from 33 countries. The United States is the biggest contributor.

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UPDATE 1-Sierra Leone war crimes court opens first case.

By Nick Tattersall

575 words

3 June 2004

16:40

Reuters News

English

(c) 2004 Reuters Limited

FREETOWN, June 3 (Reuters) - The first three suspects in a landmark war crimes trial in **Sierra Leone** appeared on Thursday before a U.N.-backed court prosecuting the masterminds of one of modern Africa's most brutal wars.

Former Interior Minister Sam Hinga Norman and two other leaders of the feared pro-government Kamajor militia are accused of crimes from human sacrifice and cannibalism to recruiting child soldiers during the decade-long war.

The prosecution told a packed courtroom in the capital Freetown it would produce witnesses testifying that Kamajor fighters paraded severed heads and ate the roasted flesh and intestines of their victims.

The war, in which 50,000 people were killed, shocked the world with its images of mutilated civilians and underage, drugged up fighters carrying out atrocities.

"The ghosts of thousands of murdered dead stand among us. They cry out for a fair and transparent trial - to let the world know what took place here, here in **Sierra Leone**," U.S. prosecutor David Crane said in his opening statement.

As Crane spoke, Norman - the most senior government figure to stand trial and a close associate to President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah - took notes, occasionally looking up to meet the prosecutor's eyes, a smile on his face.

DEAD OR EXILED

The prosecution argued the three defendants, in their quality as leaders of the Kamajors, are each personally liable for crimes carried out under their orders "as if they committed each and every crime

themselves".

All three have pleaded not guilty.

Sierra Leone's special war crimes court was set up to try those bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict, declared over in 2002 after a huge U.N. peacekeeping force disarmed some 47,000 fighters.

It is the first of its kind to try suspects in the country where the crimes were committed and to be presided over by a mixture of U.N.-appointed and local judges.

"The Special Court sees itself and will continue to function as an important instrument of global justice and world peace," said the court's president Justice Emmanuel Olayinka Ayoola.

If successful, the model may be used for judicial proceedings in other parts of the world, such as the trial of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, court officials say.

The court's early days, however, have been far from smooth and many victims in one of the world's poorest countries say the outcome of the trial will make little difference to their lives.

Top suspects among the 13 it has indicted so far have either died or fled into exile and the court has twice had to replace its president after accusations of bias.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor, indicted by the court for rape, murder, enslavement and pillage among other charges and seen as the mastermind behind a web of conflicts in West Africa, is living in exile in Nigeria.

Crane says he is confident Taylor will eventually be tried, although Nigeria has said it will not hand him over to the **Sierra Leone** court.

Foday Sankoh, whose rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) became notorious for hacking off civilians' limbs, died in hospital last year. Two other key suspects have been killed while at large.

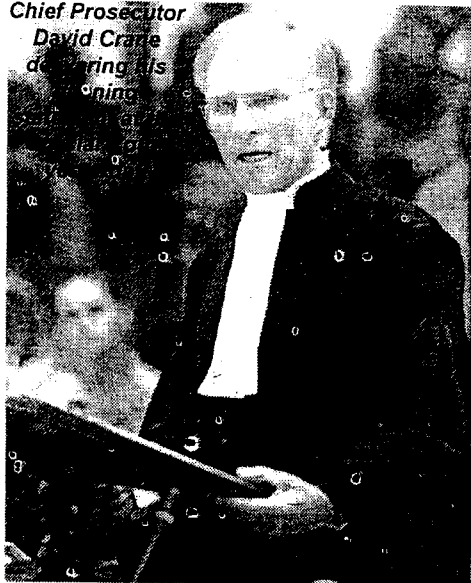
The trial of the remaining RUF suspects is due next month. Members of a former military junta are also to stand trial.

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...Crimes would be proven by Sierra Leone people- *David Crane*

The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court-David Crane in his opening statement at the start of the trial against the leadership of the Civilian Defence Force (CDF) has said that the crimes will be proven in large part by the people of Sierra Leone to the events that will make men of civility and reason recoil. "They will come before you one by one, damaged, proud, some afraid, yet still brave," He said. He said that during the trial "we will focus on crime bases in Koribundo, Kenema, Base Zero in Bonthe District, Moyamba, Bo and Tongo where alleged criminal acts or omissions took place." The Prosecutor revealed that throughout the trial

Chief Prosecutor David Crane delivering his opening statement



children who fought in the CDF would be recounting stories of alleged horrors they committed as child soldier in Sierra Leone. He said that a witness will also

testify how the CDF moves into the town of Bradford and began looting, how his wife was shot with her calling out his name and was robbed

of her life savings. Others he went on will testify that in Tongo in 1997-98

the Kamajors allegedly picked people at random and hacked them to death a standard tactic. He went

on to say that damaged and broken man would also testified in the court how

Contd. Page 2

Crimes would be proven by Sierra Leone people- David Crane

From Front Page

around 65 people were taken behind a house separated into groups of three to four and shot with their bodies rolling down a hill into a valley. The CDF to save bullets began cutting the heads of the remaining. The witness who was the last in the group had his neck cut from behind and he rolled down the hill watching

those in front of him die one at a time. David Crane said that the case against these indictees is "about breach of duty perverted into a killing frenzy against innocent civilians, non combatants, their own fellow citizens." He said that the CDF led by Norman and assisted by Fofana and Kondewa, largely supported by hunting society called

