

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



A cinema on the Peninsula advertises its films for the day.

**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:**

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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## Standard Times

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

Opinion

### President Kabbah and Berewa Linked to RUF Formation

By Karamoh Kabba

The most widely accepted postulate amongst scholars on the decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone is its lumpen revolutionary disposition. At least, that has been the explanation by researchers for the infamous limbs-hacking of war victims, recruiting of child-soldiers and indiscriminate killing of over fifty-thousand civilians by rebels, since Foday Sankoh launched the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) on March 23, 1991 in the Kailahun district village of Bomaru.

But recent research, compounded by the Alie Kabba-led student union uprising in the mid 80s and the Revolutionary United Front rebel formation tempt to, however, pose compelling and disturbing links between President Tejan Kabbah and Vice President Berewa [amongst other high-powered intellectuals] and what had been characterized before now as a lumpen revolution that had no clear cut ideological basis because of its mostly comprised of “organic intellectual” fighting force. On youth and civil war in Sierra Leone, Volume 3b: Chapter 5 of the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) reported on Alie Kabba: “Then, in 1985, Alie Kabba, a keen member of several radical clubs, was returned unopposed as president of FBC student union on a platform of collective self-advancement that he referred to as ‘we-ism’.” We-ism, according to the same report, is a leftist ideology that Alie Kabba held onto for his student union government.

The linguistic connotation of We-ism to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’ *lumpenproletariat* political ideology seems to agree with the TRC definition. The TRC and many other works have linked Alie Kabba’s student union government activities with the RUF. In a fervent determination to instill revolutionary activities in Africa mainly in search of a base upon which to rest the Green Book [Green Revolution], the likes of Alie Kabba attracted Libyan authorities very highly. Alie Kabba was already a firebrand of student leaders in Sierra Leone whose mercurial oratory and revolutionary political dispensations had led to a student demonstration in 1985 that saw the expulsion of many students from Fourah Bay College (FBC), including Alie Kabba himself. Like Ibrahim Abdallah and other top scholars on Sierra Leone civil war doubting of Alie Kabba’s true revolutionary commitment to RUF, owing to the All People’s Congress (APC)’s affinity for one party system government, I found it hard to believe that Alie Kabba would become such an honest force against the APC. It seems to indicate that Alie Kabba, unlike earlier faithful student movements against APC’s Siaka Stevens one party system, such as Hindolo Trye and others, Alie Kabba was more of an opportunist than a true nationalist, who sought to bring political change.

Evidently, he is nowhere to be heard of in the present multi-party political dispensation in Sierra Leone. Nonetheless, by virtue of his position, Alie Kabba was wedged in a students uprising, a heavy-handed government that led to his arrest and five other students that spent two months at the notorious Pandemba Road prisons and his Libyan sponsors. Amongst those arrested at that time were three lecturers, also accused by the APC of spurring the students’ discontent and subsequent demonstration; Cleo Hancilles, Olu Gordon and Jimmy Kandeh. They were kicked out of the university.

Dr. Kandeh is a US-base tenured associate professor of political science, who for apparent reason has become a strong political activist for democratic change in Sierra Leone. He has engaged other scholars who support the present SLPP-led government of Sierra Leone in fierce debates recently. Some have alleged that he was refused a job he wooed SLPP’s Tejan Kabbah for, who turned him down, according to his opponents in one of these debates. But I called the unassuming and soft-spoken professor on the matter, and he simply stated, “My detractors have not experienced the torment I have endured under APC’s one party system. No right-thinking person will encourage the seemingly single party trend build-up in Sierra Leone by the SLPP if it wins for the third time. Simply, whether written or not, a three unbroken five-year term in a fledgling democracy as in Sierra Leone is unacceptable, especially when the SLPP failed to deliver on the youth problem that fueled the ten years of civil war in the first place.”

On the other hand, The TRC reported on Alie Kabba, the main actor in the events that led to the torment of which Dr. Kandeh spoke: “When the college reopened for the third semester in April 1985, forty-one students were declared ineligible to register, among them was Alie Kabba. The student union protested against this decision. The campus demonstration spread to the city centre, where shops were looted and vehicles burnt down, apparently by unemployed youths who used the political demonstration of the students as a chance to wreak havoc and enrich themselves.

Such opportunism, to many differing degrees, would become a constant feature of the conflict in the 1990s.” This is what set Alie Kabba, the young unwilling revolutionary and make-believe nationalist, on the roadmap to Tripoli. The Libyans became fonder of him. He made several visits to Libya, became the self-appointed coordinator of the Libyan connection, and became the recruiter for revolutionary minded Sierra Leoneans, including Foday Sankoh. It was also apparent that Alie Kabba had much to do with PANAFU in Sierra Leone. This seems to be from the angle high-powered revolutionary intellectuals from the SLPP and other parties excavated deep for the remains of their political parties that had been buried by the APC’s single party rigged referendum. Alie Kabbah, it seemed, had less influence amongst those of the PANAFU intellectual heavyweights save for some individuals who had high respect for him.

The story of revolutionary intrigue seemed to be more unfolding with the said dual financial supports Alie Kabba and the initial students of the Libyan connection enjoyed from both the UN and Libya at a convergence in Ghana under another high-profile revolutionary, Flight Lieutenant Jerry John-Rawlings. Ibrahim Abdallah wrote in his work, *Ghana and Libya: The External Connection*, “But why did the expelled students, who were allegedly provided with a generous grant (\$6000) by the UN to pursue their studies choose Ghana, not Nigeria or Liberia, the two other English speaking countries in the region? The choice of Ghana may not be unconnected with the strong Libyan presence which allowed for less policing of their ‘revolutionary’ activities and therefore an ideal place.”

