

**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, 7 December 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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### Local News

Motion on Justice Thompson's Withdrawal Dismissed / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 3
Special Court to Arrest Tejan Kabbah / <i>African Champion</i>	Page 4
Anew Law Courts Building and Prison for Sierra Leone / <i>The Spectator</i>	Page 5

### International News

Warcimes Court Dismisses Ex-rebels' Attempts to Remove Judge / <i>Agence France Presse</i>	Page 6
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 7-9
War's Other Victims / <i>The Economist</i>	Page 10
Liberia Commission Visits Mass Graves / <i>Associated Press</i>	Pages 11-12

Awoko

Friday, 7 December 2007

# Motion on Justice Thompson's withdrawal dismissed

By Betty Milton

The motion filed by the three Revolutionary United Front (RUF) indictees on the withdrawal of a sitting judge of the Trial Chamber I of the Special Court, Justice Bankole Thompson, was dismissed yesterday.

Giving the judgment, presiding judge Benjamin Itoe said "the motion is

dismissed in its entirety and we therefore grant leave to appeal as this is the first time such a motion is coming before the court."

The motion of the voluntary withdrawal or disqualification of Justice Thompson was to the judgment rendered on 22 August 2007 on the two accused persons of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) in which they were found guilty of the some charges of the indictment and were convicted and not guilty on

others and so they were acquitted according to the majority decision.

Justice Itoe further explained that while in a dissenting opinion Justice Thompson found them not guilty in all of the charges and so acquitted them.

The RUF defence in their motion for the voluntary withdrawal submitted in justice Bankole Thompson's separate and partially dissenting opinion in the CDF trial, which found the two accused not guilty on

all counts that he had reached conclusions and made statements which suggested that he had already made up his mind about the guilty status of the RUF defendants.

It is on these grounds that the counsel for the three accused seek voluntarily withdrawal permanently or disqualifications of Justice Thompson from the case in that he has reached conclusion of fact and law that give rise to reasonable doubts concerning his partiality.

The prosecution in response submitted that the findings made by the learned Judge are

exclusively based on the findings of the CDF trial and that the defence has taken the judge's statement out of context.

The prosecution further submitted that the judge was not making references to crimes and criminality is unattainable when considering the lesser evil of the CDF which includes grotesque acts of criminality against innocent civilians.

In Justice Thompson's submission to the first and third accused, he

stated that the motion seek to litigate his dissenting judgment in the CDF case with the remedy being his disqualification in the RUF trial. He added that the rule to remove a judge did not apply to things done by a judge in the performance of his judicial functions but only to things done outside these functions such as a public lecture or an interview to the press.

The judge further submitted that it was his role to determine the guilty or innocence of a person based on the evidence presented in that trial and not in another trial.

African Champion  
Friday, 7 December 2007

# Special Court To Arrest Tejan Kabbah

Former president of Sierra Leone Alhaji Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah might soon find himself behind bars in a Special Court cell if investigations currently being carried out for his indictment finds him guilty of bearing the greatest responsibilities for crimes in Sierra Leone.

According to investigations carried out by **The African Champion**, Mr. Tejan-Kabbah is liable to be indicted for his part in the armed conflict in Sierra Leone contrary to international laws in Sierra Leone within the time frame set out

by the Special Court. Kabbah's name has been repeatedly mentioned as one of the potential Indictees. However, he had been protected from potential indictment as a sitting president under the Sierra Leone constitution which stipulates that a Head of State cannot be indicted for crimes done during his or her term of office. Mr. Tejan-Kabbah if found eligible for indictment will not be protected under the constitution of Sierra Leone as he is now an ordinary citizen. It could be recalled that Mr. Tejan-Kabbah while in

office had tried to introduce a bill in Parliament giving total immunity to former presidents for crimes committed while in office. The then parliament had rejected the bill after it caused a national uproar with the press calling for a rejection of the law.

The Late Chief Samuel Hinga Norman when indicted by the then prosecutor of the Special Court Mr. David Crane had repeatedly stated in his defence that he was acting under orders from Mr. Tejan-Kabbah whom he said was the Minister of Defence and

Commander of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone. The late Chief Norman implicated Tejan-Kabbah and said since he had been indicted there was no justification why Tejan-Kabbah should not be indicted for the same crimes as he was the one who gave the orders and funded the conflict directly.