Kamajors, was set up to counter internal threat of the RUF and later the AFRC. Their duty he said was to defend and protect the people of Sierra Leone, in the South and East in particular. "This duty was even more manifest by the fact that the indictee Norman was the Regent Chief in Koribundo, a located

crime scene," he went on. He said that they failed to do their duties and in their frustration turned on their own fellow citizens - the Mende people whom they declared as collaborators of the RUF and AFRC. He said that it was under the leadership of these indictees that they turned what should have been a just cause into an unjust effect, which are serious breaches of the law designed to protect humanity. Citing an example of this breach of duty the Prosecutor said that in February 1988 due to an attack by the Kamajors on Koribundo one of the witnesses will testify how he and his

brother were taken to a Kamajor base, beaten and tortured. He said that the man's brother's throat was cut in front of him and was told by the Kamajors to go back and tell the people of Koribundo what will happen to them if they collaborate with the Sierra Leonean Army. He said that the man returned to Koribundo and noticed a lot of graves and would recall that Hinga Norman himself came to the town as he was Regent Chief at that time and held a meeting. "At this meeting, allegedly Norman told the town people that they should not hold the Kamajors responsible for what they

had done in the town, but they should hold his responsible, that they were acting on his orders," David Crane went on. He said that the witness will reveal how Norman said he was not happy with the Kamajors because they did not kill every living thing as was told. He was also said to be disappointed that they did not burn all and rebuked them for being afraid of killing. According to him "no one deserves to live in circumstances like this, to die like this, to witness the horrors perpetrated by all sides and most certainly by these accused, who twisted a just cause to an unjust perversion. We will most assuredly show you through the witnesses the result of these unjust acts or omissions caused," he said.

Awoko

Friday June 04, 2004

Truth over silence

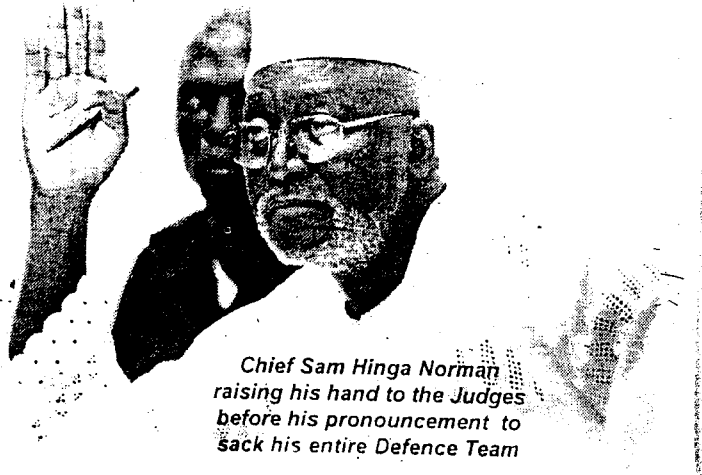
Awoko

Friday June 04, 2004

Hinga Norman sacks defence team

Special Court Indicttee
Chief Sam Hinga
Norman, former
Coordinator Civil Defence
Forces (CDF) and former
Minister of Internal Affairs

has yesterday at the start of the trial sacked his entire defence team and decided to take up the defence himself. His defence team comprised of Mr. James Blyden Jenkins-Johnston, Mr. Suliaman Tejan-Sie and Mr. Adejatu Tejan. Sources close to *Awoko* have revealed that he is going to replace the team with an expert in International war crimes based in England who is attached with Charter Chambers and is currently engaged in the trial of one Naser Oric in the Hague.



Chief Sam Hinga Norman raising his hand to the Judges before his pronouncement to sack his entire Defence Team

Bombshell at Special Court as **Norman offloads lawyers**

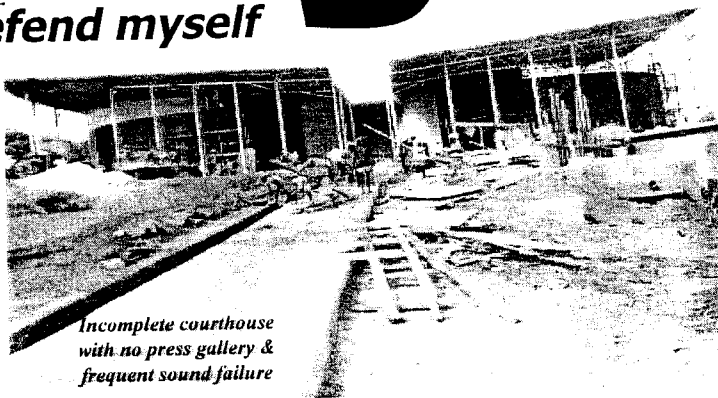
... Says I will defend myself

By Osman Benk Sankoh



Chief Norman: I want to defend myself

The first day of trial for the Civil Defence Force indictees, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana and Alieu Kondewa took a dramatic twist yesterday afternoon when the former Kamajor Coordinator informed the court that he was going to defend himself throughout the duration of his trial for war crimes and crimes against hu-



Incomplete courthouse with no press gallery & frequent sound failure

manity. Reading from a handwritten application he had made, Norman indicated that starting from yesterday, he was going to appear, represent and defend himself. "Any representation from any Defence does not have my consent," he

said and stopped short from giving reasons why he has taken this line of action.