What commonality did the UN and Libya have that involved students turned revolutionaries otherwise? One thing that was clear though, one of the most senior Sierra Leonean officials in the UN then, Tejan Kabbah [no known of family relationship with Alie Kabba], by his profile, had worked with many movements around Africa for the UN. Many believe that Tejan Kabbah was privy to talks between the students bound for Libya and PANAFU. One account explained that PANAFU fell out with Alie Kabba because he was unable to pull a deal for Libya on US Targets in Sierra Leone he wanted to subcontract with PANAFU, who according to Dr. Abdallah, aloof itself from Alie Kabba. On Alie Kabba and PANAFU, the TRC reported: “The exiled students raised the idea with PANAFU in Freetown of sending members of their revolutionary ‘cells’ in the city to undertake training programmes in Libya. Four trainees nominated by PANAFU left for Libya during the rainy season of 1987. By the time they returned in 1988, leading members of PANAFU were no longer committed to the revolutionary project, which led to a split in the movement. One group went underground and carried on planning for new batches of trainees, recruiting mainly marginalised youths from the city.” There is hardly information on those who went underground, but we know very much about those who were busy with the resurrection of the SLPP by any means possible.

However, a briefing published by African Analysis International—(A Research, Advocacy and Information Resource Group) written by Ibrahim Bangoura And Nhinson Williams, Senior Research Associates, Africa Analysis International-AAI, Field Service Network, Freetown, Sierra Leone, briefing NO: 0013. April 20, 2003, entitled *SIERRA LEONE: THE PRE AND POST WAR OVERVIEW; A COMBINATION OF TRAGEDY, THREAT AND INSECURITY:*” Outstanding opposition figures both in and outside of Sierra Leone then were in for a change of regime in the country at all cost so that they too could participate in the dividend of the aftermath political equation. Obviously, that became real after the NPRC’s rule. Current president Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, Lawyer Solomon Berewa, Dr. Joe Demby, Dr. Abass Bundu, Hon. John Kerefa Smart and Chief Hinga Norman were all amongst a long list of those who had this impulse and wished the change so dearly. “The usual predicament was the question of the most appropriate and effective medium to use in obtaining this change.

This became an eventually unanswered dilemma for most of them, especially those of them who had links to the international community, current president Kabbah inclusive.” What has really confounded many Sierra Leoneans in the last ten years is the close relationship between Libya’s Colonel Ghadaffi and President Tejan Kabbah notwithstanding the fact that Libya was the logistics behind the actions that made hacking of limbs, creation of child-soldiers and killing of over fifty-thousand countrymen and countrywomen in Sierra Leone possible. Are President Tejan Kabbah and Vice President Berewa that forgiving, or do they know more than we know about the Libyan connection and the civil war?

Independent Observer

Thursday, 7 June 2007

# Liberia: Dramatic Start of Taylor's Trial

In a dramatic opening to the Charles Taylor trial yesterday, the man long-awaited to face justice in the dock in The Hague failed to showup.

And his lawyer, Karim Kahn, interrupted the opening statement of the Special Court for Sierra Leone's Chief Prosecutor, Stephen Rapp, by clumsily walking out of the courtroom in defiance of a court order to continue representing Taylor for the day - in an unexpected move; Taylor sacked Kahn and asked to represent himself.

Rapp, and his Sierra Leonean colleague, Mohammad Bangura, continued to methodically present the prosecution case, reading out prepared statements across the room from an empty defense section - bar the court-appointed duty counsel, Mr. Jallow, who throughout the proceedings continued to sit back in the second row from where Kahn originally sat, and three seats back from the gallery.

Jallow, from the Special Court's Principal Defender's office, was appointed by the Chamber to represent Taylor in the absence of the accused, and after Kahn walked out despite a threat of contempt of court by presiding judge, Julia Sebutinde.

## Opening Statement

Despite the drama, the main event of the day should have been the opening statement by the prosecution team. Rapp and Bangura, regardless of the rocky start, appeared un-phased and continued with their opening statement, which was divided into three main parts:

- (1) An overview of the history;
- (2) A description of the crimes with which Taylor has been charged; and
- (3) A description of the forms of individual liability for which Taylor could be held responsible.

In a nutshell, the key elements of the Prosecution case included:

\* Charging Taylor with five counts of crimes against humanity, five war crimes counts and one count of other serious violation of international humanitarian law.

The Prosecution laid out a case which placed Taylor was at the center of a systematic campaign of terror waged against civilians in Sierra Leone after November 30, 1996, which included murder, rape, sexual slavery, amputation of limbs; looting; setting fire to property and conscription of child soldiers.

\* While Taylor could be held responsible for participating in a variety of ways in these crimes - including through command responsibility and by acting in concert with others in a joint criminal enterprise - the Prosecution emphasized the "overwhelming" evidence indicating



Taylor had "aided and abetted" the crimes set out in their case by providing financial and other support to the rebel army (the Revolutionary United Front or RUF) and its collaborators in the attacks (the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) - a group comprised largely of former Sierra Leonean Army soldiers) and other Liberian fighters. Taylor's support allowed these groups to undertake systematic attacks against the Sierra Leonean population.

\* Taylor, the Prosecution argued, was not only on notice about the fact these crimes had been committed, but had the intent to further them through his active support and encouragement.

\* Rapp and Bangura outlined Taylor's key subordinates, or "leaders in the bush," and their efforts to wreak havoc in Sierra Leone in order to fuel a war in which diamonds - and natural resource wealth - played a major role.

\* Bangura provided a graphic account of specific crimes including the plight of amputees, who were told to go to Sierra Leonean President, Abdul Tejan Kabbah, to ask for new hands.

\* He also laid out a system of extreme sexual abuse and violence, which saw women having to make strategic choices "that no woman should ever have to make." One victim, Bangura said, described her treatment as being like a "football on a field".

\* Rapp closed by stating that the Taylor trial demonstrated that courts are willing to uphold the law, no matter how high level the alleged perpetrators are. Bangura finished his statement with a Sierra Leonean saying - that "no matter how long the night is, light will come" - today, he said, the court was starting to shed light on Taylor's alleged crimes.

*Culled from The Analyst (Monrovia)*

# Standard Times

Thursday, 7 June 2007

## Concept of Transitional Justice

Transitional justice generally refers to a range of approaches that states may use to address past human rights wrongs and includes both judicial and non-judicial approaches. They include series of actions or policies and their resulting institutions, which may be enacted at a point of political transition from violence and repression to societal stability.

Transitional justice is informed by a society's desire to rebuild social trust, repair a fractured justice system, and build a democratic system of governance. The core value of transitional justice is the notion of justice: not necessarily criminal justice, but other forms of justice as well. This notion and the political transformation, such as regime change or transition from conflict, are thus linked toward a more peaceful, certain and democratic future.

