

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Friday, 5 October 2007

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

Friday, 5 October 2007

RUF defence witness explains Bush life

At the resumption of the Revolution United Front (RUF) defence trial yesterday at the Special Court, the fourth witness for Issa Sesay with code number DIS -074 has revealed what life was in the bush in 1991.

Lead in evidence by defence lawyer Sareta Ashraph, the 45-year-old farmer who testified in Mende disclosed that he was in a village in Kailahun when a gang of men led by one Rambo addressed them. "He told us that we as civilians should not be afraid and run away, but should go to the bush for protection while they remain in town"

Later he went on this group headed by Rambo were asked by Foday Sankoh to leave the District and they were driven away by

members of the RUF.

During the stay of Rambo and the other rebels, the witness said they were not having a happy life as their wives were taken frequently away from them overnight and returned back in the morning.

The witness disclosed that their food was taken away from them. "It was because of these reasons that Foday Sankoh asked that the Rambo group should leave the district."

Narrating further DIS-074 revealed that the rebels who took over from Rambo were in their mid twenties and early thirties and they were mainly comprised of Sierra Leoneans who had a good relationship with civilians.

The civilian's representative was referred to as the G5 and they acted as intermediary between them and the RUF to settle disputes and to enforce the laws which were passed.

Among these laws was that no rebel should take the wife or food of a civilian and that they should not disturb the civilian and if any of them is caught they will be beaten to death.

Explaining further the witness said while they were with these other rebels, life was normal for them until they left the town together with the RUF for Gbaima where they were told by the RUF again to stay in the bush as they were told that the town was not safe.

He continued, "while we were in the bush we were even asked to choose a leader

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RUF defence witness explains Bush life

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whom we referred to as Joe Bush Commander and this commander was appointed by us the civilian. This person was responsible to settle dispute among us and if there was no dispute then he should protect us. There was a Military Police called Mohamed Fatorma."

During their stay in the bush, he narrated, the witness said he had his own farm and there was also a community farm where

about 40 people cultivated food for strangers.

The idea of a community farm, the witness said, was instituted by the RUF and the village people themselves and that the arrangements were done by the G5 and those in the town.

The people working in the farm were given food and they worked in the farm only once or twice a month and if anyone of them was sick, they will ask for excuse which would be

granted by the leader.

Asked whether he knew Issa Sesay, the witness said Issa was a commander and he only went to the bush to enquire about the welfare of the civilians.

The people who went with Issa were about his age and the youngest was about 25 years.

The civilians he said had a cordial relationship with Issa and that he was never told by other civilians what was done by him [Issa], the witness added.

Premier News
Friday, 5 October 2007

Special Court Review

Chambers

From last issue

Decision on Motions by Fofana and Norman for the Issuance of a Subpoena Ad Testificandum to H.E Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah: In a majority decision of 13 June 2006, Trial Chamber I denied Motions by the Fofana Defence and Norman Defence requesting the issuance of a subpoena ordering the president of Sierra Leone, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, to testify before the court and to meet with the Defence advance of his proposed testimony. The Chamber held that the Defence was required to show that the subpoena was both necessary and for the purpose of investigation, preparation, or conduct of the trial.

The Chamber found that the Defence had failed to meet both of these standards in that, in particular, the Defence failed to demonstrate the President Kabbah testimony could provide information about the CDF command structure that was unavailable from other sources, and that the Defence had failed to show the President's testimony would materially assist the Defence case. In a separate and concurring opinion, Justice Itoe further held that the President could not be compelled to testify before the Court because he enjoyed immunity against legal process under section 48 (94) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone and under customary international practice. In a dissenting opinion, Justice Thompson ruled that when the need to uncover the absolute truth was paramount and that the Defence had set forth sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the President's testimony would germane to the trial and that the requested subpoena was necessary to the preparation and conduct of the Defence case. Justice Thompson also ruled that the president was not under international law, immune from legal process.

On 28 June 2006, Trial Chamber granted the Defence leave to appeal that decision.

Decision on Joint Defence Motion Regarding the propriety of Contacting Defence Witnesses: On 20 June 2006, Trial Chamber I partially granted a Defence motion objecting to the prosecution practice of directly contacting, interviewing and taking statements for purposes of cross-examination at trial from some Defence.