Norman claimed that he had voluntarily made the application and was not under any duress.

Affected by this decision are: James Blyden Jenkins- Johnston, Sulaiman



Crane: I will prove that Norman, Fofana & Kondewa are guilty

Banja-Tejan- Sie and Adejatu Itoe. Asked to comment on this line of action by the Presiding Judge, Benjamin Contd. page 3

From front page

Itoe, Jenkins-Johnston said, "No comment," and stressed that the indictee was entitled, "to say what he has said and do what he has just done."

Tejan-Sie adopted the same no comment posture and this was also the unchanged when Judge Itoe asked the Prosecution to comment.

In adjoining the matter to Tuesday 7th June, Judge Itoe said this was a fundamental issue to be addressed and a reasoned decision has to be taken on the application.

He said this is a rather regular and

controversial feature in International jurisdiction.

Itoe however told Norman that he should be prepared to make a statement about the conduct of his defence though not obliged if the lot fell in his favour when the matter comes up Tuesday.

Earlier, the Court's Prosecutor, David Crane and prosecution counsel Joseph Kamara made preliminary statements proving the kinds of evidence they have to nail Norman, Moinina Fofana and Alieu Kondewai for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Concord Times

Friday June 04, 2001

Sierra News

Friday June 04, 2004

As Special Court trials kick off... **Crane says 'I will prove each indictee individually criminally responsible'**

By A. Max Konneh

The United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday commenced trials of those indicted for bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity during the decade-long war in the country with three leaders of the Civil Defence Forces,

Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofanah and Allieu Kondewa taking the lead.

In his opening remarks, the Presiding Judge, Cameroonian-born Benjamin Mutanga Itoe who described the occasion as a memorable day, said the Special Court was established through an agreement between the UN

and Sierra Leone government to address impunity.

The Court he added was also established to contribute to the peace process in the country adding that as a court they will ensure that the innocence of the indictees be maintained until proven guilty as well as their rights



Chief Sam Hinga Norman

to a free and expeditious trial.

He assured the people of Sierra Leone and the International Community of their determination to contribute to the establishment of the rule of law, peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone.

In his statement, the

Prosecutor of the Special Court, David Crane who outlined crimes in the indictments said each of the three CDF leaders indicted is individually criminally responsible for the acts or omissions charged under 6.1 and 6.3 of the statute.

Mr. Crane said throughout the trial they will

See back page

Crane says 'I will prove each indictee individually criminally responsible'

From page 1

bring in children who will recount stories of alleged horrors the indictees committed.

The Prosecutor went

further to state that the issues before the court were not political and urged the court of law and chamber to focus on the alleged criminal acts of these jointly charged indictees.

"Any time the citizens of a nation rise up to seek a just account for 10-years of painful war, the international community must respond and it has" he said.

The Democrat

Friday June 04, 2004

Hinga Norman Wants To Defend Himself

THE former Deputy Minister of Defence and Indictée of the Special Court for Sierra Leone appeared before the court yesterday to face charges of Crimes Against Humanity committed in Sierra Leone during the ten-year civil war.

As National Coordinator of the civil defence forces Chief Sam Hinga Norman has been deemed to bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Prosecutor David Crane.

Since the arrest of Chief Norman, there have been persistent calls for his release by his supporters. The government has understandably refrained from making any statement relating to the justification for the indictment of the former Defence Minister, who was acting in that capacity when the Special Court Act was discussed and passed. During the preliminaries of the hearing yesterday, the indictée made attempts to put across a point to the court by raising his hand, but he was advised to do so through his lawyer Jenkins-Johnston. Apparently frustrated by the court's refusal to hear him, he wrote a letter to the court expressing his desire to defend himself. In effect, he has dispensed with the services of

his lawyer, and of any assigned legal representation the court has to offer. It would be recalled that the former leader of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosovic, refused any legal representation at his trial before

the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia and offered to defend himself. Chief Hinga Norman is not a lawyer by profession; the reasons why he has made this sudden change in the status of his trial team is both surprising and disturbing

to many Sierra Leoneans following the activities of the court, who are lost in wonder as to what his reasons might be. But it would be most unethical to speculate as the matter is now sub-judice.