The term 'transitional justice' has recently received greater attention by both academics and policymakers. It has also generated interest in the fields of political and legal discourse, especially in transitional societies. In period of political transitions, from authoritarian, dictatorial regimes or from civil conflicts to a democracy, transitional justice has often provided opportunities for such societies to address past human rights abuses, mass atrocities, or other forms of severe trauma in order to facilitate a smooth transition into a more democratic or peaceful future. This article discusses the concept of transitional justice: the definition, its historical roots and development, various models, modern-day trends of application in transitional states and its future in a transitional and democratization discourse.

The origins of the transitional

The origins of the transitional justice field can be traced back to the post-World War II period in Europe with the establishment of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and the various de-Nazification programs in Germany and the trials of Japanese soldiers. To be precise, what became known as 'Nuremberg Trials', when the victorious allied forces extended criminal justice to Japanese and German soldiers and their leaders for war crimes committed during the war, marked the genesis of transitional justice. The field gained momentum and coherence during the 1980s and onwards, beginning with the trials of former members of the military juntas in Greece (1975) and



Argentina (Trial of the Juntas, 1983). The focus of transitional justice in the 1970s and 1980s was on criminal justice with a focus on human rights promotion. This led to a worldwide focus and progressive rise of human rights regime culminating in the establishments of international human rights laws and conventions. The emphasis of transitional justice was on how abuses of human rights get treated during political transition: legal and criminal prosecu-

holding people accountable. Thus, transitional justice has its roots in both the human rights movement and in international human rights and humanitarian law. Located in the human rights movement makes transitional justice "self-consciously victim-centric."

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a shift in focus of transitional justice. Informed by the worldwide wave of democratization, particularly the third wave, transitional justice re-emerged as a new field of

transitional justice, transforming it to innovative strategies. Hence, in political terms, democratic activists and their allies in government who sought to strengthen new democracies and comply with the moral and legal obligations that the human rights movement was articulating made important contributions to the transitional justice framework. In particular, truth commissions have emerged as one of the popular forms of transitional justice in the process of democratization during

in the late 1940s, the concept of transitional justice has been transformed to assume a broader perspective of comprehensive examination of the society in transition from a retrospective position to a prospective one with democratic consolidation as one of the primary objectives. It must be noted that scholars and practitioners of democratization have come to a common conclusion on the general principles of a transitional justice framework: that national strategies to confront past abuses, depending on the specific nature and context of the country in question, can contribute to accountability, an end to impunity, reconstruct state-citizen relations, and the creation of democratic institutions.

The primary objective of a transitional justice policy is to end the culture of impunity and establish the rule of law in a context of democratic governance. The legal and human rights protection roots of transitional justice impute certain legal obligations on states undergoing transitions. It challenges such societies to strive for a society where respect for human rights is the core and accountability is routinely practiced as the main goals. In the context of these goals, transitional justice aims at:

- " halting ongoing human rights abuses;
- " investigating past crimes;
- " identifying those responsible for human rights violations;
- " imposing sanctions on those responsible (where it can);
- " providing reparations to victims;
- " preventing future abuses;
- " preserving and enhancing peace; and
- " fostering individual and national reconciliation.

In general, therefore, one can identify eight broad objectives that transitional justice aims to serve: establishing the truth, providing victims a public platform, holding perpetrators accountable, strengthening the rule of law, providing victims with compensation, effectuating institutional reform, promoting reconciliation, and promoting public deliberation.

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tion. As noted earlier, the universal conceptions of 'justice' became the platform for which transitional justice was premised. The field in its early epistemology, thus, assumed jurisprudence of human rights. It is no surprise then that initial literature on transitional justice was dominated by lawyers, law and legal rights: defining laws, and processes on how to deal with human rights abuse and

study in democratization. Transitional justice transformed itself from purely questions of jurisprudence to political and how to build a strong and stable democracy. democratization and transitional justice. The challenges of democratization in times of transition, such as how to settle past account without derailing or upsetting the transition to democracy, had a major impact on the subject of

periods of transition. Beginning with Argentina in 1983, Chile in 1990 and the most popular, South Africa 1995, truth commissions have become a symbol of transitional justice, appearing in transitional societies in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and in recent years proposals being encouraged in the Middle East.

From its core values as a link between transition and justice

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## Associated Press

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

### Judge keeps grip on Taylor's trial

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor refused to leave his jail cell, the defense attorney got up and walked out and an interpreter interrupted proceedings.

In the midst of the turmoil of the opening of Taylor's war crimes trial on Monday, presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde remained calm and showed flashes of anger and humor.

She initially threatened to hold Taylor's lawyer Karim Khan in contempt of court when he tried to walk out of court, saying Taylor had fired him and chastised Khan for interrupting her and disobeying her orders.

When Khan read a rambling letter from Taylor explaining his boycott, she urged him to get a move on.

"Are you able to tell the court a reason why, in a nutshell, in one minute, why your client is not in court?" she asked.

Eventually, she defused the impasse of whether Khan should stay by appointing another lawyer to represent Taylor. Khan immediately collected his papers and left.

"I am happy to see a woman judge presiding at the trial and I was very much impressed with the way she handled the arguments between the defense lawyer for Charles Taylor and the prosecutor," said Fatmata Kabbah, an official with the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone, who watched Monday's proceedings in Sierra Leone via a special satellite hookup.

Born in Uganda and trained as a lawyer in Britain, Sebutinde joined the Special Court for Sierra Leone from the Ugandan High Court.

Though the start of Taylor's trial on charges of controlling rebels who murdered, tortured, raped and pillaged in Sierra Leone's civil war thrust her into the international spotlight for the first time, Sebutinde already has plenty of experience at the UN-backed court.

She is one of three judges presiding over another case before the Sierra Leone war crimes tribunal, of three members of an ousted military junta that ruled during the 10-year civil war.

The junta -- the Armed Forces Ruling Council -- allied itself with Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels, which was allegedly backed by Taylor.

A verdict is expected later this month for three leaders who were tried on charges that include murder, rape, terror, maiming, mutilation, enslavement, sexual slavery, forced marriage, looting, pillaging and conscripting child soldiers.



Liberians who can't afford to buy a newspaper gather to read the headlines about Charles Taylor's landmark international war crimes trial on newspapers laid on the ground for sale in Monrovia, Liberia, on Monday. The trial of the former Liberian president is the first such one against a former African leader.

