

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



The St. John Anglican Church at Charlotte

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Friday, 4 May 2012

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

### Local News

Morris Anyah Named Lead Defence Counsel for Taylor Appeal / <i>OPA</i>	Page 3
80 Years Urged for Charles Taylor / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 4
Special Court Unveils Winners of Peace Museum Competition / <i>For di People</i>	Page 5
Charles Taylor, Boko Haram, and The Fire This Time / <i>Sierra Media</i>	Pages 6-7
80 Years Urged for Charles Taylor / <i>The Spectator</i>	Page 8
Liberians Back Special Court Judgment / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Page 9
Despots Take Heed of Taylor Verdict / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Pages 10-11

### International News

Charles Taylor's Legacy / <i>Rapaport News</i>	Pages 12-13
Prosecutor Recommends 80 years for Charles Taylor / <i>CNN</i>	Pages 14-15
Taylor's Conviction Heralds the End of Impunity / <i>New Vision</i>	Pages 16-17
Prosecutor Seeks 80 Years for Liberian Strongman Taylor / <i>Agence France-Presse</i>	Pages 18-19
Prosecutors: Give Charles Taylor 80 Years / <i>Time</i>	Pages 20-21
Stretching the Long Arm of the Law / <i>Huffington Post</i>	Pages 22-23
The Charles Taylor Verdict and its Impact on his Country / <i>Amsterdam News</i>	Page 24
Bloodied Ace of Diamonds / <i>The Times</i>	Pages 25-26
The Real Value in Pursuing Justice is Closure / <i>Business Day</i>	Pages 27-28
Timothy Spangler: War-crimes Conviction Worth the Cost? / <i>The Orange County Register</i>	Pages 29-30
Press Release by the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge / <i>ECCC</i>	Page 31



**Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
Office of the Principal Defender

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 4 May 2012**

### **Morris Anyah Named Lead Defence Counsel for Taylor Appeal**

The Principal Defender has appointed Morris Anyah, an experienced international appeals lawyer, as Assigned Appeals Counsel to conduct the appeal of convicted former Liberian President Charles Taylor. Mr. Anyah has served as co-counsel on the Taylor Defence team since 2007.

Apart from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Mr. Anyah worked at the ICTY as a legal officer in the Office of the Prosecutor between 1999 and 2001. In 2000, he presented arguments before the Appeals Chamber in the genocide case against former Rwandan Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, and in two other genocide cases.

Since 2011 he has served as victims' counsel before the International Criminal Court (ICC), representing over 200 victims in a case involving two defendants charged with crimes against humanity in Kenya.

Mr. Anyah was educated in the United States, and called to the Bar in 1996. From 2002 to 2007 he worked in private practice, and from 1996 to 1999 was Assistant State's Attorney in Chicago.

#END

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

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the  
Outreach and Public Affairs Office  
Special Court for Sierra Leone  
Email: [SCSL-pressoffice@un.org](mailto:SCSL-pressoffice@un.org)

Visit our website at [www.sc-sl.org](http://www.sc-sl.org)



Awoko

Friday, 4 May 2012

## 80 years urged for Charles Taylor

**P**rosecutors in the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor have said he should be handed an 80-year sentence following his war crimes conviction in The Hague last week.

In a brief, the team told the Special Court for Sierra Leone the "extreme magnitude" of the crimes he committed warranted the long-term sentence.

The 64-year old was found guilty on 11 counts, including rape and murder, relating to the Sierra Leone civil war.

He will be sentenced on 30 May. During the 1991-2002 civil war Charles Taylor, who was president of neighbouring Liberia, backed Revolutionary United Front rebels who killed tens of thousands of people.

In return, he received "blood diamonds" collected by slaves.

'Instrumental' in crimes In their sentencing brief, the prosecution team stated Taylor "was not a simple weapons procurer or

financier".

Instead, they say he "planned the bloodiest chapter in Sierra Leone's war - the Freetown invasion" and was instrumental in supporting the rebels in their strategy of "murders, rapes, sexual slavery, looting, child soldiers... and other forms of physical violence and acts of terror".

An 80-year sentence, the prosecutors claim, would reflect the severity of the crimes and the central role he had in facilitating them.

After a five-year trial, Taylor became the first former head of state convicted by an international court since the Nuremburg trial of Nazis after World War II when he was found guilty last week.

A sentence hearing is expected be held on 16 May, with the sentence to be handed down on 30 May. Taylor has a right to appeal against the conviction, but if he loses that appeal he is expected to serve his sentence in a British prison.



For di People  
Friday, 4 May 2012

## Special Court Unveils Winners Of Peace Museum Competition

**FOUR PEOPLE** out of 11 were yesterday unveiled as winners of the Memorial Design Competition organized by the Peace Museum Project Management Team of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The first position was given a group comprising Sonja Hobenbilds, Tejan Lamboi, Umaru Jah, and Juliane Westphal all in Germany and they won Le10 million. The second position went to Sheku Shakalearn Mansaray who also won five Million Leones while Amadou Tarawalie

and John Boart Kanu came third and fourth and won three and two million leones respectively.

In her statement, one of the judges, Fatie Haffner described all the 11 participants as potential winners whose effort is significant to the success of the construction of the peace museum. She

said the judges were drawn from all walks of life including the Civil Society, the University of Sierra Leone, the handicap committee and host of others.

After explaining all the 11 entries, Haffner described the paintings by the winners as exactitudes as the pictures actually depict what the peace museum should look like. The garden, according to Haffner, will serve as a place of reflection over the decade long rebel

war in Sierra Leone.

The pictures painted by the winners show an isolated structure with crutches supporting it with grass growing in between the tiles. The scene as depicted in the painting is completely serene with a tree flying the Sierra Leone flag.

Giving an overview of the Peace Museum, the Site Project Consultant, Joseph Dumbuya said the idea to

**Continued Page 6**

## 11 Win Special Court Peace Museum Competition

From Page 5, create the Peace Museum was born in 2008 within the motive that the Special Court for Sierra Leone was temporal and that it would be handed over as part of the legacy to the Sierra Leone Government.

The sum of USD195,000 from the

United Nations Peace Building Fund was used to establish the museum. In order to make the said aspiration a reality, the Special Court worked with the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, the National Museum, Tourism Ministry and Ministries of Education and Communications.

He furthered that the Sierra Leone peace Museum will be an independent institution dedicated to telling the history of the war of Sierra Leone and the peace process which will be achieved through exhibitions.



Sierra Media  
Friday, 4 May 2012

## Charles Taylor, Boko Haram, and The Fire This Time

*Written By Okey Ndibe  
(okeyndibe@gmail.com)*

*Last week was filled with events that touched home in a personal way.*

First, last Thursday, an international tribunal at the Hague found former Liberian leader Charles Taylor guilty of eleven counts of sponsoring and spurring on the brutal civil war that devastated neighboring Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. Krees Imodibe, a friend and colleague of mine at the [Nigeria] Guardian, lost his life at the hands of Mr. Taylor's forces whilst on assignment in war-torn Liberia. If one counts the casualties in Liberia and Sierra Leone, then it's possible to argue that Mr. Taylor was linked in wars that claimed more than 250,000 lives. On May 30, Mr. Taylor will know how many years he's going to spend in a British jail for his manifold crimes. For me, no sentence would be long enough. The former Liberian ruler has earned the harshest possible sentence.

The same day that the murderer of Monrovia was convicted at The Hague, Nigerians awoke to yet another attack by the dreaded Boko Haram. This time, the group targeted a building in Kaduna that houses three of Nigeria's major newspapers: Thisday, Daily Sun, and The Mirror. Another bomb exploded at the Abuja headquarters of Thisday. Not only do I have friends who work for Thisday, I am also a columnist for Daily Sun. On several levels, then, the attack hit home.