AS SPECIAL COURT TRIALS BEGIN

NORMAN SACKS HIS LAWYERS

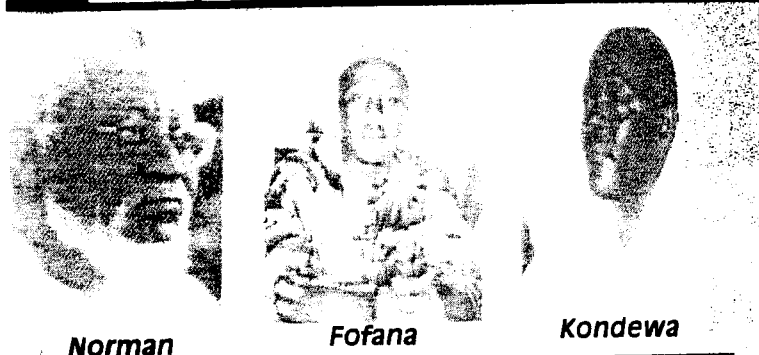
*By Prince Kamara &
Mohamed Mansaray*

In an surprise move, war crimes indictee Chief Sam Hinga Norman has sacked his legal defence team. Norman's trial began yesterday at the Special Court, New England in Freetown.

A statement from the US-based Hinga Norman CDF Defence Fund, signed by its Co-ordinator and Spokesman Rev. Sam Foray and dated yesterday stated that Norman "has relieved his legal defence team with immediate effect." The statement went on to say that Chief Norman would now be representing himself before the Special Court.

The statement went on to say that, "the technical support team is to be organized in due course. Please direct all enquiries in this matter to the Hinga Norman CDF Defence Fund at

SEE PAGE 3



Salone Times

Friday June 04, 2004

Norman Drops Defence Team

812 841-1000 or via private e-mail."

The statement added: "All officials of the court, general public, friends and supporters are informed accordingly. We will make a formal statement later today."

It is not yet clear why Hinga Norman sacked his lawyers. Efforts to contact the head of Chief Norman's defence team Blyden Jenkins-Johnston proved futile as we went to press.

Earlier at the trial, the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court, David Crane alleged that Kamajors murdered people in several locations in south eastern Sierra Leone, including Bo and Tongo, removed their intestines, cooked and ate them.

He alleged that about 65 people whom the Kamajors accused of being rebel collaborators in the Kenema district were separated in two groups of three to four and shot and that their bodies were then rolled down a hill into a valley below.

The Prosecutor further alleged that Kamajors killed people at random and hacked them to death when they took over Tongo from the rebels between 1997 and 1998. It was further alleged that a bloody battle which took place at Koribondo between the Kamajors and the AFRC around the same time left scores of civilians dead, many of whom were buried in graves along the road. "Norman visited Koribondo shortly after the clashes and held a meeting at the town's Court Barray," the Prosecutor alleged.

Mr. Crane went on to allege that Norman told the people at the meeting that they should hold him responsible for any offences committed by the Kamajors because they were acting on his orders.

According to the Prosecutor, the top leaders of the CDF: Sam Hinga Norman, the National Coordinator; Moinina Fofana, the National CDF Director of War and Alieu Kondewa the High Priest of the CDF are charged on an 8- count indictment: Unlawful Killing, Physical Violence and Mental Suffering, Looting and Burning, Terrorizing the Civilian Population and Collective Punishments, Use of Child Soldiers among others.

"The three top leaders and those that served in the CDF were required to abide by International Humanitarian Law and the law and customs governing the conduct of armed conflict," Mr. Crane said, adding that each and every indictee is individually criminally responsible for the acts or omissions charged under 6.1 and 6.3 of the Statute.

as trial of former CDF leader and Internal Affairs minister begins...

NORMAN ACCUSED OF "CRIMINAL MINDSET" AND WAR ATROCITIES!

Special Court prosecutor David Crane has called the war crimes of ex Internal Affairs minister, Sam Hinga Norman 'beyond imagination'.

Mr Crane was delivering his opening address yesterday at Special Court headquarters in Brookfields as the 8-count trial of Hinga Norman and CDF associates Ali Kondewa and Moina Fofana began.

A very impassioned Mr Crane told the court that the prosecution was prepared to prove that the 3 CDF men had "turned on their fellow citizens whom they declared to be RUF-AFRC collaborators". Dr Crane claimed that Norman and the CDF

had committed "gruesome crimes" in Bonthe, Pujehun, Koribondo.

He also spoke of the "killing fields" of Tongo and the "black hole" of Base Zero (the war time CDF HQ).

Mr Crane specifically cited a massacre of 64 people at Kambaoma on the Kenema highway where CDF shot and hacked alleged collaborators to death. One man - "a damaged and broken man" Crane described him - survived and will give evidence on this atrocity.

In the most critical part of his opening address, Mr Crane said that although Chief Norman and the CDF thought they were defending his country and democracy "there is no impunity from war-crimes". And he added that the CDF became 'perverted' under Norman, Kondewa and Fofana's

leadership. "These so-called defenders of the nation were really offenders of the nation looking out for their own self-interest".

He called on the court to focus on the "criminal acts" of Norman and his associates. "We have not charged political crimes" and accused the men of

carrying out a "killing frenzy" against the people. Observers in the court said Mr Crane's address was powerful and moving. It seems to be aimed, especially, at those who believe Hinga Norman should be praised, not prosecuted, for his role in the struggle against the AFRC-RUF junta.



