

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



Delegates and Court officials who attended the ICTJ-organised Legacy Conference on the Special Court in Freetown. See more photos in today's *Special Court Supplement*.

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:

Thursday, 7 February 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Local News	
International Experts Discuss Special Court for Sierra Leone's Legacy / <i>Standard Times</i>	Pages 3
As Special Court Wraps Up... / <i>The Exclusive</i>	Pages 4-5
Special Court Hears Investigator Trial Today / <i>The Nationalist</i>	Page 6
International News	
International Experts Gather in Freetown to Discuss Legacy.../ <i>ICTJ</i>	Pages 7-8
'GoL Wants Out of Court With Taylor?' / <i>The New Dawn</i>	Pages 9-10
Convicted War Criminal Charles Taylor Claims He is Owed \$200,000 Pension / <i>The Guardian</i>	Pages 11-12
Special Court Supplement	
ICTJ-Organised Legacy Conference on the Special Court in Photos / <i>OPA</i>	Page 13

Standard Times
Thursday, 7 February 2013

International Experts Discusses Special Court of Sierra Leone's Legacy

As the Special Court of Sierra Leone wraps up cases against accused war criminals, a conference will be held later this week in Freetown to assess the court's work and lasting legacy.

The conference is part of a larger international effort to look at how the court has helped to bring peace and establish the rule of law for the people of Sierra Leone, Liberia and the region as a whole.

The Special Court was set up by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations in 2002, after a decade of violent conflict claimed over 50,000 lives and devastated countless more. The court was tasked with trying those individuals who bore the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law.

Since then, 13 individuals have been indicted on charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations.

In the court's most high-profile case, former Liberian President Charles Taylor was found guilty in April 2012 of participating in the planning, and aiding and abetting, of crimes committed by rebel forces in Sierra Leone. Once Taylor's appeal is resolved, the court will conclude its judicial work - but its decisions, archives, prison, and courtroom will live on.

"The court has made a significant contribution to international jurisprudence and played a role in moving the focus of prosecutions for serious crimes back to the national plane," said David Tolbert, president of the International Center for Transitional Justice, the organization hosting the con-

ference. "Its legacy is rooted in recognizing victims' rights to justice, strengthening the rule of law and fighting impunity in Sierra Leone."

The court was the first of its kind and can claim many precedents. It was the first international court established by agreement between the U.N. and a state in the territory where crimes were committed; the first to indict a sitting African head of state, Charles Taylor; the first 'hybrid court' where international and national judges and personnel worked together; the first international court to be funded solely on voluntary contributions from interested states; and the first to convict individuals for the recruitment and use of child soldiers and the crime of forced marriage.

Throughout its operations, the court has paid particular attention to the experiences of women and children in the armed conflict. Children were singled out for some of the most brutal violations of human rights, including forced recruitment and physical and sexual violence. In thousands of cases, children as young as 10 years old were abducted from their homes and forced to join armed groups.

"[These trials] are an opportunity for us to know exactly what happened, and for people to be brought before the courts for their stories to be heard," said Claire Carlton-Hanciles, principal defender for the Special Court, in Freetown. "This is the first time in the history of Sierra Leone we're really going to practice rule of law. This is not only for the law books, but for Sierra Leone to move on."

According to a September 2012 report by No Peace Without Justice, there is an over-

all positive feeling among people in both Sierra Leone and Liberia about the court and its work. "The general feeling is that, on the whole, the court has been successful in fulfilling its mandate, although there is still work to be done." While many victims consider justice to be a form of redress in itself, the number of individuals who have benefitted from material compensation for the harms they suffered remains low.

The Freetown conference will bring together important stakeholders to discuss the court and its legacy -- senior officials of the government of Sierra Leone, paramount chiefs representing each district, state representatives, development agencies, former and current SCSL staff, other international criminal court and tribunal staff, and local and international civil society actors.

Topics will include the court's long-term legal obligations, like the protection of witnesses and the maintenance of archives that encompass many thousands of documents collected by the court during its investigations and prosecutions.

"Above all, the Court has helped to establish an authoritative record of the nature of the crimes that took place during the Civil War - who was responsible for them, what groups were targeted, and why," summed up Tolbert on the court's lasting impacts. "It has strengthened Sierra Leone's domestic legal system and encouraged Sierra Leoneans to have faith in their justice system." A high-level conference is held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, February 6-7, 2013.

The Exclusive

Thursday, 7 February 2013

As Special Court Wraps Up...