Reports reveal senior members of the Sierra Leone people's party are also part of the drive to ensure that Mr. Tejan-Kabbah is indicted and jailed. "We are sure that he will be indicted because all the evidence shows that

Pa Kabbah also bears the greatest responsibility. Pa Kabbah was the one that made the arrangements, Pa Kabbah was the one that talked with the mercenaries and contracted them, Pa Kabbah was the one that sent the weapons to Sierra Leone and whenever there was a lack of logistics Pa Kabbah would send, so Pa Kabbah is responsible," said David Juana a former Kamajor now enrolled as a university student.

Sources within the Special Court for Sierra Leone reveal Mr. Kabbah's name

has already been placed on the list of those to be indicted and said a powerful force is demanding that the former president be arrested as long as Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia has been indicted and arrested. "If Taylor is now in a jail in The Hague, there is no reason why Kabbah should not also be in the same condition," said a Liberian refugee in Sierra Leone who asked not to be named. Meanwhile the life of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has been extended to 2009.

The Spectator  
Friday, 7 December 2007

# A New Law court building and prisons for Salone?

There have been so many recommendations towards the enhancement of an exemplary judicial system in Sierra Leone that had fallen in deaf ears, but if those that were put forward by the Sierra Leone Bar Association in its recently held consultative conference, is any thing to go by, this country will once again enjoy a modern judicial system where cases would be expedited at ease, satisfactorily and without or favour. The proposed recommendations which are expected to be published by the secretariat saves that immediate steps must be taken to ensure that a building project be proposed for a new and suitable law court building which will sectionalize that different courts such as criminal, traffic, economic crime, Anti Corruption etc. where a lawyer is to be appointed into another office or even to the bench, his or her law firm must be dissolve, procedures connected to the criminal justice system must be reviewed for speedy trials while young and dynamic lawyers be invited to serve in higher courts, and expedite cases in court without formal witnesses. It was also recommended that lawyers practicing in other countries be allowed to do so in Sierra Leone bar Association must be contacted in the appointment of judges also the remuneration for judges and magistrate must be reviewed with decent condition of service which is commensurate to inter national standards and then set up a public complaint and court inspectorate monitoring unit. In the part of the law officers Department, state funded law student must render national services whiles the British Council plays a vital

role in the justice ministry. Local court system be made an arm of the High Court for the Sierra Leone police force, only serious cases are to be sent to court and discard those that seems not too serious. Justices of peace must be remunerated on time, to conduct regular training programmes on judge's rules where members of the Bar Association could lead a helping hand. It should be noted that former witnesses owes a duty to the court and no politician should be a member of the police council.

And finally for the prisons Department, Government must seriously consider building a maximum security prison

immediately to combat the influx of detainees escaping justice.

Prison officers be reminded of their duty to bring prisoners to court on time. It was also proposed that a back way house be established to prepare those who are completing their sentencing or other wise for useful work out of the yard and integration into social life. Senior judges must visit the prisons regularly to see those prisoners who spent more time in jail while awaiting trials. Review sentence guidelines on the imposition of sentences and concentrate on community services instead of fines while implementing the TRC report on justice. A full copy of the draft recommendation will be published soon.

## Agence France Presse

Thursday, 6 December 2007

### **Warcrimes court dismisses ex-rebels' attempts to remove judge**

The UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone on Thursday dismissed attempts by three rebel chiefs, on trial for warcrimes, to have a judge removed from their case accusing him of bias.

Lawyers of three leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) that waged the civil war in Sierra Leone, had sought to have Sierra Leonean-born judge Bankole Thompson, withdraw voluntarily or be disqualified from their case over remarks he made in an earlier separate judgement.

They said his statements presumed the RUF guilty before their trial was over.

Thompson "had reached conclusions and made statements which suggested he had already made up his mind about the guilt of the RUF defendants and so should either be withdrawn from the case or the trial chamber should disqualify him."

In an opinion delivered at the conclusion of the trial of the pro-government Civil Defence Forces (CDF) earlier this year, Thompson said the militias fought "against imminent evil, anarchy and tyranny to the citizens of Sierra Leone brought about by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (the so-called marriage between the rebel Sierra Leone army and the RUF}."