'Norman's crimes beyond imagination'

CDF Crimes Against Humanity

excerpts from Prosecution's Opening Address

CDF burnt all houses in Koribundo village during *Operation Black December* in 1997-1998 - except mosque, church and Hinga Norman's house. Reportedly acted on Norman's orders.

8th February 1998, four police officers, Sgt Osonah, S.I. Momoh, Sergeant Turay, Corporal 9939 all brutally killed at Blama Police Station.

Bradford: CDF looted rice supplies, captured wife of a witness, robbed her of Le 600,000 and shot her dead.

CDF engaged in illicit diamond mining and practiced forced labour at Tongo's infamous *Cyborg Pit* Kamajors picked people at random and hacked them.

Kemabaoma massacre: 54 people shot, rolled down a hill into a valley below. Last ten were beheaded when CDF realised that they "needed ammunition for combat"

Peep

Friday June 04, 2004

Mr. Hinga Norman Sacks All 3 Defence Lawyers

John Baimba Sesay reports on how it happened at yesterday's opening session of the Special Court trials

Sam Hinga Norman surprisingly yesterday sacked his entire defence team and told the court that anybody standing as defence lawyer(s) for him does do at their own disadvantage.

Norman, appearing in white flowing gown alongside two other members of the Civil Defence Force, was taking notes as Chief Prosecutor David Crane set the stage for the trial to begin with the presentation of the prosecutions evidences against the three accused persons. The others being

Moinama Fofanah and Alieu Kondewa.

On several occasions during this period, Norman raised up his hands as if wanting to say something. As a result of this, one of the three presiding Judges, Justice Benjamin Itoe from Cameroon, asked Mr. Norman's leading defence lawyer, Mr. J.B Jenkins-Johnston what his client wanted to comment on since according to procedure, he should have consulted with his lawyer if at all he has any objection to raise.

Then the court adjourned for about two hours. When session was reconvened, Justice Itoe informed the court of a letter he had received from first accused, Sam Hinga Norman but wanted clarification whether indeed the accused had written the letter.

The letter was then passed on to Mr. Norman who confirmed that it was indeed his handwriting and signature. He was asked

THE JUDGES

Justice Benjamin Itoe
Justice Bankole Thompson
Justice Pierre Boutet

PROSECUTORS

David Crane
Luc Cote
Jim Johnson
Joseph Kamara

DEFENCE

*Jenkins-Johnston, Sulaiman
Banja-Tejan-Sie, Adejatu
Tejan
for Hinga Norman

*Michiel Pestman,
A. Bockarie, Mr. Uiterwaal
for Moinama Fofana

*Charles Margai, Thomas
Briody, Susan Wright,
Yada Williams
for Alieu Kondewa

to read it which he did. Addressed to the Principal Defender and referenced *self defence*, Mr. Norman said he had "decided to appear, defend and represent himself." And effective yesterday, "anybody representing him does so at his or her own disadvantage."

Judge Itoe then asked the defence team for their comment. And Mr. Jenkins-Johnston in reply said "My Lord we have no comment to make. We believe he is entitled to do what he has done and to say what he has said." The Judge also asked the prosecution team for their comment, Chief Prosecutor David Crane likewise said he has no comment to make.

This dramatic and unexpected development made it impossible for two witnesses the prosecution had wanted to call, to testify in the matter. And the Judge had to adjourn to Tuesday June 8 when Hinga Norman is expected by the court to make a statement about the conduct of his defence if he so wishes.

Independent Observer
Friday June 04, 2004

...family tells lawyer that Hinga Norman is under stress

**By Kadijatu
Sesay**

Mr. Jenkins-Johnston in a brief telephone chat last evening said the family of Mr. Hinga Norman approached him later yesterday, after the day's dramatic event in court, to tell him that the action of

the latter was due to stress he is undergoing. He was even begged to re-

consider defending Mr. Norman, but according to him, he told them categori-

cally he was no longer interested appearing for him. The other two lawyers could not be reached to comment.

Independent Observer

Friday June 04, 2004

The Independent

Friday June 4, 2004

Norman bans his lawyers

...ready to defend self

By Saa Famanda

Former internal affairs minister and coordinator of the Civil Defence Force, the pro-government militia, Sam Hinga Norman has lost

patience with his lawyers and finally told them to call it quit.

At 4 pm yesterday, a letter in Norman's handwritings was delivered to the judges of

the court which stated that he would represent himself in all subsequent sittings of the court.

Norman is represented by J. B. Jenkins-

Johnston, Sulaiman

Banja Tejan-Sie, and Adejatu Tejan.

Judge Itoe the presiding judge said Norman's decision would cause a delay in the trial as the matter has to be debated.

Earlier yesterday in court, Norman was noticed raising his hand. The judge asked if he had anything to say, but one of his lawyers Jenkins-Johnston said he was not ready to hear anything from his client. In the opening of the court, the prosecutor

David Crane asserted that Norman had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes. He pointed out that the international community had been aroused by the magnitude of war crimes in the different scenarios.