PHOTO: AP



Throughout Monday and in pretrial hearings, Sebutinde has always striven to ensure Taylor is given a fair trial. On Monday she ordered a court official to be flown from Sierra Leone to talk with Taylor about his defense.

In between arguing with Khan, Sebutinde even had to deal with an interpreter who kept asking Khan to slow down.

"Interpreter, you are not in charge of this court," Sebutinde scolded, causing laughter in the packed public gallery.

## Agences Frances Presse

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

### **Charles Taylor's family cries foul as trial begins**

MONROVIA (AFP) -- The family of former Liberian leader Charles Taylor watched the start of his war crimes trial on Monday, claiming it was not going to be fair because he had already been prejudged.

"I think it is in the minds of the court and the judges that Taylor should be guilty," his sister Thelma said.

Taylor, 59, faces 11 charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the 1991-2001 civil war in nearby Sierra Leone.

He is being tried by a special international tribunal based in Sierra Leone, although the case is taking place in The Hague for security reasons. If he is convicted, Britain has said he could serve his sentence there. Thelma said the fact that "they have decided in London the jail he should be in, tells me they have already judged Taylor without trial."

Dead silence reigned in a small room where the former leader's family huddled in front of a television set in Monrovia to watch the trial.

Only after his lawyer said Taylor would not appear because he was not assured a fair trial did the family burst into shouts of approval.

In a letter to the court, Taylor said he was shunning the court hearings because he had concluded he was not going to receive a fair trial.

Thelma echoed her brother's sentiments that his defense team was smaller than that of the prosecution, saying: "It is an indication that they are already holding Taylor as a war criminal without trying him. "Taylor is not a monster. Taylor is a family person, who has up to 14 children; he has always been the head of that family."

Elsewhere in Liberia, the start of the trial momentarily brought Taylor's native country to a halt.

Along the capital's main Broad Street, vendors abandoned their stalls while drivers parked their cars on the road side, crowding restaurants and bars with cable television facilities to watch the opening minutes of the trial.

## Inter Press Service (Johannesburg)

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

### **Too Busy Surviving to Follow a Landmark Trial**

By Nadja Drost  
Freetown

It was Charles Taylor's money that allegedly bought guns for the rebel faction that fired the first shot of Sierra Leone's devastating civil war in 1991 -- a conflict that claimed the life of Mustafa Mansaray's pregnant daughter.

As the barbarism spread, Mansaray would soon lose his hands to the rebels. But it wasn't the pain of having his arms chopped off that made him cry -- rather, hearing the screams of 50 people burning in a locked house behind him.

Living in a modest home in a camp for the war-wounded on the outskirts of the capital, Freetown, he struggles to care for his six remaining children and seven adopted orphans. Mansaray was once a farmer; but his amputated arms mean that he has to leave the tending of a tiny vegetable garden behind the house to others in his family.

One might think that few would care more than Mansaray to see Taylor face an international tribunal.

The former Liberian president has been charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity -- this on the grounds that he bears the greatest responsibility for atrocities that took place in neighbouring Sierra Leone from 1996, through backing Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in exchange for conflict diamonds. His trial was supposed to get underway Monday at The Hague, in Holland; however, Taylor is boycotting the proceedings, reportedly claiming that he has not been given the means to defend himself properly.

Yet, these events matter little to Mansaray. With Taylor far from Sierra Leone, Mansaray is simply concerned with how he will survive in a country where 70 per cent of the population lives on less than two dollars a day, according to the 2006 Human Development Report -- produced by the United Nations Development Programme.

Daily life here bumps up against the challenges of a country still grappling with recovery from its violent past. Most of the West African nation is without electricity or clean water. Unemployment is high and poverty rampant. It is little surprise Sierra Leone was rated second from the bottom in last year's United Nations Development Index of 177 countries.

Notes Edward Jombla, national coordinator for the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP): "Of course the trial of Charles Taylor is important to us. But people are also trying to move on with their lives."

When the war ended in 2002, the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations moved ahead with a 2000 U.N. resolution establishing an independent Special Court of Sierra Leone to try those bearing prime responsibility for crimes committed in the course of the conflict. The civil war dragged on for more than a decade marked by sexual slavery, recruitment of child soldiers and the hacking off of civilian limbs.

The court indicted Taylor in 2003, and he was arrested last year in Nigeria where he had been living in exile, prompting cheers in the streets of Freetown as well as anxiety over the instability his presence in the city could provoke. This possibility of upheaval is reportedly what led to proceedings being transferred to The Hague.

Taylor had launched a rebellion in 1989 in his country at the head of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, becoming president in 1997 -- a post he retained until 2003. He is also said to have undermined security in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

Taylor's trial is precedent setting, says Christopher Staker, deputy prosecutor of the Special Court. "We have a person who was the president of a country at the time of the events in question. And the fact that a person in that position is called upon to answer before a court the things that happened during that person's time in office make very real that nobody is above the law."

This warning against impunity is expected to resonate beyond the trial chambers of The Hague, particularly in Africa. "If you're head of state and for the first time in your region you see a (former) head of state indicted, it sends a message," says Binta Mansaray, outreach co-ordinator at the Special Court.

But while the international importance of the trial seems clear, its significance in helping Sierra Leone recover from years of war is less so -- particularly after a series of disappointments in the Special Court.

The indictment of Sam Hinga Norman, leader of the Civil Defence Forces and a revered war hero in certain quarters, shocked many in Sierra Leone, fostering cynicism about the role of the court in pursuing justice. The Civil Defence Forces backed President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah against the RUF.

Of 13 people indicted by the court to date, five are considered leading figures in the conflict. Three of them are now dead and another is missing, his fate unknown.

"People have lost confidence in the Special Court for the reason that those very big ones (indicted persons) are no longer there," says Jombla. "Taylor is the hope of restoring the dignity (of) and respect for the court."

Yet, when Taylor's trial was transferred to The Hague, much of what interest there was in the matter left with it. And, the move also threatens to undercut one of the very reasons the Special Court was established in Sierra Leone in the first place: to make justice accessible to those most affected by the war.

Journalists and civil society members will travel to the Netherlands, and plans are afoot to screen trial excerpts in Sierra Leone using mobile video units. Still, the geographic gap promises to be hard to overcome.