13 Indicted

Foday Sankoh, Maskita Dead, Johnny Paul Missing

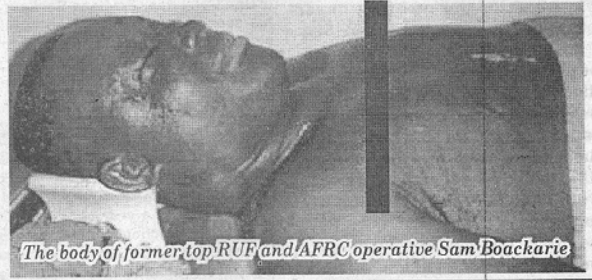
Johnny Paul Koroma



Sam Hinga Norman



Foday Sankoh



The body of former top RUF and AFRC operative Sam Boackarie

See story page 2

13 Indicted

After slightly over a decade of work, the United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone will after hearing the appeal of Charles Taylor wrap up its activities in Sierra Leone.

The court spent a little over \$100 million in establishing an office in Freetown and the trying of 13 indicted persons that included the infamous Charles Taylor whose trial took place at the Hague in Netherland because Sierra Leoneans expressed fear that if it took place in Freetown, Taylor's fighters could contemplate the idea of launching an invasion of Freetown to effect his release.

Of the thirteen persons the court indicted for war crimes in Sierra Leone, leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Cpl. Foday Saybana Sankoh; Maskita his second in command who led the invasion of Freetown on January 6 1999; and leader of the civil militia force, the Kamajors, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, have since died.

Still missing and wanted by the court is Major Johnny Paul Koroma who headed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) that overthrew the democratically elected government of Ahmad Tejan Kabba in 1997; a year after the 'Return to Democracy' election in 1996, and the signing of the Lome Peace Accord between the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF.

As the court wraps up the last of its cases against accused war criminals, a

conference will be held this week in Freetown to assess the court's work and lasting legacy. The conference is part of a larger international effort to look at how the court has helped to bring peace and establish the rule of law for the people of Sierra Leone, Liberia and the region as a whole.

The court was set up by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations in 2002, after a decade of violent conflict claimed over 50,000 lives and devastated countless more.

It was tasked with trying those individuals who bore the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law.

Thirteen individuals were indicted on charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations.

In the court's most high-profile case, former Liberian President Charles Taylor was found guilty in April 2012 of participating in the planning, and aiding and abetting of crimes committed by rebel forces in Sierra Leone. Once Taylor's appeal is resolved, the court will conclude its judicial work - but its decisions, archives, prison, and courtroom will live on.

"The court has made a significant contribution to international jurisprudence and played a role in moving the focus of prosecutions for serious crimes back to the national plane," said David Tolbert, president of the International Center for Transitional Justice, the organization host-

ing the conference.

"Its legacy is rooted in recognizing victims' rights to justice, strengthening the rule of law and fighting impunity in Sierra Leone," he added.

The court was the first of its kind and can claim many precedents.

It was the first international court established by agreement between the U.N. and a state in the territory where crimes were committed; the first to indict a sitting African head of state, Charles Taylor; the first 'hybrid court' where international and national judges and personnel worked together; the first international court funded solely on voluntary contributions from interested states; and the first to convict individuals for the recruitment and use of child soldiers and the crime of forced marriage.

Throughout its operations, the court paid particular attention to the experiences of women and children in the armed conflict.

Children were singled out for some of the most brutal violations of human rights, including forced recruitment and physical and sexual violence.

In thousands of cases, children as young as 10 years old were abducted from their homes and forced to join armed groups.

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Continued page 9

13 Indicted

From page 2

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"This is the first time in the history of Sierra Leone we're really going to practice rule of law. This is not only for the law books, but for Sierra Leone to move on."

According to a September 2012 report by No Peace without Justice, there is an overall positive feeling among people in both Sierra Leone and Liberia about the court and its work.

However, in Sierra Leone an opposing view maintains that the \$100 million spent in setting up the court would have been better utilized bringing relief to the victims of the war, instead of wasting it on the trials of just thirteen persons.

While many victims consider justice to be a form of redress in itself, the number of individuals who have benefitted from material compensation for the harms they suffered remains low.

But 'No Peace Without Justice' holds that, "The general feeling is that, on the whole, the court has been successful in fulfilling its mandate, although there is still work to be done."

The Freetown conference will bring together important stakeholders to discuss the court and its legacy -- senior officials of the government of Sierra Leone, paramount chiefs representing each district, state representatives, development agencies, former and current SCSL staff, other international criminal court and tribunal staff, and local and international civil society actors.

Topics will include the court's long-term legal obligations, like the protection of witnesses and the maintenance of archives that encompass many thousands of documents collected by the court during its investigations and prosecutions.