The guilty verdict against Charles Taylor has elicited a variety of responses from Nigerian/African quarters. Some Africans contend that the idea of the international court is an inherently unjust one. They insist that the only reason Taylor could be arrested and tried had to do with the address where he strutted his "presidential" stuff: Africa. Were he to be a former US president - or a Chinese

Premier or a British Prime Minister - he would never have lost sleep for one second. For some, therefore, the Taylor trial translated into humiliation for a continent. It was an occasion of Euro-Asian-American imperialism demonstrating Africa's marginality, its serfdom.

Taylor's British lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, mined the vein of that argument. He characterized the trial as politically motivated. Taylor, he said, was a legitimate leader who decided to offer aid to rebels in Sierra Leone. He stated: "If such behavior is to be deemed illegal, then I'd like to see it be deemed illegal across the board." Mr. Griffiths' statement was an oblique way of wondering whether leaders in the UK, Europe and the US would be held responsible for crimes committed by rebel groups they backed with funds, weaponry or logistics.

No reasonable person would dismiss the above argument. I for one want to see a world where the same standards are applied to leaders who choose to enable the gruesome acts of groups like Sankoh's RUF. Former President George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq - on the basis of questionable claims that Saddam Hussein had stockpiled weapons of mass destruction - deserves round condemnation. Scores of thousands of Iraqis perished in the invasion, and continue to die in the reign of violence unleashed since. If Mr. Bush were an African president, it is altogether conceivable that his invasion of Iraq could have triggered an invitation to the dock at The Hague.

Only a fool would insist that all nations are treated equally. Different measures are used for different leaders - there's no question. That's a reason to work, by all means, to





achieve a fair measure of accountability that is blind to the complexion, prestige and power of the perpetrator of inhuman acts. But it would be a grave mistake to invoke the reality of unfairness to let a man like Mr. Taylor get away with his cruel deeds.

In fact, I am more sympathetic to those who dream to have more African rulers docked. Taylor and Sankoh, the man he sponsored, collaborated to create widespread death and destruction - general mayhem - in Sierra Leone. Many Nigerians believe that their so-called leaders, past and present, military and civilian, easily dwarf Mr. Taylor's blood-soaked ately asked for - desperately ordering it with the currency of economic injustice, money laundering, the pauperization of the vast majority of Nigerians. In short, we asked for war then - as we do today - by acting counter-intuitively, playing ostrich, denying reality, blinding ourselves to the lessons of history. Nigeria had fought a costly civil war from 1967 to 1970, but its leaders and people persist in acting as if the war never happened, as if there were no lessons to be taken away from that devastation, as if close to two million lives could perish in vain.

And so, here we are, again, with another (Boko Haram) phase of a long-running Nigerian war. And again, there's misrecognition of the import of the war. In fact, both the press and the country's political leadership have achieved the evasive genius of refusing to call what the country is going through by its proper name: war. Nigeria is at war, and not (as some might assume) against the entity that has come to loom in our imagination as Boko Haram.

The enemies are the same politicians (some of them former khaki boys who now favor embroidered agbada) who have stolen the nation to a state of stupor; the same presidents, governors, ministers, legislators, past and present, who use their loot to send their children to foreign schools (because they have destroyed Nigerian schools); those who shamelessly ferry themselves to India, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Canada, the UK, Germany etc, etc for medical treatment (because they wrecked Nigeria's health care system); those who claim fuel subsidy payments for fuel they never supplied; those who approve these fraudulent payments; those who, for a slice of the eba, refuse to prosecute these fraudsters; those who bury reports of financial scams and scandals (Siemens, Halliburton, fuel subsidy etc) under the carpet; judges who arm big-name embezzlers with protective orders; journalists who, for a small hand-out, are happy to report that black is white and white black; electoral officials whose magic touch makes winners of losers and losers of winners.

In a book titled "The Fire Next Time, the late African American writer James Baldwin had warned his fellows about the prospect of conflagration unless the nation found a way to slay the monster of racism. Baldwin, a prophetic writer, spoke about a coming combustion. In the case of Nigeria, it is the fire this time.

In other words, the war we ordered is not only here, it is also feeding on its own fuel.

# 80 years urged for Charles Taylor

Prosecutors in the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor have said he should be handed an 80-year sentence following his war crimes conviction in The Hague last week. In a brief, the team told the Special Court for Sierra Leone the "extreme magnitude" of the crimes he committed warranted the long-term sentence. The 64-year old was found guilty on 11 counts, including rape and murder, relating to the Sierra Leone civil

war.

He will be sentenced on 30 May.

During the 1991-2002 civil war Charles Taylor, who was president of neighbouring Liberia, backed Revolutionary United Front rebels who killed tens of thousands of people.

In return, he received "blood diamonds" collected by slaves.

In their sentencing brief, the prosecution team stated Taylor "was not a simple weapons procurer or financier".

Instead, they say he "planned the bloodiest chapter in Sierra Leone's war - the Freetown invasion" and was instrumental in supporting the rebels in their strategy of "murders, rapes, sexual slavery, looting, child soldiers... and other forms of physical violence and acts of terror".

An 80-year sentence, the prosecutors claim, would reflect the severity of the crimes and the central role he had in facilitating them.

After a five-year trial, Taylor became

the first former head of state convicted by an international court since the Nuremberg trial of Nazis after World War II when he was found guilty last week.

A sentence hearing is expected to be held on 16 May, with the sentence to be handed down on 30 May.

Taylor has a right to appeal against the conviction, but if he loses that appeal he is expected to serve his sentence in a British prison.



The Exclusive  
Friday, 4 May 2012

## Liberians Back Special Court Judgment

*By Ayodele Deen Cole*

Many Liberians residents in Sierra Leone have backed the judgement issued out by the Special Court for Sierra Leone on their former President, Charles G. Taylor on Thursday 26th April 2012.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague found the former Liberia President guilty on 11 count charges for supporting the civil war in Sierra Leone and related offences.

William Zarzar, a Liberian resident in Sierra Leone told this press that despite the forgiveness for Taylor by the Liberian people, it was necessary for the former War Lord to be punished for his deeds. According to them And the SC -SL carried out that process impartially.

The Liberian citizens together with oth-

ers made this response when this press went out to seek their opinions about the judgement issued by the Samoan born judge on 26th April 2012.

Clarence Swegel one Liberian citizen stated that he backed the judgement of the SCSL as the former NPFL leader was indeed proven to be connected with the war in Sierra Leone. He cited the testimony of the renowned model, Naomi Campbell as indicting revelation against the NPFL War Lord. "I received dirty looking stones when I opened the door," he quoted the Campbell as saying while testifying about a party organized by the former South African President, Nelson Mandela. The SCSL is expected to issues sentence on the convicted former Liberian president on the 30th of May, 2012.

## Liberia: PYJ - Taylor Is Kind-Hearted!

As the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone convicts former President Charles Taylor and the world condemns him for his evil deeds, including crimes against humanity, fellow former rebel leader Prince Johnson, now Senior Senator of Nimba County, has rained praises on his former boss and war crimes convict Charles Taylor, describing him as "a kind-hearted and generous man."

The Senator did not give any details about the kindness and generousness of Charles Taylor; however, he maintained that, because of Taylor's kind-heartedness and generousness, he (Taylor) should be forgiven of the crimes he was accused of committing in Sierra Leone.

Speaking to this paper in an exclusive interview Wednesday, Senator Johnson said: "Charles Taylor is a kind-hearted and very generous man. We all need to forgive him and pray for him while we await his sentence."