Whatever the outcome of this and other trials -- the first of which got underway in 2004 -- they are only part of the overall effort to help Sierra Leone rebuild itself.

"The court is not a solution it will not address the problems that led to the war," says Alex Macavorey, who narrowly escaped from the rebels, and now works with refugees.

Many people valued the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which began hearings in 2003, for shedding light on the root causes of the war -- marginalisation of youth and women, corruption, and lack of access to justice -- and for making recommendations on how to address these issues.

But there is frustration at the government's failure to implement the vast majority of proposals put forward by the commission. And, many feel that the potential for instability and conflict will remain as long as factors that underpinned the war go unaddressed.

"We have relative peace," explains Macavorey. "But we don't have absolute peace."



Daily Observer

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

## **THE TAYLOR TRIAL BEGINS: IS THERE ENOUGH EVIDENCE?**

**By Jeremiah J. Kringar Harris**

Monday, June 4, 2007, marked the beginning of the trial of Charles Taylor, an event fraught with many possibilities and potentialities. For the first time in the short history of emerging Africa, a former President must stand trial for crimes against humanity, not in the land over which he presided, but in a neighbouring country.

While this promises to add much drama, hoopla and media blitz to the trial, the concatenation of events preceding this extraordinarily historical saga makes it extremely difficult to predict which pathway the trial might traverse as it meanders towards a conclusion.

The drama, given the strange twist of events at Monday opening session, began with Taylor's dismissal of his Defense Attorney. If his wishes are granted, Taylor will defend himself.

## The Analyst

Monday, 4 June 2007

Editorial

### World Poised For Taylor's Fair Trial

Monday, June 4, 2007

**TODAY, 4 JUNE**, all roads lead to The Hague, The Netherlands, as the long awaited trial of former President Charles Taylor begins in earnest. This day must be crucial particularly for the peoples of Liberia and Sierra Leone, the two sisterly countries associated with Taylor as far the trial in concerned. Not only is Taylor a former president of Liberia, charged and whisked off from his country while he was still head of state, he is being trialed for crimes allegedly committed in neighboring Sierra Leone.

**TAYLOR'S INDICTMENT BY** a Sierra Leonean Special Court, set up by the international community has been a source of hilarious controversy not only in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but also within the greater international community. While his relinquishment of political power constituted one of the foremost strategies of the international community to remedy the complex Liberian civil war, the indictment which got him in jail, first in Sierra Leone and now in The Hague, haunted him nonetheless to satisfy the international community's zero tolerance for crimes against humanity and impunity.

**IT CAN BE** recalled that while Taylor was President of Liberia, he lamented so much about a grand international conspiracy to strangulate his regime and unseat him for what he invariably called his refusal to mortgage the sovereignty of the country and submit himself as a puppet and rubberstamp of external powers. Concurrently, there were local and international outcries about his vicious exercise of powers that was leaving behind a trail of political and economic casualties not only at home in Liberia, but also in the West African Sub-region. He was therefore widely perceived a threat to domestic and international peace. The international community, in particular, strongly feels that conspired, connived and collaborated with other warlords in Sierra Leone to loot, maim, torture and kill thousands of unarmed people in that sisterly country; thus, his indictment, imprisonment and subsequent trial beginning today.

**OVER THE LAST** few months, both the defense and the prosecution in the Charles McArthur Gankay Taylor litigation have been marshalling their evidences and antithesis respectively in anticipation of the commencement of formal hearing. Today is the day, and every ear and eye across the globe is opened to hear and see how Taylor, a former Liberian head of state indicted in his presidential chair, would be arraigned and adjudged by the Special Court of Sierra for alleged heinous crimes committed in Sierra Leone.

**THE LEGAL PROCESS**, now taking a definite shape, is highly welcomed, not because we take pleasure in Taylor's guilt or acquittal, but because we regard the legal forum as the only universally acceptable means in the scrupulous the meticulous establishment of guilt or acquittal. Our fervent hope, however, is that justice, whatever it shall be, would evolve out of a transparent, sincere and evidentially fair litigation that reflects the reverence of due process and the sanctity of law. A highly convincing verdict is the only viable antithesis not only for the disparagement that could befall the proponents of the Special Court, but also the complications that may be afoot for future political and diplomatic regional and international peace efforts.

**WE ALSO CRAVE** for viable public relations mechanisms that will spare The Hague-based litigation of every spat of misinformation, disinformation and other gimmicks that have the propensity to foment disquiet amongst and between various interests back home in Liberia and the sub-region in general. Meanwhile, we wish the legal protagonists all the best in the trail of Taylor as the world await the outcome.

## The Analyst (Monrovia)

Tuesday, 5 June 2007

### **Amnesty Int'l - Trial Must Be Made Relevant**

The long awaited trial of former Liberian President Charles got underway yesterday at the International Court of Justice in The Hague without Mr. Taylor appearing and his lawyer working out of the proceedings.

Without commenting on the absence of the former president, Amnesty International (AI), an international institution that focuses on human rights, has focused its attention on the need of making the trial relevant. According to the group, the Special Court of Sierra Leone should do all it can to make the case extremely relevant to Liberians and Sierra Leoneans.

In a statement issued yesterday in the wake of the start of the Taylor's trial, the AI indicated that it would prudent if the appropriate efforts were made so that Liberians and Sierra Leoneans can feel the impact of case.

"It is virtually important that this landmark trial is communicated to the people of Sierra Leone where the crimes being prosecuted were committed against and in Liberia where the indictee served as president," the statement quoted officials of the AI saying.

Though the statement seems not be representing the truth of the matter that Liberians and Sierra Leoneans did not know when the trial suppose to start, AI said citizens of the two countries "are unaware that the trial is about to start and do not understand the reasons for moving it from Freetown, where the Special Court has its premises."

Amnesty quoted observers saying that Liberians and Sierra Leoneans did not know, prior to the resumption, when the trial would get underway. According to Amnesty, the Special Court's main challenge is to ensure that the trial is accessible and known to the victims.

"With the trial taking place in The Hague, it would be crucial that the day to day developments of the court be communicated promptly and accurately," Amnesty urged.

"The people of Liberia and Sierra Leone must observe the justice process. In particular, they should see that the trial is conducted fairly in accordance with international standards, respecting the presumption of innocence," the human rights agency said in the statement.