From the outset of its decision, the Chamber ruled that witnesses are not the property of either the Prosecution or the Defence and therefore both parties have an equal right to interview them. The Chamber noted that in this instance none of the Defence witnesses had previously requested the issuing of protective measures by the Court. The Chamber also found that it would be fair if the Prosecution were to give prior notice to the Defence of its intention to interview their witnesses in order to avoid allegations of bad faith or improper interference with a witness. In granting one of the heads of relief sought by the Defence, the Chamber consequently determined that the Witness and Victims Section of the Special Court, by virtue of its functions and objective toward the protection security and support of witnesses and victims is in the best position to approach and explain to a witness his or her right to refuse to be interviewed and to ascertain that proper consent to an interview with another party the proceedings was obtained from the witnesses.

Decision on Impermissibility of Eliciting Evidence Involving the Second Accused through Cross-Examination of Witnesses called by the Third Accused: In an oral decision on 6 October 2006, and in a subsequent written decision on 10 November 2006, Trial Chamber I sustained a Defence objection and forbade the prosecution from eliciting, during cross-examination of a Defence witness direct evidence pertaining to an accused

who had not called the witness in question. The Chamber found that a cross-examining party is not strictly limited to addressing questions arising from the direct examination of witness but may also cross-examine on matters related to joint criminal enterprise and credibility. However, continued the Chamber the exact extent and manner of questioning permitted will depend on the specific nature of the testimony given and the purpose of the questioning. In the specific circumstances of the Defence objection, the Chamber found that the Defence who did not call the witness was not afforded the opportunity to conduct investigations in relation to the witness and consequently, the potential prejudice to the Defence for this other accused would outweigh any potential probative value of the evidence elicited by the Prosecution.

Written Reasoned Decision on Prosecution Motion for Leave to Call Evidence in Rebuttal: On 27 November 2006, Trial Chamber I dismissed a Prosecution motion requesting leave to call a rebuttal witness at the close of the Defence case, in order to rebut a Defence witness's claim that the witness's brother was killed an attack on koribondo rather than killed in a sacrifice at the Poro Bush in Talia as previously claimed by a Prosecution witness. In its decision, the Chamber set forth the standard for admission of rebuttal evidence after the presentation of the Defence case: in addition to being relevant and of probative value, the evidence in question must relate to a significant issue which has arise during the Defence case and the nature of the Defence evidence must be such that it cannot have been reasonably anticipated or foreseen also the rebuttal evidence cannot be introduced in order to cure defects in the Prosecution's case and cannot violate the fundamental fairness of the

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Special Court

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proceedings. In its decision, the Chamber held that the prosecution had every reason to expect that its witness's testimony would be disputed by the Defence, that the witness's own testimony had indicated the possibility that the Defence would put forth evidence that the victim

had been killed at koribondo instead, and that this possibility could reasonably have been expected and addressed by the Prosecution during its case. Because the Defence's introduction of evidence relating Koribondo could have been reasonably foreseen by the Prosecution, it did not qualify as new evidence in case and the Chamber

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 4 October 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

There were no relevant stories on Liberia in the international media today.

International Clips on West Africa

INTERVIEW-Ivory Coast GDP to grow by 2.5 in 2008

ABIDJAN, Oct 3 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast expects economic growth to accelerate to 2.5 percent in 2008, from a forecast 1.8 percent this year, Finance Minister Charles Koffi Diby told Reuters. The minister said in an interview late on Wednesday that President Laurent Gbagbo's government was focused on repaying outstanding debt to multilateral lenders in order to qualify for debt relief.

Local Media – Newspaper

President Sirleaf Pays Homage to Fallen Diplomat

(The News, Daily Observer and The Inquirer)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was on Wednesday among an array of personalities who paid tributes to a fallen Liberian diplomat, Angie Brooks-Randolph. The President referred to the deceased as described as a “Trail Blazer, Champion for Political Freedom and Gender Equality” who symbolized women through her hard work and perseverance.
- Brooks-Randolph, 91, served as the first black female President of the 24th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. She died in the United States following a period of illness.