Concerning Taylor's guilty verdict focusing on "aiding and abetting" the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) vis-a-vis the weight of his charges, Senator Johnson

indicated that the grounds for the verdict is weaker than the original charges.

"They accused him of bearing the full responsibility of whatever happened in Sierra Leone, but, to the greatest surprise of the whole world, after trying him for five years, he was convicted for only aiding and abetting, which I see lesser than what they accused him of."

He was quick to point out, though, that he was not in the position to say whether the trial was free or fair, but noted that Taylor had problem with the West and Sierra Leone, something he said he does not have any idea of, as he was not with Taylor during the Sierra Leonean crisis because, according to him, he had already broken away from Charles Taylor and his NPFL rebel group based on political reasons.

"But, nevertheless, he's my boss. I still respect him highly... He got problem with the West and Sierra Leone. I was not with him to know his involvement in the Sierra Leone war he was indicted for."

The Nimba County Senior Senator also said that Liberians do not have problem with Charles Taylor.

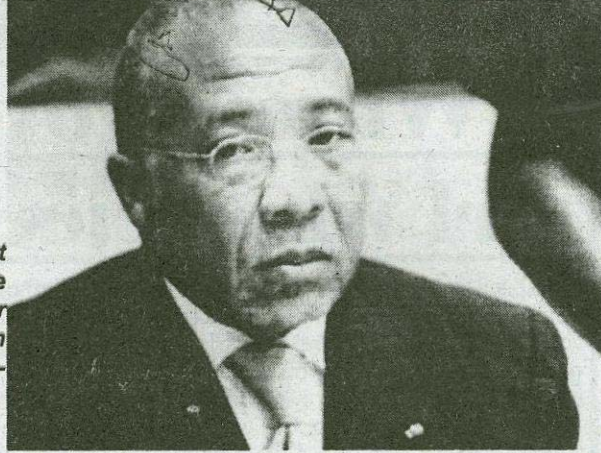


The Exclusive  
Friday, 4 May 2012

# Despots take heed of Taylor verdict

By Peter Fabricius

**Former Liberian President Charles Taylor is seen at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone in Leidschendam, the Netherlands**

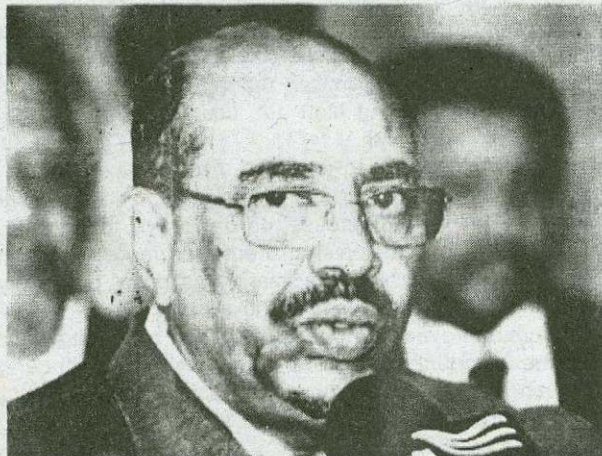


The Special Court for Sierra Leone's conviction last week of former Liberian president Charles Taylor near The Hague for helping rebel groups in neighbouring Liberia commit terrible atrocities against their own people was historic. It was the first time a current or former head of state had been convicted of war crimes by an international court since Nuremberg.

Taylor's conviction sent a powerful message that even leaders of countries are not above the law. That message is growing stronger. Former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo, awaiting trial before the International Criminal Court, (ICC) could be the next head of state convicted.

The ICC has also indicted current Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir but he remains a fugitive and will probably remain one, at least for a while. At a lower level, the ICC secured its first conviction in March of Thomas Lubanga, militia leader and recruiter of child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

**Sudan's  
Omar al  
Bashir**



The ICC is also to try top Kenyan politicians accused of masterminding the post-election inter-ethnic violence in 2007.

Meanwhile the US and four central African states seem to be closing in on Joseph Kony and other leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army, indicted by the ICC for their atrocities against civilians in all of those states over the past 25 years.

And in Arusha the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda is still grinding its way laboriously through the prosecutions of the ringleaders of the 1994 genocide.

So the net of international justice does seem to be closing around war criminals.

But it must be said that the net is closing very slowly, selectively, expensively and against considerable resistance. Convicting Lubanga alone cost the international community almost one \$1 billion.



**Former Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo waits for the judges to arrive as he appears for the first time at the International Criminal Court to face four charges of crimes against humanity in The Hague, Netherlands**



Securing Taylor's conviction, then, surely cost a lot more.

The ICC has encountered huge resistance in Africa. The African Union has instructed its member states not to co-operate with the court, which it accuses of picking on Africans.

Ordinary African citizens, though, particularly those living in communities where atrocities have been committed, hold a much better opinion of the ICC. And the imminent replacement of the ICC's Italian prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo with Gambian advocate Fatou Bensouda should elevate the court's standing even at the AU level.

It will be hard even for the AU to accuse an African prosecutor of being anti-African.

So are nasty dictators across the continent shivering in their Gucci shoes?

One wonders.

Because of the immense difficulties in pursuing international justice, these dictators must feel their chances of ever ending up in the dock at The Hague are rather remote.

Nonetheless they are real. Al-Bashir seems effectively immune from ICC justice now, protected by a strong and loyal state and by the AU.

However the fortunes of leaders in unstable countries like Sudan, can change suddenly.

Giving up South Sudan as an independent state last July was not popular among Sudan's hawks and the current growing war with the new state could aggravate opposition against Al-Bashir.

If he fell from grace, his immunity from the ICC could evaporate.

Taylor probably thought himself safe from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, perhaps even after his fellow West African leaders persuaded him to step down from power in 2003 and go into exile in Nigeria. Whether he was ever formally offered amnesty for doing so is not clear. But if so, that undertaking was soon rescinded, supposedly because he continued interfering in Liberian politics which annoyed the new President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. So the Taylor arrest and conviction might in the short term have a negative impact on human rights in Africa, discouraging other nasty leaders, like Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, from surrendering power in exchange for amnesty.

But the growing spread of justice across the continent might provide some deterrence against even those who have committed atrocities from committing more.

And, over time, it should diminish human rights violations by deterring future leaders from grave crimes.

## Rapaport News

Friday, 4 May 2012

### Charles Taylor's Legacy

The guilty verdict against former Liberian president Charles Taylor, handed down on April 26 in The Hague, should send a clear message to Africa's rogue leaders. But the fact that Taylor was the first African leader to face an international tribunal – and the first head of state to receive such a verdict – is bittersweet for the victims of violence and human rights abuses not only in West Africa, but around the world.

Taylor was found guilty on 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity carried out during his tenure as Liberia's president between 1997 and 2003. Before then, as leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), and during his term in office, he was found to have helped rebel forces wage war in neighboring Sierra Leone, enabling the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) to carry out their attacks in that country.

"The attacks included terrorizing the civilian population including burning of civilian homes, murder, sexual violence, physical violence, illegal recruitment of child soldiers, abduction and forced labor, and looting," the Special Court for Sierra Leone stated in its judgment.

Hopefully, the verdict offers sufficient justice to the people of Sierra Leone. For them, the horrific civil war that formed the background to the Taylor trial still burns in their memory, with the hundreds of thousands dead and countless dismembered limbs bearing silent testimony throughout the proceedings.

For the diamond trade, the trial offered a stark reminder of its own vulnerability. The court outlined how there was a continuous supply of diamonds mined from areas in Sierra Leone by the RUF and AFRC to Taylor, often in exchange for arms and ammunition.