While calling for fair trial and urging the Special Court to ensure that the people of Sierra Leone are fairly treated in terms of being informed appropriately, Amnesty International noted however that following the government decision to grant amnesties to the vast majority of persons who committed crimes during conflict, many of the victims continue to suffer without justice and reparation.

Amnesty said it is of the belief that by judging small number of cases, the Special Court can play "an important role to deliver some level of justice to the people of Sierra Leone and to highlight the need to review the injustice imposed by the government by conducting an amnesty."

Observers are bewildered over the Amnesty's statement, trying to figure out the government it is referring to, but called on the human rights body to decipher the statement so as to eschew because two governments are involved in the process as far as the case is concerned.

## Daily Champion (Lagos)

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

### **Taylor - Anyaele Recounts Ordeal**

By Kalu Okwara

Lagos

Anguish, pain and sorrow inflicted on humanity, especially Nigerians, by the former Liberian president, Mr. Charles Taylor in Liberia and Sierra Leone re-echoed yesterday in Lagos when the Executive Director of the Centre for Citizens with Disability (CCD), Mr. David Anyaele, recounted his experience.

"The rebels, Revolutionary United Front (RUF) caught me and cut off my two hands with a machet, poured petrol on me and asked me to go and tell the Nigerian government to stop funding the Economic Organization of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

"The RUF in Sierra Leone was being clandestinely funded by Taylor likewise other rebellious groups within the sub-region as researches have proved," said Anyaele.

Briefing newsmen yesterday, he called on Nigerian and international community to lend their support to the trial of the one-time fugitive in Nigeria at the Special Court in the Hague for the atrocities he committed against humanity in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

According to him, Taylor's trial would bring justice to the numerous victims of the civil war in Sierra Leone, stressing that it would serve as a deterrent to other African leaders who might be similarly predisposed.

While calling on individuals and groups with evidence of Taylor's atrocities to make such available to the centre for onward transmission to the special court, Anyaele lamented the over N820 billion spent by the Nigerian government on ECOMOG Peace keeping operations was a sheer waste of resources.

He chided the government for failing to protect its citizens when the need arose, citing as example the razing of the Nigerian Embassy by the rebels, killing hundreds of people during the Sierra Leonean civil war.

All Americans Patriot. Com

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

[http://www.allamericanpatriots.com/48724454\\_barack\\_obama](http://www.allamericanpatriots.com/48724454_barack_obama)

### **Barack Obama: Obama Statement on Bringing Charles Taylor to Justice**

WASHINGTON, DC -- U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) today released the following statement on the actions of former Liberian President Charles Taylor before the Special Court of Sierra Leone:

“Charles Taylor is one of the worst war criminals of the last century. He must answer for the 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and he can't be allowed to pull another stunt like he did today when he walked out of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.”

“Bringing Mr. Taylor to justice is a critical step towards promoting the rule of law and helping advance security and stability in Africa. His trial also sends an important signal to perpetrators of atrocities that they will be held accountable for their actions.”

“Mr. Taylor is in the Court's custody thanks in part to a long, bipartisan struggle that involved pressuring the government of Nigerian to turnover Mr. Taylor to the Court; securing much needed funding for the Court; and pushing the Bush Administration to do the right thing on this issue. Taylor's prosecution marks a defeat for impunity and a victory for the people of West Africa who suffered at the hands of his brutal regime.”

Source: Senator Barack Obama



## Voice of America

Tuesday, 5 June 2007

### Supporters Defend Taylor's Boycott of Court

By James Butty  
Washington, D.C.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor boycotted the opening of his trial Monday at the UN-backed Special court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, Netherlands. Chief Cyril Allen is former chairman of Taylor's National Patriotic Front Party and one who has maintained constant telephone contact with the former President.

From the Liberian capital, Monrovia, he told VOA Taylor did not appear in court Monday because he feels he will not receive transparent justice.

"He has to have a choice of his lawyers, and he has to be properly represented. If he feels he is not represented properly, legally he feels that he can do better to represent himself; I think he has a right under international law to represent himself. And he will do better than any other lawyers," he said.

Special Court sources said that as of last Friday (June 1), Taylor's lawyers were part of a special administrative meeting of all the principal parties to the case. But they did not mention his lack of confidence in the ability of the court to dispense justice.

Allen said Taylor has been complaining for a long time that he was not pleased with the Special Court.

"He's been saying time and again that there is no proper legal representation and no one would listen. These are handpicked lawyers who are going to represent the interest of international community and not his interest," he said. Allen said Taylor is competent to represent himself, and if the court grants his wishes, he would appear when the court reconvenes.

"Of course he would appear in court. He has nothing to run away from or to hide. I always said that Taylor fought war in Liberia for 12 years. He never ran away from guns. So he's not going to run away from legal proceedings. He has submitted himself to the legal procedure, but he said he is opting to represent himself. I think he should be able given the opportunity to represent himself," Allen said.

Some critics of Taylor said he might be trying to delay his trial the same way he prolonged the end of Liberia's 14-year civil war. But Allen said the former Liberian president wants a chance to represent himself.

"Whatever people think is their prerogative. What is important is for Mr. Taylor to have proper representation and a cream of counselors of his choice to represent his interest," Allen said.

Allen said Taylor has put forth one or two Liberian lawyers to represent him. But he said the Special Court is being selective who should represent the former Liberian president.

"They are selecting who they think should defend Mr. Taylor in such a high profile international case, and I don't think it is their decision to decide who represents him. It is his decision to choose a core of lawyers that would represent his interest, and he should be given the opportunity to select his lawyers to represent him because he doesn't feel that justice would be transparent if handpicked lawyers represent his interest," Allen said.

**United Nations**  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 June 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

#### **Government Ban On Diamond Mining Continues Despite UN Go-Ahead**

UN Integrated Regional Information Networks June 6, 2007 -- Two months after the United Nations lifted a six-year ban on Liberia exporting diamonds the government has still not legalised diamond mining. "Right now people shouldn't start mining until certain mechanisms are in place to ensure transparency," Liberia's deputy minister for lands and mines Ernest Jones recently told IRIN.