"The statement would give a reasonable, fair-minded person an apprehension that the judge is now unable to adjudicate fairly on the guilt or innocence of any member of the RUF," the lawyers contended.

But fellow judge Benjamin Itoe, who presided over the hearing on Thursday, "dismissed the motion in its entirety" and said Thompson would continue to sit in the ongoing RUF trial.

Defence lawyers told AFP that they would appeal against the decision.

Prosecutors said the defence took Thompson's statement "out of context".

The tribunal, set up in 2002 under a deal between the United Nations and the Sierra Leone government, is prosecuting those responsible for atrocities committed during the 1991-2001 war.

In its first rulings this year, it jailed three rebel AFRC commanders to between 45 and 50 years each for mutilation, murder, rape and enlisting child soldiers, and two former pro-government militia commanders for six and eight years.

The war, funded by so-called blood diamonds, is considered one of the most gruesome in modern history.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 December 2007

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

### International Clips on Liberia

AP 12/06/2007 08:06:00

#### **Liberia's truth commission visits mass graves**

By JONATHAN PAYE-LAYLEH

MONROVIA, Liberia - A team from Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission has visited mass graves of people massacred during the country's 14-year civil war and pledged to help villagers who want the bodies given proper burials. Commission Chairman Jerome Verdier said Tuesday he headed a team that visited four villages this week in Lofa County, which was known as Liberia's bread basket before the war and changed hands many times during the fighting.

### **Liberia clears debts to World Bank**

WASHINGTON, Dec 5, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Liberia cleared all overdue debt service payments to the World Bank on Wednesday, marking the beginning of a new era for the country as it normalizes relations with the international community. The clearance of arrears to the World Bank and other multilateral agencies will make **Liberia** eligible for full debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) programs.

### **NCR Demands N150m to Integrate Liberian Refugees**

Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

Dec 06, 2007 (Daily Trust/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The National Commission for Refugees (NCR) has demanded for N150 million in the 2008 budget to integrate into the Nigerian society Liberians and Sierra Leonean refugees who have refused to return to their countries after war.

### International Clips on West Africa

#### **Ivory Coast cocoa tax hinders EU trade deal-source**

By Peter Murphy

ABIDJAN, Dec 6 (Reuters) - Top cocoa grower Ivory Coast is likely to finalize an interim trade deal with the European Union this week, but will have to modify the way it taxes cocoa exports, a source following the negotiations said on Thursday.

AP 12/06/2007 08:10:42

#### **Germany extradites Ivory Coast national to Italy in Student slaying case**

BERLIN \_ An Ivory Coast national wanted in connection with the killing of a British student in Perugia has been extradited to Italy, a German prosecutor said Thursday. Rudy Hermann Guede has denied involvement in the slaying of Meredith Kercher, 21, but has acknowledged being in her room the

night she died. He was arrested in Germany on Nov. 20 and has been held in Koblenz. The victim's 20-year-old American roommate Amanda Knox, a University of Washington student, and Knox's Italian ex-boyfriend, Raffaele Sollecito, 23, have been detained in the investigation into the killing.

## **The Undisclosed Facts about the SLPP Tragedy [opinion]**

Atomic Pen

Dec 05, 2007 (Concord Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) -- The people of Sierra Leone have made history in the recently concluded presidential and parliamentary elections which have been described by members of the international community as the most transparent, credible, and free and fair democratic elections in the history of elections in Africa.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **World Bank Clears Liberia's Arrears**

*(The Analyst, Liberian Express, The Inquirer, New Democrat, Daily Observer, Heritage and The News)*

- The Government of Liberia and the World Bank have concluded arrangements for the clearance of all of Liberia's arrears to the Bank, amounting to more than US\$400 million.
- The clearance of the arrears to the Bank and to other multilateral agencies, in the weeks ahead, will enable Liberia to begin the process of obtaining debt relief, under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries' Initiative.