As Global Witness correctly stressed, the Taylor trial highlights the role that natural resources play in funding and fuelling conflicts. "Sierra Leone's diamond fields were a principle military target for the RUF, which employed slave labor to mine diamonds for export," Global Witness explained. "While in control of the sector, it was estimated that the RUF received annual revenues of between \$25 million and \$125 million from diamond sales, more than enough to sustain its military activities."

It was this conflict that ultimately led to the establishment of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) in 2002, to stem the flow of conflict diamonds used by rebel movements to finance wars against legitimate governments.

Today, more than 10 years later, it is questionable whether the scheme is effectively carrying out its mandate. Its inability to respond to human rights abuses carried out by the Zimbabwe government at the Marange mines in 2008 has forced a number of key founding members – including the Rapaport Group - to reject its effectiveness. Global Witness - perhaps the most high profile of non-government organizations (NGOs) involved in the KP - withdrew its participation in December 2011, shortly after the KP approved certification from the Marange mines.

"The sad truth is that most consumers still cannot be sure where their diamonds come from, nor whether they are financing armed violence or abusive regimes," said Charmian Gooch, a founding director of Global Witness.



The Taylor verdict offers some hope that justice does prevail after all, even if the wheels of international bureaucracy turn slowly. It took more than a decade to bring him to justice. But progress does need to be made and the trial once again brings the diamond industry to a turning point on its own ethical journey.

Do industry bodies take the verdict as the end of a chapter and a signal to just allow it to move on? Or do they take the lessons of the Taylor episode and ensure that its product does not again fall victim to the blood diamond stigma?

The lack of any official response from the industry about the verdict may be telling.

The judgment is therefore well timed, and the sentencing – scheduled for May 30 – even better. Hopefully, it will serve as a sufficient reminder, and motivator, to participants attending the upcoming World Diamond Council (WDC) meeting on May 13, and the KP inter-sessional meeting beginning on June 4, as to why their respective organizations were created in the first place.

The questions emanating from the Taylor trial are two-fold. Will the judgment serve as a sufficient deterrent to other African leaders, and those in other parts of the world, to avoid going down the Taylor path of governance? Current events in Syria and Sudan suggest not. Secondly, are the mechanisms put in place by the KP and elsewhere in the diamond industry, sufficient to prevent blood diamonds – in the broadest of possible non-official definitions - from filtering into the market?

The WDC and the KP need to consider whether their founding principles reflect the challenges facing the industry in 2012, rather than in 2002 when Taylor was the central issue. Is the KP prepared to ensure that the definition of conflict diamonds includes a wider range of atrocities, such as human rights abuses? Are rogue dictators cut from the Charles Taylor cloth profiting from the diamond trade today? Are their diamond revenues associated with human rights abuses, violence or murder?

Failure to effectively answer these questions would be akin to acknowledging their own irrelevance. The KP and WDC mandates, after all, are to provide assurance to consumers that they can confidently and with a clear conscience buy diamonds sourced in an ethical manner – anywhere in the world.

But while progress takes time, it will be left to individual members of the trade to ensure their own diamonds and jewelry are sourced and sold in an ethical way. In so doing, justice would truly be served, to ensure that not only is Charles Taylor – and hopefully others like him – brought to justice, but that his conflict diamond legacy does not last.

*The writer can be contacted at [avi@diamonds.net](mailto:avi@diamonds.net).*

CNN

Thursday, 3 May 2012

## Prosecutor recommends 80 years for Charles Taylor

By the CNN Wire Staff



(CNN) -- Former Liberian President Charles Taylor should receive an 80-year sentence for his conviction for aiding and abetting war crimes in neighboring Sierra Leone's civil war, the chief prosecutor in the international court case recommended Thursday.

"Should the trial chamber decide to impose a global sentence, 80 years' imprisonment would be appropriate," said a signed statement by Brenda Hollis, chief prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, according to the court's press and outreach officer.

"The recommended sentence is appropriate to reflect the essential role that Mr. Taylor played in crimes of such extreme scope and gravity," said the prosecutor's report. "It also reflects the critical and unique contributions Mr. Taylor made to the crimes. But for Charles Taylor's criminal conduct, thousands of people would not have had limbs amputated, would not have been raped, would not have been killed. Further, the recommended sentence provides fair and adequate response to the outrage these crimes caused in victims, their families and relatives, the Sierra Leonean people and the world at large."

Last week's landmark ruling by the international tribunal was the first war crimes conviction of a former head of state by an international court since the Nuremberg trials of Nazi leaders after World War II.

Prosecutors, however, failed to prove that Taylor had direct command over the rebels who committed the atrocities, said Justice Richard Lussick of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

A three-judge panel issued a unanimous decision that Taylor, 64, was guilty on all 11 counts of the indictment against him. The judges found him guilty of aiding and abetting rebel forces in a campaign of terror that involved murder, rape, sexual slavery, conscripting children younger than 15 and mining diamonds to pay for guns.



There is no death penalty in international criminal law, and Taylor would serve out any sentence in a British prison.

Taylor's lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths, suggested the trial was politically motivated. He claimed his client's conviction was "obtained on tainted and corrupted evidence" based on the testimony of witnesses from Sierra Leone who were paid to appear in court.

Griffiths portrayed Taylor as a legitimate leader who aided rebels in a neighboring nation. Those rebels, not Taylor, should be held accountable for their actions, the lawyer contended.

U.N. human rights chief Navi Pillay noted that Taylor can appeal the verdict, and it could be overturned. That said, she called his conviction "immensely significant," saying it sends out a message that even the most powerful are not above the law.

"This is undoubtedly a historic moment in the development of international justice," she said. "A former president, who once wielded immense influence in a neighboring country where tens of thousands of people were killed, mutilated, raped, robbed and repeatedly displaced for years on end, has been arrested, tried in a fair and thorough international procedure."

Taylor has been a pivotal figure in Liberian politics for decades after he overthrew the regime of Samuel Doe in 1989, plunging the country into a bloody civil war that left 200,000 dead over the next 14 years.

After he was forced out of office under international pressure in 2003, he lived in exile in Nigeria, where border guards arrested him in 2006 as he was attempting to cross into Chad amid international pressure.

That culminated in his trial, which began in 2007 at the special court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, Netherlands. U.N. officials and the Sierra Leone government jointly set up the tribunal to try those who played the biggest role in the atrocities.

The court was moved from Sierra Leone, where emotions about the civil war still run high.

Prosecutors accused Taylor of financing and giving orders to Revolutionary United Front rebels in Sierra Leone's civil war that ultimately left 50,000 dead or missing. His support for the rebels fueled the bloody war, prosecutors said.

Fighters included teenagers forced to kill, rape and plunder placed under the influence of drugs to provoke violent behavior.

Witnesses testified about grisly violence by the rebels during the conflict, including shooting and disemboweling pregnant women and children. Sometimes, rebels asked people if they wanted long sleeves or short sleeves. The former meant hacking off hands; the latter, forearms.

Taylor becomes the first former head of state since Adm. Karl Doenitz, who became president of Germany briefly after Adolf Hitler's suicide, to be convicted of war crimes or crimes against humanity by an international tribunal.

Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was tried by an international tribunal but died before a judgment was issued.

The International Criminal Court has charged Laurent Gbagbo, the former Ivory Coast president, with crimes against humanity. It also has a warrant out for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who, so far, has been able to elude arrest.

## New Vision (Uganda)

Friday, 04 May 2012

### Taylor's conviction heralds the end of impunity



By Moses Walubiri

ON the account of the evidence adduced before the UN-backed special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, the writing was clear on the wall that Charles Taylor's chickens would ultimately come home to roost - even before Justice Richard Lussick delivered his much awaited judgment.