Nigeria Views AFRICOM Differently despite Liberia’s Interest in it

(Liberian Express, The News, and The Inquirer)

- The continuing debate over whether to accept or reject the US Africa Command appeared to be the preoccupation of both the media and public in the last couple of days. There have been differing opinions in the Liberian press on the issue. Despite Liberia’s support for the initiative, the *Liberian Express* quoted Nigeria’s Foreign Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, as opposing the idea of stationing U.S. combat troops on African soil.
- According to the paper, Nigeria opposes AFRICOM on the grounds that the initiative would be ‘counter-productive, unnecessary and impinges on the sovereignty’ of African States. Nigeria brings to two the number of African countries opposing Liberia’s interest to host the US Africa Command, with Libya being the first.

Capitol Building Renovation on Course

(The Informer)

- The Ministry of Public Works has clarified that renovation works at the Capitol Building are continuing contrary to media reports that the work was at a stand still.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

President Pays Tribute to Late Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)

Lawmaker Accused of Ordering the Flogging of Police Officers

- Sources confided to Radio Veritas that River Cess County Representative Jerry Massa allegedly ordered the flogging of some police officers assigned in the County.
- Quoting the complaint sent to the Liberia National Police Headquarters in Monrovia by the County's Police Commander Thomas Sackor, the sources alleged that the Lawmaker ordered citizens of the area to flog the officers after he had engaged them in a fist fight at the County's Police Station.

President Sirleaf Congratulates Germany on Historic “German Unity Day”

- In a message, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf congratulated German President Horst Kohler and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on the occasion making the observance of “German Unity Day”.
- President Sirleaf conveyed warmest felicitation on behalf of the Government and people of Liberia to the President, Government and people of Germany as they celebrate the historic event in their national life.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)

Spanish Government Commits to Liberia's Economic Development

- The Spanish Government said that it would assist Liberia in its economic recovery program in order to make the Country an economic power in West Africa. Spanish Political Counselor Yeago Lusada said that Spain would re- open its Embassy in Liberia and in the process focus its assistance largely on health, transportation and the economy.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)

House Speaker Lauds Government for Free Education Program

- In his speech delivered by his assistant at the graduation ceremony of the William V.S. Tubman High School in Sinkor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Alex Tyler commended the Government for implementing its free and compulsory primary education policy but called for more schools in the Country to deal with the growing number of pupils interested in taking advantage of the program.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)

Methodist Clergy Calls on Communities to Initiate Development

- According to a release issued by the faith-based Christian Media Centre, Liberian Council of Churches President, Methodist Bishop John Innis stated that community initiative was the best formula for Liberia's reconstruction and called on Liberians and communities across the Country to organize for the purpose of developing their areas.

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM and ELBS Radio)

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.

Institute for War and Peace Reporting

Friday, 5 October 2007

Rebel Victims Promised Compensation

Museveni says funds to come from government's reconciliation and rehabilitation programme.

By Samuel Okiror Egadu in Gulu

The Uganda government will compensate victims of the two-decade insurgency in northern Uganda once a comprehensive peace deal is reached at the South Sudan-mediated peace talks in Juba, President Yoweri Museveni announced this week.

Museveni said people who have been mutilated or raped, together with those whose relatives have been murdered by rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army, LRA, in the region will be compensated under the government's programme of reconciliation and rehabilitation.

The head of state is touring northern districts of Uganda devastated by both the war and the country's worst floods in 35 years.

"We are going to mobilise funds," Museveni told reporters in Gulu, the north's biggest town, on October 1. "The victims will be compensated once a comprehensive peace agreement is signed in Juba."

Meanwhile, government officials in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, announced that LRA negotiators would meet government negotiators in Kampala on October 4 in what could be a fillip to the Juba talks.

The visit to Kampala would be the first by LRA representatives since the northern war began in 1986. The government officials emphasised, however, that the visit would last only a day and that the movement's top leaders would not be part of the delegation. They will remain in their bush headquarters in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC.

LRA spokesman in Juba Godfrey Ayoo said the chairman of the LRA delegation at the Juba talks, Martin Ojul, will lead a six-man team to Kampala.

LRA and government teams are currently engaged in on-off peace talks mediated by Dr Riek Machar, Vice President of the autonomous South Sudan government, and overseen by the United Nations special envoy for northern Uganda, former Mozambique president Joachim Chissano.

The talks in Juba, the South Sudan capital, are aimed at ending the 21-year insurgency that has displaced more than 1.7million people from their homes and resulted in more than 100,000 deaths. Some 75,000 people, including 38,000 children, have been abducted in LRA attacks.