#### **Liberian Government Gets More Support**

All Africa Global Media Date: June 06, 2007 -- A delegation of a new social investment organization based in the United States, has met with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the Foreign Ministry in Monrovia, pledging a million United States dollars toward government's Senior Executive service program. The group known as Humanity United is working to end slavery and mass atrocities and supports public policy and philanthropic efforts.

#### **Liberia needs more help, investment - V.P. Boikai**

Runningafrica.com, PROVIDENCE, June 6, 2007 — Liberia is literally turning on its lights, restoring power and water and repairing infrastructure destroyed by prolonged civil war. But the country still desperately needs help as it works toward a peaceful, productive future, its vice president said yesterday.

### **International Clips on West Africa**

#### **Sierra Leone Grounds Commercial Helicopters**

Voa News, June 6, 2007 - **Sierra Leone** President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah late Tuesday grounded all commercial helicopters and suspended the country's transport minister, and the director of civil aviation and his deputy. The president's action followed the explosion Sunday night of a helicopter that was ferrying Togolese soccer fans and sports officials to the country's main airport following an African Cup of Nations soccer match in Freetown.

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **Armed Robbers Kill One as Police Raid Criminal Hideouts in Paynesville**

*(National Chronicle, Heritage, The Inquirer, the Analyst, Public Agenda and Daily Observer)*

- Men suspected to be armed robbers early Tuesday morning shot and killed a local money exchanger in the Soul Clinic Community in Paynesville, outside Monrovia.

- At the same time, the Liberia National Police backed by their UN counterparts have raided several communities believed to be criminal hideouts in the Paynesville suburb, the second in less than a week.
- It can be recalled that the Police carried out similar raid last week in the Paynesville area and arrested suspected criminals while one suspected armed robber was reportedly shot dead by security forces.
- Police Inspector General Munah Sieh said the Police raid, co-named "Operation Calm Down Fear" would continue throughout the rainy season.
- Residents of Paynesville have lauded the Police for raiding and demolishing criminal hideouts in their areas.
- The Heritage newspaper reports that Justice Minister Frances Johnson Morris and Police Inspector General Munah Sieh are due to appear before the Plenary of the House of Representatives Thursday to comment on the increasing wave of armed robberies and other criminal activities in the country.

### **UN Peacekeepers Discovered Many Unexploded Ordnances in Montserrado and Margibi Counties**

*(The News, The Inquirer, The Informer, and National Chronicle)*

- The Nigerian contingent commander of Sector One Brig. Gen. Olayemi Lasisi Abidoye said a lot of unexploded bombs have been discovered in various parts of Montserrado and Margibi Counties by UNMIL peacekeepers.
- Brig. Gen. Abidoye told a press briefing Tuesday that his contingent usually discovers eight to 10 unexploded ordnances on a weekly basis.

### **Taylor's Family Point Accusing Fingers**

*(National Chronicle)*

- [sic:] The family of detained former Liberian President Charles Taylor has described the ongoing trial of their relative as a charade that is purely based on lies and blatant fabrication maliciously contrived by certain elements in the Governments of Great Britain and the United States of America. The family, in a three-page document released in Monrovia Tuesday claimed that the judicial proceedings involving their brother and father were being prosecuted by two political entities, the United Nations Security Council and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

### **Local Media – Star Radio** *(News culled from website today at 10:00am)*

#### **UN Peacekeepers Intercept Armed Robbers' Vehicle**

- The UNMIL Nigerian Contingent has announced that it intercepted an unmarked vehicle used by armed robbers in the evening hours of Saturday.
- According to the Commander of Sector One, the robbers had picked up some passengers on their way to Sinkor when the vehicle was caught.
- Brig. Gen. Olayemi Abidoye told a news conference Tuesday that the robbers held the passengers hostage in an attempt to rob them.
- Brig. Gen. Abidoye said the passengers tussled with the robbers as they approached the UNMIL checkpoint next to the Foreign Ministry.
- According to him, the Nigerian UNMIL troops intervened and arrested one of the robbers while the others fled.
- Brig. General Abidoye said they have turned over the suspect along with some deadly weapons including cutlasses to the Liberia National Police.

- He said the vehicle which is currently at the Sector One Headquarters, will also be turned over to the Police by Wednesday.

### **Commerce Ministry Clamps Down on Cement Syndicate**

- The Commerce Ministry has identified several cement depots in Monrovia that are supposedly stockpiling the commodity for profit making.
- The Ministry's Price Analysis Division on Tuesday said it discovered stockpiles of cement at the Sheriff and Wellington cement depots on the Gardnersville on the Somalia Drive.
- Commerce Ministry officials immediately put the commodity on sale and turned the proceeds over to the owners of the two entities.
- The Director of Price Analysis Division at the Commerce Ministry Charles Bennie said the dealers were being pardoned because the act was a first offense.
- Mr. Bennie said the main importer of cement in the country, CEMENCO could not meet the increasing public demand for cement, adding that importers and factories are needed to encourage competition and satisfy the huge consumer demands.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Radio Veritas)*

### **Armed Robbers Kill Businessman in Paynesville**

- Armed robbers in the Soul Clinic Community early Tuesday morning shot dead a money exchanger of seven children.
- A neighbour who later came to the rescue of the victim said Tony Gaye was shot as the robbers attempted forcing their way into his room.
- Paul Cheeks explained that the multiple wounds on the victim's stomach suggest he was shot with a single barrel gun.
- According to Paul, the neighbours could not immediately come to the rescue of the Gaye family because the armed robbers opened excessive fire.
- Mr. Cheeks said the shooting lasted for one hour. He said the shooting began at about 2'0 clock in the morning, alleging that not a single security officer came to the crime scene until daylight.

### **President Extends Protective Tariff on Cement Importation**

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has issued Executive Order Number Nine, extending protective tariff on cement importation.
- The Order suspends with immediate effect the protective tariff of US\$2 dollars imposed by government on every bag of cement imported.
- An Executive Mansion release says the decision is to promote competition and reduce the price of the commodity on the Liberian market.
- The price of cement has been increasing of late to the disadvantage of users and the public.