From beheading of civilians, displaying victims' heads at checkpoints, to grisly amputations and gruesome dismembering of hapless civilians, Taylor's proxy killing machine in Sierra Leone – the Revolutionary United Front – raised barbarism a notch higher, even for a continent that had borne the brunt of Idi Amin and Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa.

For abetting and aiding war crimes and crimes against humanity in his support for rebels in Sierra Leone in return for “blood diamonds,” the 64th year old erstwhile president of Liberia faces a lengthy term in a British jail.

At the height of his powers – both as a rebel chief and president – Taylor epitomized what lesser mortals in Africa admire about those with real power – grandeur and brazen impunity.

At a time when his National Patriotic Front of Liberia was at the cusp of wresting power from Samuel Doe's imploding regime in the early 1990s, Taylor gave the world a glimpse of the flamboyance they were to expect from the next chief in Monrovia.

Uninvited, he attended an ECOWAS summit in Lagos which left many invited dignitaries including regional presidents in the shade.

Right from Murtala Mohammad International Airport to the summit venue, Taylor's convey was escorted by his heavily armed rebel escorts, who went trotting besides their boss's car.

Upon being charged of being a gunrunner and diamond smuggler during his presidency, the son of an Americo-Liberian appeared in public in all White robes and implored God for forgiveness in mock repentance, while denying the charges.

Sad to say, for Taylor, the times had fundamentally changed in the wake of the tearing down of the Iron Curtain in 1991.

The cold war tensions had clouded the need to enshrine the Nuremberg trial of Nazi war criminals as precedent in international law.

The effect was five decades of sacrificing human rights and civil liberties on the altar of ideological cold war and its attendant proxy wars around the globe.

In Africa, Amin and Central Africa's Bokassa met their creator without ever answering for the carnage and reign of terror their respective regimes spawned.

While Bokassa served six years in jail for murders during his presidency – including over 100 school children for protesting against wearing expensive uniforms supplied by his wife – Amin savored a tranquil evening in Jeddah Saudi Arabia until his death in 2003.

In Asia and Latin America, Cambodia's Pol Pot and Augusto Pinochet respectively continued to enjoy diplomatic support from their Communist and Capitalist god fathers even as they went about annihilating thousands with nonchalant ease in their fiefdoms.

In Europe, only former Yugoslavia and later Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, has ever been arraigned before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity.

In his bid to craft a strong Serbian state from the smoldering ruins of Yugoslavia, Milosevic sanctioned ethnic cleansing in the Serb populated areas of Croatia, Kosovo, and Bosnia. He expired in a jail cell at The Hague without getting his comeuppance.

Taylor's conviction marks veritable watershed in the struggle by the international community to draw a line under acts of barbarism by those intoxicated with power.

Despite genuine concerns about the ICC's failure thus far to bring to book equally criminal elements in the West, Taylor's conviction sends out one clear message – the days of impunity were interred in the ruins of the Cold War.

They are over.



## Agence France-Presse

Thursday, 3 May 2012

### Prosecutor seeks 80 years for Liberian strongman Taylor

By Jan Hennop (AFP)

THE HAGUE — The chief prosecutor in the trial of Charles Taylor has suggested an 80-year sentence after the Liberian former president's conviction for war crimes, according to a document made public Thursday.

The prosecutor said the term would be fair given Taylor's role in arming and aiding rebels who killed and mutilated thousands in neighbouring Sierra Leone during the 1991-2001 civil war, one of the most brutal conflicts in modern history.

"Should the trial chamber decide to impose a global sentence, 80 years imprisonment would be appropriate," said the document, signed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone's chief prosecutor Brenda Hollis in The Hague.

"The recommended sentence is appropriate to reflect the essential role that Mr Taylor played in crimes of such extreme scope and gravity."

Taylor, 64, was found guilty by the UN-backed court last week for aiding and abetting war crimes.

In the first judgement against an ex-head of state by a world court since the World War II Nuremberg trials, Taylor was convicted on all 11 counts including acts of terrorism, murder and rape committed by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels, who paid him for arms with diamonds mined by slave labour.

Taylor will be sentenced on May 30 by the court, based in the leafy suburb of Leidschendam outside The Hague. Should he get jail time, it will be spent in a British prison.

The hearings, which saw model Naomi Campbell testify she had received diamonds from Taylor, lasted nearly four years, wrapping up in March 2011.

Prosecutors alleged that the RUF paid Taylor with illegally mined so-called blood diamonds worth millions, stuffed into mayonnaise jars.

The rebels would in return get arms and ammunition provided by Taylor.

Prosecutors said "but for Charles Taylor's criminal conduct, thousands of people would not have had limbs amputated, would not have been raped, would not have been killed."

But during his conviction, judge Richard Lussick did however stress that although Taylor had substantial influence over the RUF, including its feared leader Foday Sankoh -- who died in 2003 before he could be convicted by the SCSL -- "it fell short of command and control" of rebel forces.

Taylor, Liberia's president from 1997 to 2003, had dismissed the charges as "lies" and claimed to be the victim of a plot by "powerful countries."

During his own 81 hours of testimony, which began in July 2009, he called the trial a "sham" and denied allegations that he had eaten human flesh.

"These convictions were obtained with corrupt and tainted evidence effectively bought by the prosecution," his lawyer Courtenay Griffiths said after last week's verdict.

Prosecutors however said they believed their suggested sentence "provide a fair and adequate response to the outrage these crimes caused in victims, their families... the Sierra Leonian people and the world at large."

Authorities in Nigeria arrested Taylor in March 2006 and he was transferred to The Hague in 2006 after security fears in the west African country.

During Taylor's trial which began on June 4, 2007, 94 witnesses took the stand for the prosecution and 21 for the defence.



## Time

Thursday, 3 May 2012

### Prosecutors: Give Charles Taylor 80 Years



(AMSTERDAM) — Former Liberian president Charles Taylor deserves an 80-year sentence for the war crimes he was convicted of last week, including aiding and abetting murder and rape on a mass scale, prosecutors said in a written filing Thursday.

Judges at the Special Court for Sierra Leone on April 26 ruled Taylor played a crucial role in helping rebels to continue a bloody rampage during that West African nation's 11-year civil war, which ended in 2002 with more than 50,000 dead. MORE: Warlord Convicted, Liberia's Charles Taylor Found Guilty of War Crimes

They found Taylor guilty of 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, for his role in arming the Sierra Leone rebels in exchange for "blood diamonds" mined by slave laborers and smuggled across the border.

In a written submission Thursday, prosecutor Brenda Hollis said an 80-year sentence would "reflect the essential role Mr. Taylor played in crimes of such extreme scope and gravity." The court does not have the death penalty.

Taylor's conviction, the first of a former head of state since the aftermath of World War II, is seen as a landmark in international war crimes law.

The 64-year-old Taylor will be sentenced on May 30. The defense must submit its counter-recommendation by May 10, and oral arguments are scheduled for May 16 — including a chance for Taylor to address the court in person.

Taylor fled into exile in Nigeria after being indicted by the court in 2003 and wasn't arrested for three years. And while the Sierra Leone court is based in that country's capital, Taylor's trial was staged in The Hague, Netherlands for fear it could destabilize the region.

During seven months of testimony in his own defense, Taylor insisted he was an innocent victim of neocolonialism and a political process aimed at preventing him from returning to power in Liberia.

Hollis said the scale and brutality of the crimes Taylor helped make possible were such that they impacted "virtually the entire population of Sierra Leone." MORE: Global Justice: A Step Forward with the Conviction of Charles Taylor and Blood Diamonds

"The purposely cruel and savage crimes committed included public executions and amputations of civilians, the display of decapitated heads at checkpoints, the killing and public disembowelment of a civilian whose intestines were then stretched across the road to make a check point, public rapes of women and girls, and people burned alive in their homes," she wrote.