"Above all, the Court has helped establish an authoritative record of the nature of the crimes that took place during the Civil War - who was responsible for them, what groups were targeted, and why," summed up Tolbert on the court's lasting impacts. "It has strengthened Sierra Leone's domestic legal system and encouraged Sierra Leoneans to have faith in their justice system."

The conference will be held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, February 6-7, 2013.

The Nationalist
Thursday, 7 February 2013

Special Court Hears Investigator Trial Today

A pre-sentencing hearing in the trial of Prince Taylor has been scheduled for today at 2:00 p.m. in Courtroom 1 of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Prince Taylor, a former Defence investigator at

the Special Court, was convicted on 25 January

2013 on five contempt counts for interfering with

witnesses. Under the *Cont. Page 8*

**Embracing National Prosperity
Should Be Paramount**

See Page 3

Special Court Hears Investigator Trial Today

From front page

Rules in effect at the time, he faces a maximum possible sentence of seven years in prison, a fine of two million Leones, or both.

The Independent Counsel has recommended a sentence of from four

to five years and a fine of two million Leones. The Defence has not thus far made a sentencing recommendation, but has requested that the Accused's father be allowed to testify at the hearing.

The proceedings will be open to members of the public.

ICTJ

Wednesday, 6 February 2013

International Experts Gather in Freetown to Discuss Legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone



New York, NY - As the Special Court for Sierra Leone wraps up cases against accused war criminals, a conference will be held later this week in Freetown to assess the Court's work and lasting legacy. The conference is part of a larger international effort to look at how the court has helped to bring peace and establish the rule of law for the people of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the region as a whole.

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“The court has made a significant contribution to international jurisprudence and played a role in moving the focus of prosecutions for serious crimes back to the national plane,” said David Tolbert, president of the International Center for Transitional Justice, the organization hosting the conference. “Its legacy is rooted in recognizing victims' rights to justice, strengthening the rule of law, and fighting impunity in Sierra Leone.”

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and national judges and personnel worked together; the first international court to be funded solely on voluntary contributions from interested states; and the first to convict individuals for the recruitment and use of child soldiers and the crime of forced marriage.

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The New Dawn (Liberia)

Thursday, 7 February 2013

'GoL Wants Out of Court With Taylor?'

Winston W. Parley

The Legal Representative of ex-President Charles Taylor in Liberia, Counselor Julius Sayma Syrenius Cephus has quoted the Justice Ministry here as saying that it was not contacted before petitioning the Supreme Court of Liberia for Taylor's benefits.



As the result, the ministry has urged both parties to meet for out-of court discussions. On 17 January 2013, Cllr. Cephus filed an 18-count joint petition before the high court for a writ of mandamus to compel the government to pay US\$231,429.99 as total annuities (benefits) to ex-president Taylor's wife, Victoria B. Addison Taylor

covering 111 calendar months, and US\$114,583.32 for Liberia's former Vice President John D. Gray representing 110 calendar months, respectively.

But in a phone interview with this paper Wednesday morning, Cllr. Cephus said though the Justice Ministry sees the petitioners' action as legitimate on grounds that past presidents were entitled to annuities, not every matter needed to be taken to court.

"The ministry said not everything needs to go to court; past presidents need to get their benefits. So our issue is legitimate. But for us, we want to stay out of the press..." said Cllr. Cephus.

However, efforts to obtain comment from Justice Minister Christina Tah failed, as she could not answer her phone after an office staff, only identifying herself as Ms. Johnson earlier, said the minister was in a meeting and would later get back to the caller (the New Dawn-Liberia).

Consistent with Section 1.4 of an act enacted by Legislators on July 6, 1978, Taylor and Gray are pleading for the Supreme Court to grant them the necessary relief by compelling the current government to pay to them 50% each of the salary of the president and vice president per annum respectively, on grounds that they were honorably retired since 2003 to private life, and were not in the employ of government.

Quoting Section 1.4 of the act entitled "An Act to provide for retirement pension of the President, Vice President, Speaker, Chief Justice of the Republic of Liberia," Taylor's lawyers argued, among others, that a former president who has honorably retired to private life and who is not in any way gainfully employed by the government shall receive from the government a pension equal to fifty percent (50%) of the salary of the president."

The act further mandates that the sitting government provides personal staff and facilities for the remainder of the ex-president or vice president's life at a cost not less than US\$25,000.00 per annum for

the ex-president and an allowance not less than US\$12,500 per annum for the ex-vice president, respectively.