The New Citizen

Friday June 04, 2004

AS SPECIAL COURT COMMENCES HEARINGS ...



Sam Hinga Norman (right) and other indictees in trial chamber



CDF indictees, Moinina Fofanah and Hinga Norman

NORMAN SACKS DEFENSE LAWYERS

By James B. Sawyerr
When the Trial Chamber of the Special Court of Sierra Leone presided over by Judge Benjamin Itoe commenced sittings yesterday at courtroom No. 1 New England, a dramatic development unfolded when the trial Judge granted permission

for Chief Sam Hinga Norman's application to be read. Sam Hinga Norman's letter addressed to Presiding Judge Itoe, stated among other things that his two defense Lawyers, J.B. Jenkins-Johnston and Sulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie, have ceased to be his

defense counsels at the ongoing trial.

"I am determined to defend myself at the Trial Chamber", he asserted.

Norman, Fofanah and Kondewa, all CDF indictees are currently facing trial at the Special Court as former members of the Civil Defense Force. They are accused of

perpetrating heinous crimes against humanity. When Judge Itoe asked Sam Hinga Norman's defense lawyers to respond to his application, J. B. Jenkins-Johnston responded when he said, "I do not wish to comment about the decision taken by the accused person

before the Special Court". Sulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie stated that, "I hold no brief about Sam Hinga Norman's wish". Sam Hinga Norman's application letter to the Trial Chamber was tendered as exhibit 1 by the trial judge, Benjamin Itoe. The Trial Chamber which

started its initial session was abruptly adjourned to 8th June 2004 when Sam Hinga Norman's application sacking Jenkins-Johnston and Banya Tejan-Sie will be certified by the trial judge.

Below is part of the statement of the Presiding
CONT. BACK PAGE

FROM PAGE 1

NORMAN

Judge Benjamin Itoe's statement to mark the commencement of the Special Court trials

"It was for purposes of bringing before justice and putting an end to impunity perpetrated by this category of offenders, that the Special Court, whose Trial Chamber is sitting today for the first time to commence trials, was, pursuant to the Security Council Resolution No. 1315 (2000, established by an Agreement of the 16th August, 2000, established by an Agreement of the 16th of January, 2002, between the United Nations Organization represented by H.E. the Secretary General Mr. Kofi Annan, and the Government of Sierra Leone.

Let me state here that we, as a Court, indeed, as a Trial Chamber are not bound by the findings or conclusions of these investigations or the contents of the indictments which so far, are mere allegations, and that our decisions will entirely be based on the "best" oral, documentary and other evidence that is advanced by the parties before us in the course of the proceedings.

In fact, the mission of this Court and the process we are about to embark upon today, is to contribute to the peace and reconciliation process within Sierra Leone and in the wording of the Security Council in its Resolution No. 1315 (2000) of the 14th August, 2000, and I quote;

"In the particular circumstances of Sierra Leone, a credible system of justice and accountability for the very serious crimes committed there, would end impunity and would contribute to the process of national reconciliation and to restoration and maintenance of peace."

Below is part of the opening statement of David M. Crane of the Special Court of Sierra Leone

The Special Court on behalf of the international community and the people of Sierra Leone is now ready to prosecute those who bear the

greatest responsibility for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The persons sitting in the dock before you, before this nation, before the world; Samuel Hinga Norman, the National Coordinator of the Civil Defense Force (CDF); Moinina Fofana, the National Director of War for the CDF; and Alieu Kondewa, the High Priest of the CDF – the top leaders of the CDF – have been indicted for the following international crimes:

- Crimes against humanity;
- Violations of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, and;
- Other serious violations of international humanitarian law in violation of Articles 2, 3 and 4 of this Court's Statute.

We allege in the joint indictment of Norman, Fofana, and Kondewa the following counts;

Unlawful Killing: Count 1 – Murder as a crime against humanity punishable under Article 2.a. of the Court's statute and/or in the alternative; Count 2 – violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being, in particular murder, a violation of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, punishable under Article 3.a. of the Statute;

Physical Violence and Mental Suffering: Count 3 – Inhumane Acts, a crime against humanity punishable under Article 2.i of the statute and/or in the alternative Count 4, violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular cruel treatment, a violation of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Ad-

ditional Protocol II, punishable under Article 3.a. of the Statute;

Looting and burning: Count 5 – Pillage, a violation of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, punishable under Article 3.f. of the Statute;

Terrorizing the Civilian Population and Collective Punishments: Count 6 – Acts of terrorism, a violation of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, punishable under Article 3. d. of the Statute; and Count 7 – Collective Punishments, also a violation of Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, punishable under 3. b. of our Statute;

Use of Child Soldiers: Count 8 – Enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities, an other serious violation of international humanitarian law, punishable under Article 4. c. of the Statute.

- That the Civil Defense Force (CDF) was an organized armed faction;

- That there was a nexus between the armed conflict and all the acts or omissions charged as violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II and as other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

- That the CDF was an organized armed faction comprised of various tribally-based traditional hunters.

- These accused and those that served in the CDF were required to abide by International Humanitarian Law and the law and customs governing the conduct of armed conflicts.