She said there was little that could be said in favor of giving Taylor a lighter sentence, and the "brutality and impact on the victims should be reflected" in the demand.

There was no clear paper trail linking Taylor to rebels, and the three-judge panel hearing his case wound up convicting him of aiding and abetting the fighters. He was cleared of even more serious direct command responsibility over the rebels.

Taylor's lawyers must wait for the sentencing before they can file any appeal. Taylor will serve whatever sentence he receives in Britain.



## Huffington Post

Thursday, 3 May 2012

Opinion

### **Stretching the Long Arm of the Law**

This week I have shared the common fate of most citizens summoned to jury duty, milling about in the holding pen for prospective jurors without ever making it into a jury box. It's a long way from the county court house in Trenton to the international tribunals in The Hague, but my mind keeps drifting from the quotidian unfolding of justice for murder or assault in nearby courtrooms to the precedent-setting accounting for large-scale murder and mayhem that's been rendered in those distant tribunals in recent days.

Last week in The Hague, the Liberian warlord Charles Taylor was convicted of aiding and abetting war crimes and crimes against humanity -- murder, rape, inhumane violence, child conscription, and enslavement. Taylor's ferocious militiamen had terrorized Liberians into electing him president so the bloodletting might end.

But the tribunal did not nail Taylor for the crimes his rebel troops committed in a seven-year civil war that took 200,000 Liberians' lives. Rather, he has been convicted for actively assisting the even more reprehensible "Revolutionary United Front" militia in next-door Sierra Leone, whose rampages devastated that country for a decade.

The reason? The exceptionally repellant violence of the RUF militiamen in Sierra Leone -- routinely chopping off the hands or feet of civilians they did not bother to kill -- finally provoked international intervention and creation of a U.N.-affiliated tribunal to try the perpetrators. The United Nations did not create a similar special court for Liberia, and Liberia's own fragile court system does not dare take on Taylor's crimes at home.

So Taylor last week made history as the world's first one-time head of state to be convicted of atrocity crimes by a U.N.-sponsored tribunal. (Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic might have claimed the historical honor, but died before the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal could deliver its verdict.) And the atrocities were committed by forces he did not command.

Although Taylor helped launch the RUF as a complement to his own insurrection in Liberia, he did not claim operational control over RUF forces, who had their own notorious leader in Foday Sankoh. Their alliance was sealed by Sankoh's diversion of Sierra Leone diamonds to Taylor for the purchase of RUF weaponry -- which Hollywood brought to the attention of otherwise clueless Western publics through Leonardo DiCaprio's starring role in *Blood Diamond* (2006).

Sankoh died in prison before trial; the tribunal convicted eight of his senior RUF lieutenants of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and they are now serving lengthy sentences in a prison in Rwanda. But in convicting Taylor last week as well, the tribunal has found the outside sponsor criminally responsible for aiding and abetting the war crimes of his clients and allies.

The verdict is pregnant with implications for other government leaders who choose to arm and equip armed groups abroad. Certainly anyone aiding insurgent groups that resort to mass atrocities is now on notice of potential culpability. Perhaps even shipping arms to another government's atrocity-stained security forces may be fair game for international criminal scrutiny as well.

The Taylor verdict thus sets a significant precedent on which the new International Criminal Court (ICC) can build. The Sierra Leone tribunal that convicted him is one of several special courts established under

U.N. Security Council resolutions to provide justice and accountability in specific conflicts where war crimes and atrocities seemed particularly egregious, including Yugoslavia and Rwanda. These tribunals' legacy has shaped the scope and workings of the permanent ICC created under the 1998 Rome Statute to prevent and punish genocide and other mass-atrocity crimes.

Just six weeks ago the ICC prosecutor secured the court's first conviction, of Thomas Lubanga for the forced conscription of child soldiers into his rebel militia and their use in hostilities and atrocities in the Congo's Ituri region. Two other trials are currently underway, and seven more are scheduled to open soon.

Eight ICC indictees remain fugitives, including the president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir. If apprehended, Bashir stands a good chance to become the first head of state the ICC convicts of masterminding mass-atrocity crimes. (Rebels last fall disposed extrajudicially of the only other head of state indicted by the ICC prosecutor, Libya's Muammar Qaddafi.) The court has active investigations and indictments underway in seven countries in Africa, and is conducting a preliminary examination of complaints of mass atrocity crimes in eight other countries spanning four continents.

During the Obama years the United States has been an enthusiastic supporter of the investigations of the International Criminal Court. The court remains, however, an obsessive *bête noire* on the far right, even if the military's initial obdurate opposition has subsided as the court has proved itself. In his riveting new memoir, *All the Missing Souls*, former war-crimes ambassador David Scheffer has detailed the paralysis inside the Clinton administration as the Rome treaty was being negotiated, citing the president's failure to overrule Pentagon paranoia and support the treaty taking shape there.

Clinton last-minute signature on the treaty has been shadowed by a formal letter George Bush sent to the United Nations disavowing any intention to become a state party. But Bush himself blinked when the Europeans pressed the Security Council to refer the atrocities in Darfur to the ICC. The great mystery today is why President Obama, a genuine legal scholar, has not simply revoked the Bush letter.

Here in the juror holding room of my county court house, we have all been treated to juror-preparation videos extolling America's rule of law. It seems only natural that the international community should crank up judicial machinery to enforce the rule of law against humanity's most heinous crimes in places where no working national court system can provide justice. Let's just get on with it.

*Jeffrey Laurenti is a Senior Fellow at the Century Foundation.*

## Amsterdam News (New York)

Friday, 4 May 2012

Opinion

### **The Charles Taylor verdict and its impact on his country**

Jonathan P. Hicks

There has been no discussion topic in the streets, churches and gathering places quite as heated and passionate as the verdict in the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor. Taylor was convicted at The Hague by a special U.N. court recently of 11 counts of crimes against humanity.

The discussions have been fervent and incessant, and there is an unexpectedly sharp division among Liberians about Taylor to a degree that is rather astonishing.

Apart from being a former president, Taylor was a noted warlord during Liberia's debilitating civil conflict that lasted for 14 years, ending in 2003. Taylor's record of war crimes is as shocking as it is appalling and ghastly. To hear people here tell it, the Taylor horrors during the war extended from getting teenagers to become soldiers, all while on drugs, to mutilation of civilians he deemed enemies.

Despite his misdeeds in Liberia, Taylor was charged with crimes that took place in Sierra Leone and convicted of sustaining and guiding the brutal rebel movement in that country. Taylor is the first head of state to be convicted by an international court since the Nuremberg trials in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Most Liberians seem to be taking the view of Taylor as something of a monster who, if he had not been convicted of war crimes, might have returned to Liberia—a prospect that they say would surely reverse the strides the country has taken in the last decade.

Others—and not a small number by any means—look at Taylor sympathetically. He is, many here suggest, a victim of a witch hunt by the United States and England. They contend that the Taylor years in power were days of relative stability for the country's economy and that he was far more benevolent to the common Liberian than he is portrayed to have been by the media.

The sad truth is that Taylor was a one-man terror show who helped to drive this country into deeper distress, negatively affecting every fiber of Liberia's existence, from its infrastructure to housing, employment, health care and education. The country had operated in relative stability and even prosperity by West African standards until the horrific civil war that left more than 250,000 dead and caused thousands more to move out of the country.

Taylor bore a considerable responsibility in the events that devastated this country during its civil conflict, to say nothing of the role he played in neighboring Sierra Leone. But with a sizable minority of Liberians believing that he is a victim, not a villain, the chance for unrest, and even violence, following his conviction has become real and worrisome.