Since negotiations began in July last year, with a ceasefire being agreed a month later, the war-ravaged region has been largely peaceful, and people have slowly begun returning to their homes from the squalid refugee camps.

Funding problems are currently stalling the Juba talks, which were adjourned on June 29. A date for their resumption keeps being set back, with mid-October now cited as the earliest possible date for a return to the table.

The rebels are requesting cash from international donors to carry out consultations with a wide range of northern representatives on accountability and reconciliation proposals that are on the table in Juba. The LRA argues that it needs the money to airlift 500 delegates from northern Uganda to the main rebel base in the 5,000 square kilometre Garamba National Park in the DRC. It also wants to fund travel for its negotiators to Argentina, South Africa and Sierra Leone to research issues of conflict, justice and reconciliation.

The government delegation has just concluded its own consultations in the north, collecting views from war victims and community leaders on issues of accountability and reconciliation, the third of five items on the agenda at the Juba talks.

Museveni, who told reporters that his government has devised a 14-point programme for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the north, said, "I am told the victims in this area are ready to forgive these people [the LRA rebels] who committed various atrocities against them. I was worried the people would take the law in their hands when they [the rebels] return home."

During its consultations on accountability and reconciliation, the majority of LRA victims said they would forgive the rebels in the interests of peace, according to government reports.

The LRA leader, Joseph Kony, his deputy, Vincent Otti, and top commanders Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ogwen have been indicted by the Hague-based International Criminal Court, ICC, to answer charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The LRA leaders face 33 charges of murder, rape, sexual enslavement, mutilation, abduction and recruitment of child soldiers as guerrilla fighters. A fifth indicted LRA commander, Raska Lukwiya, was killed last year in a battle with government forces near Kitgum, on the border with Sudan.

The president said he hoped the Kony would grasp the chance of peace offered by the Juba peace negotiations.

Describing the LRA as terrorists who were supported by Sudan's Arab government until the Juba talks began, Museveni said, "I hope Kony and his group will use the chance of peace talks. Before the start of the talks, we had managed to eliminate terrorism caused by these rebels and brought peace. We fought and defeated the terrorists who were disturbing us and those Sudan Arabs who were supporting them.

"We have built an army that is able to guarantee peace in Uganda. No one will destabilise again our peace. We now have the means to guarantee the security in the whole country - quickly, unlike in the past."

Museveni said the government intended reopening schools that were abandoned in northern Uganda as a result of the war.

Museveni said the 14-point recovery programme includes elimination of terrorism, construction of roads, restoring education, instituting micro-finance projects, an industrialisation strategy and reconstructing health facilities.

Samuel Okiror Egadu is an IWPR journalist in Uganda.

Commonwealth News and Information Service (London)

Wednesday, 3 October 2007

Peace-Building Tops Agenda At Commonwealth-UN Talks in New York

The two sides agreed to closely co-ordinate their activities in Sierra Leone to consolidate peace and promote development

The Commonwealth has reiterated its longstanding commitment to Sierra Leone at a meeting on 27 September 2007 in New York with Carolyn McAskie, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-building Support.

Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General, told Ms McAskie that he looked forward to working closely with the UN Peace Building Commission (PBC) towards consolidating political stability and promoting social and economic development in the country.

The Commonwealth sent a team of Observers to Sierra Leone for the recent presidential and parliamentary elections, including the run-off. The Observer Group's report said the elections had been credible, fair and peaceful.

The team also made recommendations, highlighting the problems of youth unemployment, the provision of infrastructure and social services, and corruption and accountability issues.

"We stand ready to work on these issues with the PBC towards our shared goal of promoting social and economic development in Sierra Leone," stated Mr McKinnon.

The Commonwealth has observer status at country-specific meetings of the PBC and has been in close contact regarding its work in Sierra Leone. "We look forward to strengthening that relationship," said the Secretary-General.

Since 1999, the Commonwealth has been engaged in peace-building in Sierra Leone and has observed all elections there since the end of the war in 2002.

In addition, it has provided technical capacity-building assistance to promote political dialogue and reconciliation and to strengthen the Electoral Commission, and has given support to local industries for generating employment.

The two sides agreed to closely co-ordinate their activities in Sierra Leone to consolidate peace and promote development.