- All of these alleged offenses charged were committed within the territory of Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

Standard Times

Friday June 04, 2004

power.

HINGA NORMAN SACKS

DEFENCE TEAM

By Theophilus S. Gbenda
Former Minister of Internal Affairs and National Coordinator of the Civil Defence Force, and now Special Court indictee, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman has unceremoniously dismissed his defence team and tendered an option to appear and represent himself in all legal proceedings that has to do with his person, with immediate effect.

Chief Norman made this surprising decision yesterday, at the commencement of the Special Court trials.

Reading his letter of intent, addressed to the principal defendant, Mr. Norman stated categorically that with immediate effect he will be representing himself

in the ongoing proceedings and that he no longer desires the services of lawyers Jenkins Johnston, Banja Tejan-Sie and Adejatu Tejan.

No reason was forwarded for the decision, but Chief Norman made it clear that the decision was taken out of his own free volition.

Acknowledging the receipt of Chief Norman's letter of intent, the trial chamber, headed by Judge Benjamin Itoe said that the court was ceased by the decision and hence deemed it fit to adjourn the matter to Tuesday, June 8, 2004 so as to enable the chamber examine and deliver a reasoned ruling on the issue, which it referred to as fundamental.

For their own part, the dis-

missed defence team, headed by prominent lawyer Jenkins Johnston said they had no objection to the decision as Chief Norman deserves the right as provided for in the statute of the special court.

Earlier, a total of six indictees were arraigned in court to mark the beginning of the trials, conducted jointly on factional basis.

Chief Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofanah and Allieu Kondewa from the former

CDF were the first to be arraigned while Issa Sesay, Augustine Gboa and Morris Kallon from the RUF followed suit.

The case involving the RUF indictees was adjourned to July 5, 2004.

In his opening statements, the prosecutor, Mr. David Crane, backed by his aide, Joseph Kamara, remarked that the indictees are charged with the worst crimes any human being can ever commit against his/her fellow man.

Mr. Crane also stated that the prosecution will prove the allegations preferred against the indictees beyond all reasonable doubt.

The Exclusive

Friday June 4, 2004

Defence Lawyer Appeals For Kamajor Chief

By Joseph Turay

Michiel Pestman, who is defence lawyer for former Civil Defence Force (CDF) Director of War, Moinina Fofanah, yesterday raised an objection at the Special Court that his client's face or photo should not be displayed in public.

Making his objec-

tion after hours of court proceedings, Pestman who could not control his emotion said he is against the idea of cameras and videos being displayed all over the courtroom, adding that he takes great exception to the idea of taking the photo of his client's face for the purpose of publication in newspapers

or to be viewed on television.

Responding to the application, the court president Emmanuel Ayoola asked the defence counsel whether the application was made at the opportune time and in the proper manner.

In his reply, Pestman said he made the same objection even before the court session commenced. His submission was however noted by the court.

Found at: <http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/87428/1/>

{article_created}

Nigerian high court agrees to review Charles Taylor asylum

Nigeria's Federal High Court agreed Monday to review the asylum status of fugitive former Liberian President Charles Taylor. The decision comes on the first anniversary of the public indictment.

Indicted one year ago for war crimes by the United Nations Special Court for Sierra Leone, Taylor has avoided justice by receiving asylum from Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in August 2003.

The High Court decision allowing the challenge to Taylor's asylum status to go forward was brought on behalf of two Nigerian businessmen who were tortured in 1999 by rebel groups in Sierra Leone backed by Taylor.

"This decision vindicates the courage and efforts to seek justice of two survivors of a brutal civil war largely engineered and financed by Charles Taylor," said Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, senior legal officer of the Open Society Justice Initiative, one of the groups that supported the suit. "Now it is the duty of judges to decide in accordance with the law regardless of political considerations."

The petitions filed on behalf of Nigerian businessmen David Anyaele and Emmanuel Egbuna, recount the brutal treatment against them and other Nigerians by rebels from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC).

"The rebels isolated Nigerians from the other captives and began amputating their forelimbs," Anyaele said in his petition. "I witnessed the amputation of tens of persons. Only Emmanuel Egbuna and I survived. "After amputating me, the rebels set me on fire and told me to go deliver their message to the Nigerian government."

Egbuna's statement describes not only the abuse he suffered but also the murder of his brother.

"They cut off the hands of my younger brother, Benedict, from beneath the elbow. They dumped him at the cemetery behind the house. He bled to death in front of me and his pregnant wife. I was next," said Egbuna. "The machete cut through the flesh and the bones of my hands but did not entirely sever them. With my hands dangling from my arms, the rebels also dumped me at the cemetery."

The UN Special Court on June 4 held Taylor accountable for these and other atrocities by indicting Taylor for providing financial support, military training, personnel, arms, and ammunition to the RUF, which worked jointly with the AFRC to take control over Sierra Leone.

Yet by granting asylum to Taylor in August 2003, Nigerian President Obasanjo derailed justice and protected Taylor from prosecution.