In fact, after weeks of anticipation of the verdict, there was widespread expectation that some unrest might accompany the decision from the tribunal. However, there is extraordinarily good news in this tale. Despite the expectation of violence—which led to the dispatching of additional troops when the verdict was announced—there was nothing in the way of unrest.

The complete absence of civil disturbance points to a level of maturity and discipline among the Liberian people. More than a decade of civil war has made the country weary of unrest. After years of stability, led by a president who has commanded international attention for steering the country toward development, Liberia is making it clear that it has no thirst for a return to the old days of devastation.

And that's a good thing for Liberia and all of West Africa.



## The Times (Malta)

Friday, 4 May 2012

### Bloodied ace of diamonds

John Attard Montalto

By the time you read this, the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague should have sentenced Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia. Last week, Mr Taylor was found guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes, committed during his six years in office between 1997 and 2003.

Perhaps the most famous moment during the trial concerned the involvement of former supermodel, Naomi Campbell, who was said to have received a diamond as a gift from Mr Taylor. The matter was relevant to the trial since it would establish a connection between Mr Taylor and “blood diamonds”.

Sometimes also called “conflict diamonds”, the gems get their name because they are one of the currencies of choice of warlords and terrorist groups. When Al Qaeda found its cash deposits were being frozen, it invested in diamonds in order to have a portable source of wealth. In Mr Taylor’s case, he used to be paid in diamonds for his involvement in the civil war of Sierra Leone, an involvement that eventually found him guilty of all 11 charges brought against him.

Only a month before he was found guilty, I had to make an unplanned visit to Liberia. Having just been monitoring the elections in Dakar, Senegal, I could not leave as planned through Mali, as a coup d’etat had just been staged there. Eventually, I travelled to Liberia and found myself testing my “airport road theory”, namely that the road from the airport tells you a lot about the state of a country and the resourcefulness of its people.

I was particularly curious about Liberia for reasons other than wanting to know how the country was faring nine years after the notorious Mr Taylor stepped down. The country has a special historical relationship to the United States, which is why Liberia’s flag is similar to the American one.

When slavery was abolished in 19th century America, some 20,000 freed slaves were resettled in Liberia. They did not get on well with the indigenous population. A dual caste system emerged reflecting almost the situation in pre-abolition America, complete with plantations and mansions. Today, the hollow structures of the former remain.

One other curiosity is the imprint of freemasonry. Three former prime ministers were freemasons. Constitutional changes have since forbidden such a reoccurrence.

This then was the special history of the country that circumstances had brought me to. As soon as we landed I could see that the UN peace force was still deployed. Large numbers of white helicopters and military vehicles occupied a good portion of the airport. Peace was evidently still fragile.

The drive to Monrovia, the capital, took almost an hour as it is just over 40 km from the airport. At \$35, the cost of the taxi was reasonable and suggested a modicum of stable order, otherwise prices were more likely to be opportunistic. I modified this view, however, when we stopped to fill up the car at a petrol station.

It was guarded and the guards were from a private security firm. I realised it was a guard for every pump, not per station. However, it was not an entirely tense situation.

The sight of the road was a paradox. On one side I could see a long wall mounted with barbed wire, a scene which would prevail throughout my visit to Liberia. On the other side, there were clusters of small traditional homes with no boundaries. The homes were made of all types of materials (some having bamboo cages) but with a large open space in the middle.

At the periphery of the roads Liberians carried goods on their heads, mostly in bright plastic containers. Many were children who could not have been older than 10: barefoot, in well-worn T-shirts and shorts.

One thing that struck me was the number of vehicles which had crashed and been abandoned on the side of the road. The road itself was good, marked in yellow in the middle and straight all the way to Monrovia.

The vehicle of status is the shiny steel polished motorbike, which are displayed like racing horses and proudly protected by their owners. I was surprised that many of the motorcyclists were teenagers. As we got closer to Monrovia, I noticed that schools had finished and children and teenagers, mostly girls, were just returning home.

Perhaps the picture that will stay with me most of the country is the number of audacious girls, hair plaited back in the African style, riding on the back of the motorbikes, flaunting attitude.

It is of them that I will think when I follow the efforts of Liberia's President, Africa's only woman in the position, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. A co-winner of last year's Nobel Peace Prize, Ms Sirleaf is 73, in her second term and determined to alleviate poverty and improve the health and education system. She has renegotiated most contracts with the multinationals and is now looking at oil exploration.

Notwithstanding its diamond mines, Liberia is one of the poorest countries in Africa. The diamonds should have been the economy's ace but were soiled by conflict. Ms Sirleaf is now attempting to construct a legitimate diamond industry, which would deal the country a new deck of cards.

*Dr Attard Montalto is a Labour member of the European Parliament.*

## Business Day

Friday, 04 May 2012

### **NICOLE FRITZ: The real value in pursuing justice is closure**

The many victims of Sierra Leone's war will know that the crimes against them did not go unacknowledged

LAST month, the Special Court for Sierra Leone convicted former Liberian president Charles Taylor of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other violations of humanitarian law. It is the most high-profile conviction by the court and the ruling for which it is likely to be known.

It found him liable not, as the prosecution had charged, on the basis of command responsibility for the gruesome atrocities committed by the Revolutionary United Front and other rebel forces in Sierra Leone during the civil war, or on the basis that he formed a joint enterprise with the rebels, but because he had aided and abetted their acts and had helped plan some of the rebel attacks.



For some observers, this will seem less the resounding condemnation that all the time, effort and resources deployed by the court should yield. And yet Taylor will likely live out the rest of his days in prison, and the many victims of Sierra Leone's war will now know that the crimes against them did not go unacknowledged.

International criminal justice, particularly in an African context, is an easy target. What dividends does it pay, critics ask. Too expensive, too time-consuming, too far away, they say. Admittedly, some of these criticisms are fairly made. It's hard, for instance, to make the case that international justice proceedings have any deterrent effect. Does Syrian President Bashar al-Assad go any softer on anti-regime forces for fear of a possible International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment? Does Sudan's Omar al-Bashir, already the subject of an ICC indictment, make this impending sanction any part of his calculations against South Sudan?

But we appear to ask of international criminal justice proceedings far more than we ask of any domestic criminal process. Countless studies call into question the deterrent effect of domestic prosecutions and punishments without us ever significantly interrogating the value of these proceedings.

It is the back story to another international law judgment issued last month, that perhaps best testifies to the value of proceedings such as those against Taylor. This case, heard by the European Court of Human Rights, concerned the Katyn massacre, a Second World War atrocity in which more than 20,000 Polish army officers and other nationals were executed — the crime hidden by burying their bodies in the Russian forests of Katyn. The killings were on Joseph Stalin's orders after the Soviet invasion of Poland, but the Russians blamed the crime on the Nazis, going so far as to try to have them prosecuted at Nuremberg. Only in 1993 did then Russian president Boris Yeltsin acknowledge that Stalin and the politburo of the Communist Party were responsible for the deaths.

Descendants of the victims attempted to initiate investigations and prosecutions but, in 2004, Russian officials classified most of the volumes gathered in investigations as "top secret" and classified their decision to discontinue investigation as "top secret" too, effectively ending the descendants' search for accountability.



They approached the European Court for assistance. The court's judgment is of limited value — it concluded that the time between the crimes (in 1940) and the entry into force of Russia's obligations under the European Convention (in 1998) meant that it could exercise no jurisdiction in ordering investigation and prosecution. But it is this very lapse of time that makes the case so notable.

Seventy-two years on — several generations gone — the applicants before the court, including a widow, children and grandchildren, seek official acknowledgment of the wrong that was done to their families.