#### **Controversy Brews over Sale of Stockpile of Iron Ore in Buchanan**

*(The Analyst, The Independent, Liberian Express, The Inquirer, New Democrat, The News and National Chronicle)*

- A debate has emerged over the 'secret' sale of the remaining stockpile of iron ores at the Port of Buchanan. The National Chronicle newspaper had reported that there was no public disclosure about the bidding process neither were proceeds from the sale of the iron ore transaction between the government and a foreign firm reflected in the 2007/2008 national budget.
- Most opinions expressed in The Analyst, The Independent, Liberian Express, The Inquirer, New Democrat, The News and National Chronicle suspect that the ore was sold under 'dubious circumstances' since the government was mute over the transaction.
- However, former Justice Minister Frances Johnson Morris, according to several dailies, admitted to the sale of the iron ore but said the Government was not under obligation to publicize the agreement or any other agreement for that matter.

#### **Army Chiefs of Staff end Security Meeting in Liberia**

*(Heritage, The Informer and The Monitor)*

- Chiefs of Defense Staff in the Mano River Basin on Wednesday concluded a one-day meeting held in the border town of Solomba in Foyah District near the Liberia-Guinea border. The meeting which was presided over by UNMIL Force Commander Lt/Gen. Chikadebia Isaac Obiakor was aimed at cementing security relations among countries of the Mano River Basin.

#### **Ex-officials Questioned over "Dubious" Sale of Iron Ore**

*(National Chronicle, The News, The Monitor, Heritage, The Informer and The Analyst)*

- Several senior officials of the erstwhile transitional government [former Finance Minister Lusine Kamara, former Lands, Mines and Energy Minister Jonathan Mason and former President of the Liberia Mining Company Siaffa Gbollie] were invited by the Bureau of National Investigation (NBI) for questioning in connection with the sale of the stock pile of iron ore at the Port of Buchanan in 2004 - the same reason for which a Lebanese businessman, George Haddad, was arrested and detained over the weekend by state security personnel.



**State prosecutors admit screening wrong video tape in treason trial**

*(The Monitor, Heritage, National Chronicle, The News, The Analyst, New Democrat and Daily Observer)*

- State prosecutors in the ongoing treason trial have admitted that the video clip they screened in court on Wednesday was a mistake, saying it was not the clip they intended to screen as part of their evidence in the trial of the treason suspects.

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

**Liberia Clears Overdue Debts with the World Bank**

*(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY Radio and Truth FM)*

**Former Government Officials Face Arrests for Dubious Iron Ore Deal**

*(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY Radio and Truth FM)*

**Prosecutors in Treason Trial Allegedly Presented Wrong “Evidences”**

- Correspondents said that State prosecutors in the treason trial of former Armed Forces of Liberia Gen. Charles Julu and Col. Andrew Dorbor yesterday said that the video clip they screened in court yesterday was not the one they intended to screen as part of their evidence in the ongoing trial of the suspects. Rather, they screened a video which was mistakenly brought to the Court by some officers of the National Security Agency who were assigned to screen the video.

*(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY Radio and Truth FM)*

*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](mailto:karpeh@un.org).*

## The Economist

Thursday, 6 December 2007

<http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story>

### War's other victims

The scale of an unspeakable horror

FROM Bosnia's rape camps and the horrors of Rwanda's genocide in the 1990s to the atrocities being perpetrated daily in northern Congo and Sudan's Darfur region, the tally of body bags runs alongside another grim body count: the numbers of women and girls, but in some places men and boys too, subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence. Reliable and comprehensive figures are hard to come by: victims are often too traumatised or too fearful to speak out. But a report on "Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict" by the Geneva-based Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) picks its way as systematically as it can through conflict after conflict, in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, piecing together the evidence.

It is grim reading. In Bosnia's war up to 50,000 women were subject to sexual violence; over 14 years perhaps 40% of Liberia's population suffered similar abuse; just under half those interviewed in a randomised study in Sierra Leone in 2000 had been raped, and more than a quarter had been gang-raped.

Such sexual violence can lead to severe physical as well as psychological damage: high numbers of fistula cases have been reported during conflicts in Burundi, Chad, Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia and elsewhere. An earlier DCAF report recorded that an estimated 70% of Rwanda's rape survivors were infected with HIV/AIDS. The offspring of such violence are often stigmatised or abandoned as "children of hate". In other words, the damaging health, economic and social consequences live on long after conflicts end.