The petitions from Anyaele and Egbuna, however, open up a new opportunity to bring Taylor to justice by demanding that all obstacles be removed to his appearance in Freetown to face the Special Court's charges.

The petitions claim that, by purporting to grant asylum to Taylor, President Obasanjo breached their rights under Nigeria's Constitution and international law and usurped the powers of Nigeria's National Refugee Commission, the country's sole arbiter of asylum claims. The petitions also accuse the Nigerian government of obstructing Mr. Taylor's trial in the Freetown-based Special Court.

In explaining the Federal High Court's ruling, Justice S.J. Adah said that the Court had a "primary responsibility" to hear the cases.

The suits were filed on behalf of the businessmen by Tunde Fagbohunlu of the law firm of Aluko & Oyeboode, and supported by the Nigeria Coalition on the International Criminal Court (NCICC), the Open Society Justice Initiative, the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), and the Amputees Rehabilitation Foundation, an organization founded by survivors of the Liberia and Sierra Leone conflicts.

"The law is on our side, justice is on our side, truth is on our side," said NCICC National Secretary Mohammed Ibrahim. "In fair proceedings, we expect the outcome to bring closer the day when Mr. Taylor will face an impartial international trial."

<http://www.justiceinitiative.org>

As Norman's trial starts today

Crane ready to welcome Taylor

Hinga Norman: Hero or villain?



War Crimes indictees of the former Civil Defence Force (CDF) including head of the Kamajors, Chief Sam Hinga Norman will today start their

first journey of answering to various charges of war crimes levied against them by the Prosecutor of the Special Court, David Crane when their trial



Kondewai: Chief Priest

opens this morning at the Court's Jomo Kenyatta Road site.

Though the CDF indictees have all answered to pleas of not guilty during



Moinina Fofonah: Director of war or peace

the preliminary hearings, Crane is however optimistic that he has been able to gather enough evidence to keep them behind bars.

"Wait until I get to court, I will prove how Norman has been a hero of this nation," he had ironically said during one of his several town hall meetings in the country.

At a Press Briefing he called yesterday at the Sierra Leone News Agency, Crane also said he was looking forward to welcoming former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, presently hibernating in Nigeria to stand trial in Freetown.

"Charles Taylor will have every opportunity to mount a full defence and receive a fair trial as provided under the Special Court's statute," he said and stressed that the prosecution is ready for his trial.

Contd. page 3

Concord Times

Thursday June 03, 2004

Crane ready to welcome Taylor

From front page

He used the occasion to once again urged Nigeria to continue its backing of the Special Court by handing over Taylor for trial.

"We rely on the political will of the United Nations and its member states

to produce Charles Taylor to face the charges against him," Crane said.

Moinina Fofana and Alieu Kondowai and others are joining Norman at today's trial.



FT .com
FINANCIAL TIMES

 **PRINT THIS**

Liberia's ousted regime 'smuggled arms by air'

By Mark Huband, Security Correspondent, in London

Published: June 3 2004 5:00 | Last Updated: June 3 2004 5:00

A complex arms smuggling operation involving false aircraft identities allowed the former Liberian regime to break sanctions and import weapons on aircraft based in Iran and the Democratic Republic of Congo, a confidential United Nations report into sanctions-busting has revealed.

The report gives details of seven flights that carried illegal arms shipments to Liberia's Robertsfield airport between March and August 2003, as fighting intensified in the country and led to the downfall of the former president Charles Taylor.

It also reveals that a businessman with close ties to the ousted regime appears to have been allowed entry to France, despite being named on a United Nations list of former Taylor associates who are banned from travel and should be barred from entering or passing through any country.

The businessman, Gus Kouen-Hoven, was in Paris in April, the report said. His presence there will be an embarrassment to France, which last month accused the US and the UK of failing to take strong action against Victor Bout, a Ukrainian arms dealer who was a significant supplier to the Taylor regime.

The report details how pilots flying illegal arms shipments to Liberia fraudulently used the call sign of a Kenyan aircraft company - Astral - when requesting overflight permission from countries such as Sudan, the Czech Republic, and the United Arab Emirates. According to the UN document, two airlines operating out of the emirates of Fujairah and Dubai may have used Astral's call sign to hide their identity, unbeknown to Astral itself.

All the arms shipments were destined for Mr Taylor's regime. One flight carried 22 tonnes of arms, the report revealed. Six of the flights originated in Tehran, with three of these passing via Libya, two via Sudan and one via Benin.

On one occasion a shipment arrived in Liberia and the aircraft was immediately sent off to collect a second load that arrived a few hours later from the DRC, the report by a UN panel of experts says. Most of the shipments were of AK-47 assault rifles.

Liberia has been subject to an arms embargo since November 1992, though it was tightened in March 2001 in response to Mr Taylor's support for rebel forces in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

The UN report reveals that the arms embargo and the travel ban were flouted by the Taylor government, which ceded power to an interim administration last August when Mr Taylor went into exile in Nigeria.

A travel ban was imposed on members of Mr Taylor's government in 2001, and the UN is drawing up a list of Taylor associates and family members whose assets will be frozen, in an effort to prevent them plotting to destabilise the country.