Court judgments tend to be one dimensional, foregrounding the issue at hand. Still, even if every day of the past 72 years has not been only joyless grappling with the trauma of Katyn for these descendants, there is no doubt that it has cast a long shadow over their lives — that their lives would have been made easier by an acknowledgment of what happened, that their husbands, fathers and grandfathers had not simply disappeared.

International criminal justice proceedings will not erase the trauma of international crimes, but its acknowledgement, its accounting, will go some way to easing the suffering and memory of those who endured Sierra Leone's brutal war — a prospect still sought by many, such as those who, 72 years on, seek reckoning for the massacre of Katyn.

Its justification lies not in it offering a complete salve, but in offering some.

*Fritz is the director of the Southern Africa Litigation Centre.*

# The Orange County Register

Thursday, 3 May 2012

## Timothy Spangler: War-crimes conviction worth the cost?

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor found guilty of atrocities in neighboring Sierra Leone, where thousands of victims have received little or nothing.

By TIMOTHY SPANGLER / The attorney divides his time between Orange County and the United Kingdom

After a trial costing over \$50 million, Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia, was convicted this week of aiding and abetting war crimes in Liberia's neighbor Sierra Leone. Not since the Nuremberg trials in 1946 has such a high-ranking official been successfully convicted of war crimes.



Taylor is scheduled to be sentenced May 30, and will likely serve out his sentence in Britain, the country responsible for toppling his murderous regime in 2003.

Article Tab: In this May 18, 2000 file photo, 14-year-old Maria Tukamara, mother of 5-month-old son Abdul, shows her false arms in the amputee camp run by the French aid agency 'Medicins Sans Frontiers' in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Maria lost her hands after the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) invaded her village on April 30, 1999. On April 26, 2012, judges at an international war-crimes court convicted

warlord-turned-Liberian president Charles Taylor, who is accused of sponsoring rebels responsible for untold atrocities during Sierra Leone's brutal civil war in return for so-called blood diamonds.

In this May 18, 2000 file photo, 14-year-old Maria Tukamara, mother of 5-month-old son Abdul, shows her false arms in the amputee camp run by the French aid agency 'Medicins Sans Frontiers' in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Maria lost her hands after the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) invaded her village on April 30, 1999. On April 26, 2012, judges at an international war-crimes court convicted warlord-turned-Liberian president Charles Taylor, who is accused of sponsoring rebels responsible for untold atrocities during Sierra Leone's brutal civil war in return for so-called blood diamonds.

Taylor's defense counsel, Courtenay Griffiths, promptly criticized the court's conviction as "neocolonialism," since to date the Special Court for Sierra Leone, based in the Hague, has arrested only Africans. Early indications were that Taylor will appeal the conviction, a process which might last a year or more.

The charges stem from Taylor's support for the Revolutionary United Front, a rebel army in Sierra Leone that carried on a series of bloody atrocities. During this decade-long civil war, the RUF were involved a horrific campaign of rape and torture, as well as the widespread recruitment and use of child soldiers.

Young boys were turned into drugged and numbed killers. Young girls were kidnapped and used as sex slaves. By one account, more 1,000 children had "RUF" carved into their backs in order to stop them from escaping. Many of the RUF's victims still bear the scars. As part of a campaign of amputations, innocent people would have their arms cut off if they offered any resistance to the RUF.

During Taylor's six years in power in Liberia, he ruled with intimidation and fear.

One of the unofficial slogans popular during his 1997 presidential campaign was "he killed my ma, he killed my pa, but I'll vote for him, anyway." However, as part of stepping down from power, he was granted immunity from prosecution in Liberia. As a result, the focus of the war-crimes tribunal was limited solely to his activities in Sierra Leone.

What motivated Taylor to become involved in his neighbor's civil war? Blood diamonds.

In exchange for laundering these valuable, uncut precious stones, Taylor provided weapons, bases, training and other support for the RUF.

Celebrations broke out across Sierra Leone when news of Taylor's conviction was announced. Unfortunately, Taylor's vast fortune, estimated to exceed \$400 million, seems to have disappeared.

An international search, which only began in earnest in 2007, appears to have come up empty-handed. In the three years between his resignation as president and his arrest in Nigeria for war crimes, friends and allies of Taylor successfully laundered his plundered money. As a result, his victims cannot look forward to receiving any meaningful compensation for their suffering and losses.

The consequence of Taylor's crimes will linger for years in Sierra Leone. Many of the former child soldiers remain ostracized, despite having been forced by the RUF to fight against their will. As a result, in the decade that has followed the end of the civil war, unemployment and stigmatization remain significant problems for these young men.

Would the \$50 million for the trial have been better spent within Sierra Leone to address the needs of survivors, rather than obtaining the conviction of a single man? As the pursuit for the lost Taylor fortune continues, this may prove the most vexing question.

Meanwhile, Africa remains a continent wrestling with violence and bloodshed.

Since Taylor's conviction, atrocities have continued across the continent. In Sudan and South Sudan, the recently bifurcated Sudanese people appear ready to resume an all-out war after six years of uneasy peace. In Nigeria, two dozen people were killed at Christian worship services by gunmen thought to be affiliated with the militant Islamist Boko Haram group. A similar attack took place at a church in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi.

Presidents and other senior governmental officials who engage in criminal activities should be held to account for their actions. However, international justice exists only in a selective and tentative form.

Despite the Taylor precedent, few are campaigning for charges to be brought against the presidents of Uganda and Rwanda – Yoweri Museveni and Paul Kagame, respectively – for their very similar activities in their neighbor state the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In the case of Sierra Leone, Taylor ended up on trial for war crimes as a direct result of the decision by British Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2003 to send 1,500 troops to defeat the RUF at the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown. Without this intervention, it is unclear how long the bloodletting in Sierra Leone would have continued.

Does the showcase value of a possible war-crimes conviction outweigh other important goals that could be obtained without such theatrics, such as being able to quietly, but effectively, negotiate a tyrant's exit?

Perhaps the worst lesson that can be drawn from the Taylor conviction is that similarly situated despots will be more motivated to cling to power and go out fighting, rather than risk succumbing to a "victor's justice" at the end of a war.

In the case of Charles Taylor, it seems that, despite the much-heralded conviction, his victims have not received anything close to the justice that they deserve.



## Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts in Cambodia

Friday, 4 May 2012

### Press Release by the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge

Since he took office at the ECCC, the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge, out of respect for the law and the victims, has focused all his energy to continuing the judicial investigation of the highly contentious Cases 003 and 044. In addition to conducting field investigations, the suspects were informed of their rights and were granted access to the case file. By way of a decision on the jurisdiction of the ECC to continue Case 003, the facts under investigation were made public with a view to ensuring that the victims are properly informed and able to exercise their rights.



For reasons which are manifestly more political and financial than strictly judicial, the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge – whose prerogatives were constantly called into question by his national counterpart for no material legal reason – found himself in a highly hostile environment and was severely impeded in the day-to-day performance of his duties, as a result of which he tendered his resignation to the United Nations Secretary General.

In light of the internal investigations into the violation of ECCC Internal Rule 35, the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge has reason to believe that several individuals, both current and former staff members of the ECCC, have interfered with the conduct of the investigation in Case File 004. The Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge has therefore reported this to the criminal prosecution authorities of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Moreover, the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge is of the view that the role played by the National Co-Investigating Judge as described in his Note of 21 March 2012 amounts to a serious interference with the conduct of the judicial investigation in Case Files 003 and 004. The Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge has therefore brought this matter to the attention of the Supreme Council of the Magistracy of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Finally, the Reserve International Co-Investigating Judge hereby invites all the competent authorities of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the United Nations to take a clear and common stand concerning the future of Case Files 003 and 004 so as to restore the image and dignity of the ECCC and uphold international justice.