But both petitioners had accused the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf administration of sporting with their lives and rights by adopting “a pick and choose” biasness and “selective” payments of retirement benefits “as demonstrably shown in its settlement of retirements benefits of former President Samuel Kanyon Doe to his wife, Nancy B. Doe.

Ex-president Taylor is currently being held in The Hague and expected to face a 50 year prison sentence for aiding and abetting war crimes against humanity in neighboring Sierra Leone after he was convicted in April last year by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the Hague. An appeal process initiated by Taylor is ongoing.

Under pressure from various rebel factions and ‘international powers’, Ex-President Charles Taylor was forced to resign the Liberian Presidency on August 11, 2003.

Following the departure of Ex-President Taylor to Calabar, Nigeria in 2003, Liberia’s Vice President Moses Z. Blah ascended to the office of the president on Constitutional ground; thereby bringing onboard John D. Gray as Vice President from August 11, to October 14, 2003.

Vice President Gray, along with Blah also retired in 2003 upon the inception of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, NTGL headed by Chairman Charles Gyude Bryant on October 14, 2003.

The Guardian

Wednesday, 6 February 2013

Convicted war criminal Charles Taylor claims he is owed \$200,000 pension

Afua Hirsch, West Africa correspondent

Lawyers for former president of Liberia and his wife say he is entitled to retirement benefits to support family.



Charles Taylor, who was sentenced to 50 years in jail last year for 11 counts of war crimes. Photograph: Evert Jan Daniels/AFP/Getty Images

The former president of Liberia and convicted war criminal, Charles Taylor, and his wife, Victoria Addison-Taylor, claim they are owed a pension of more than \$200,000 (£128,000) earned during the 111 months since he stepped down from power.

The amount is equivalent to half of what the current president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, is paid, plus personal staff and facilities worth \$25,000 a year for the rest of Taylor's life.

Last May, a UN-backed court sentenced him to 50 years' jail on 11 counts of war crimes in which he aided and abetted Sierra Leone's rebels during the 1991-2002 civil war.

"President Taylor is now in detention in The Hague, has a huge family back home, and, by law, he is entitled to his retirement benefits to support his wife and family," said Sayma Srenius Cephus, a lawyer at Kemp & Associates in Monrovia who is representing the first African head of state to be convicted of crimes against humanity.

"At the moment, Mrs Taylor is struggling with 12 little children in the home of the former Liberian president and life there is precarious and absolutely condescending and unsuitable for the family of a former constitutional president of our country," Cephus added.

Liberian law provides that former presidents and vice-presidents who are "honourably retired" and no longer employed by the government are entitled to special pension allowances. But Liberians are divided about whether Taylor should qualify.

"Everybody is talking about this. Opinions are very divided," said Wade Williams, a journalist at the Liberian newspaper FrontPage Africa. "Some people are saying that Charles Taylor didn't give anyone benefits whilst he was president of Liberia, so he shouldn't expect benefits himself."

"But others are constitutionalists, and the constitution requires that as a former president, you get half of what the current president is earning, as well as security, diplomatic passports for your children and other benefits."

"Taylor is very popular still in Liberia," said Aaron Dixon, a resident in Monrovia. "If he were to run for election now, he would win. The opposition party is full of Taylor supporters, so this is a political issue."

Liberia has a complicated history of unpopular former heads of state. The former president Samuel Doe, who seized power in Liberia in a bloody 1980 military coup and was tortured and killed by rebels a decade later, was awarded his retirement benefits, paid posthumously to his wife, Nancy Doe.

She gave a series of interviews in Liberia in which she told journalists that she was living in poverty. "My children did not go to school. I am sleeping in the dark, no security," she was reported as saying before she received the payments.

Cephus said: "The widow of the late president Samuel Kanyon Doe, who did not retire but was rather assassinated, filed a petition for a writ of mandamus for the retirement benefits of her late husband and the government of Liberia paid her over \$400,000.

"What is good for the geese is also good for the ganders."

But the Liberian government denies it has any duty to provide the same benefits for Taylor.

"It was out of goodwill that Samuel Doe's wife received support," said a Liberian government adviser, who asked not to be named. "That does not mean that there is an obligation to provide the funds in Taylor's case."

The case is not the first time that Taylor has raised eyebrows with his demands since being arrested by the Sierra Leone special court in 2006 and detained in The Hague, where the court convened specially for his trial.

It has been reported that Taylor has converted to Judaism in detention – receiving regular visits from a rabbi. He has been allowed conjugal visits with his wife, whom he married in 2002, fathering at least one child while in custody.

Special Court Supplement

ICTJ-Organised Legacy Conference on the Special Court for Sierra Leone

6-7 February