Can such violence be curbed? In Darfur, marauding militias prey on women and children collecting firewood, food or animal fodder outside refugee camps. In some places, African Union peacekeepers have sent out trucks with soldiers to follow the women and provide as much protection as they can.

Alongside practical initiatives like these "firewood patrols", DCAF calls, as have earlier UN resolutions, for more women peacekeepers. They get along better with locals and also improve the behaviour of their male counterparts (in Congo in 2005 the UN registered 72 allegations of sexual violence of one sort or another against its own troops; 20 were substantiated). The percentage of women serving in UN military and police units is tiny; but some women have recently had senior posts in UN missions. And earlier this year Liberia received the UN's first-ever all-female contingent—103 Indian policewomen. It would help, says DCAF, if victims of sexual violence were more involved and better cared for in programmes for disarmament and demobilisation.

But when it comes to curbing sexual violence during conflict, ending a culture of impunity is key. The statute of the International Criminal Court allows for the prosecution of rape and similar violence as war crimes, crimes against humanity and even potentially as acts of genocide. Earlier this year the chief prosecutor decided to focus one of the court's investigations on atrocities carried out in 2002-03 in the Central African Republic—where rapes may have exceeded murders.

The increasing use of rape, by governments as well as militias, as a weapon of war is to be the target of a UN General Assembly resolution that is expected to pass soon. After intense lobbying by Sudan (the resolution named no names, but evidently the shoe fitted) among the UN's Africa group, backed surprisingly by South Africa, the language of the resolution has been watered down somewhat. But it still calls for the UN secretary-general to report back next year on what is being done to protect civilians against sexual violence—and to hold to account, among others, governments that target their own citizens in this way.

## Associated Press

Thursday, 6 December 2007

### **Liberia Commission Visits Mass Graves**

By JONATHAN PAYE-LAYLEH

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Visiting mass graves with hundreds of bodies, Liberian officials offered help to villagers who told stories of devastation from the nation's civil wars.

"The mass graves that we saw are something the people are living with," Jerome Verdier, chairman of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said Wednesday. "In some places, they have the full names of those who were buried."

A team from the national commission investigating human rights violations in Liberia, one of the world's poorest countries, saw the mass graves of people killed in its civil wars from 1989 to 2003. More than 200,000 people were killed and half the nation's 3 million people displaced.

Verdier, a lawyer and human rights activist, said his team visited four villages this week in Lofa County, known as Liberia's bread basket before the war. It changed hands many times during the fighting.

Corinne Dufka, a Human Rights Watch senior researcher for West Africa and expert on Liberia, called Lofa County "an epicenter of both military activity and human rights abuses."

She said the mass graves in Liberia have been well-documented, including several group killings that she did the research on. "The local population already knew about these graves," Dufka said, but the visits by the truth commission makes them official.

Members of the nine-member commission encouraged residents to share stories. The smallest grave the commission visited held 78 bodies; the largest contained as many as 500, according to Verdier.

The civil wars ended when former President Charles Taylor bowed to international pressure and went into exile. He is now imprisoned in The Hague, Netherlands, awaiting trial on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The west African nation — created to settle freed American slaves in 1847 — is still struggling to recover.

Among the villages "some of the survivors narrated horrible and gruesome stories of the atrocities committed against them by various warring factions during the Liberian conflict which caused some listeners to shed tears," commissioners said in a statement.

Verdier said villagers told his team they wanted the bodies exhumed and reburied. He said while that was not his commission's role, it would try to help villagers who want to give proper burials to those massacred.

Though rich in natural resources, Liberia was impoverished by years of war. There is little money or expertise for mass exhumations.

The United Nations sets detailed guidelines for exhuming human remains, including taking steps to isolate the site and to conduct DNA tests to identify the bodies.

Liberia's truth commission, patterned after a similar commission established in 1995 to examine human rights abuses in South Africa, offers victims an opportunity to air their grievances and create a historical record.

It cannot conduct criminal trials, but can recommend that some people be prosecuted.

"Liberians are prepared to say the truth of what happened," Verdier said. "And Liberians are prepared to put the past behind."