*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.*

## Macleans (Canada)

Monday, 4 June 2007

### **The long arm of Charles Taylor versus the law**

His trial may spell an end to the African Big Man, and new hope for a continent

MICHAEL PETROU

Sierra Leone's civil war first came to Ishmael Beah's village in 1991, when he was 10 years old and refugees began to stream through town. The children among them refused to meet anyone's eyes, and they jumped at the sound of chopping wood or stones bouncing off tin roofs. "It was evident that they had seen something that plagued their minds, something that we would refuse to accept if they told us all of it," Beah says. Three years later, he discovered what this was. While he and some friends were visiting a nearby village, the Revolutionary United Front, a rebel group that had launched the war by invading Sierra Leone from neighbouring Liberia, attacked their hometown and nearby villages. The RUF massacred almost everyone, but they sent a few survivors ahead with their fingers or limbs chopped off and the initials "RUF" carved on their chests with hot bayonets as a warning to others.

Beah fled into the jungle and would eventually survive the war. Tens of thousands of Sierra Leoneans did not. Most were civilians. The atrocities committed against women and children during the conflict were so savage that even to describe them feels obscene. Thousands were murdered, mutilated and driven from their homes. Women and girls were raped en masse. Their families were forced to watch or take part. The bellies of pregnant women were sliced open and the heads of fetuses were impaled on spikes for the amusement of visiting warlords.

Perhaps worst of all, the war -- with all its attendant horrors -- was fought in large part by children. The RUF made early and extensive use of forcibly recruited boys and girls. The boys were used as fighters and the girls as sex slaves, "bush wives," and camp workers. New recruits were often forced to murder their own parents before joining the rebels. This made them numb and vicious, as did witnessing the cannibalism practised by some of their leaders, and the cocaine and amphetamines that they constantly ingested. By the time British intervention helped defeat the RUF and end the war in 2002, countless children had been brutalized, one-third of Sierra Leone's population had been displaced, and as many as 200,000 people were dead.

Next month, Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia and the man many hold ultimately responsible for some of the worst horrors of the war, will face trial in The Hague at the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is tasked with trying those from both sides of the conflict who bear the "greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict. The prosecution alleges that Taylor, first as the leader of a major armed group in Liberia, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and then as his country's president, used the RUF and allied militias to take control of large swaths of Sierra Leone, especially its diamond-mining areas. It alleges that he had ultimate command of these fighters, that he armed and trained them, that they were loyal to him, and that he is therefore responsible for the "criminal means" they used to achieve and hold political power and physical control over the people of Sierra Leone.

"These criminal means involved the campaign of terror waged against the civilian population of Sierra Leone, including widespread and continuing killings, rapes, beatings and mutilations, enslavement of the civilian population for use as fighters, 'bush wives' and forced labour, looting



and burning of civilian property. Children were used to carry out this criminal campaign and in active hostilities," reads the Office of the Prosecutor's pre-trial brief.

The case has enormous international implications. Almost 50 countries are funding the court, which is presided over by international and Sierra Leonean judges. Canada, one of the largest donors, has given more than \$6 million, and has also contributed personnel. Human rights groups and NGOs are trumpeting the Taylor trial as a step toward ending the era of the untouchable African Big Man, of demonstrating that countries afflicted by the worst atrocities can confront their past, and that even heads of state can be held accountable for their actions.

Convicting Taylor, however, depends on finding members of his inner circle who are willing to testify against him. Many are missing, have mysteriously died, or are unwilling to take the stand. There is one man, however, who has known Taylor intimately for decades, lived in his home as a child, carried out his most important commands, and was privy to his innermost decisions. This man broke with Taylor in 2001 and has been on the run ever since, dodging assassins and living under assumed identities on three continents. His name is Cindor Andrea Reeves. He is a refugee claimant in Canada and a suspected war criminal. He was once Taylor's brother-in-law. He has agreed to tell his story to Maclean's.

Cindor Andrea Reeves is 35 years old, although he looks younger. He is tall and thin, with clear, dark skin. His facial expressions are subdued and calm, and he speaks in relaxed, measured tones -- only occasionally raising his voice or speaking more quickly to emphasize a point. But he appears to have reserves of bottled energy. His eyes are active, and he periodically opens and snaps shut a cellphone during an interview that takes place in a corner booth at a Tim Hortons somewhere in Canada. Reeves asked that his current location not be identified.

He says he first met Taylor when he was nine years old and Taylor married his sister, Agnes. It was 1981, and Taylor had just returned to Liberia after years of study in the United States to take a position in the new government of then-dictator Samuel Doe. Within a couple of years, Taylor was accused of embezzling more than \$1 million, and fled back to the United States. He was arrested but escaped from jail and returned to Africa. Uncertainty surrounds his exact whereabouts over the next four years. He spent some time in Libya, where he received shelter and military training from Moammar Gadhafi. Then, in 1989, Taylor sent for Reeves to come live with him in Burkina Faso.

Reeves says that when he lived with Taylor, those around him considered Reeves to be the equivalent of Taylor's son. Reeves never thought of Taylor as his father, but he remembers that Taylor had complete control over the young members of his family and entourage. "In the same way that he would later use child soldiers, small boys, he used us," Reeves says. "Those small boys saw him as a god. For us, it was the same. If he told me to do something, I would do it without question. You would do it with confidence. You think, 'Oh, he likes me.' If Taylor says hello, you're happy for a month."

On Christmas Eve 1989, Taylor returned to Liberia at the head of his then-small guerrilla force in an attempt to overthrow the government of Samuel Doe. The National Patriotic Front steadily gained recruits and swelled its ranks with drug-crazed children who gained a reputation for ferocity as members of Taylor's infamous "small boys units." The NPFL soon controlled much of the country, but civil war continued to rage between Taylor's forces and rival armed groups. Taylor needed money; some of the most lucrative diamond fields in the world were right next door in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone also backed the Economic Community of West African States

Monitoring Group, which was preventing him from seizing control of the Liberian capital Monrovia. It was an attractive target.

The Revolutionary United Front attacked Sierra Leone from Liberia in March 1991. Its ranks included fighters from Taylor's NPFL and mercenaries from Burkina Faso. The RUF was led by a barely literate former corporal named Foday Sankoh. But Reeves confirms that ultimate control lay with Charles Taylor in next-door Liberia. "He created the RUF. He funded and trained the RUF. He appointed commanders. He drew up plans for attack. He sent vehicles. Everything."

Reeves would know. He was made Charles Taylor's main envoy in Sierra Leone. Whenever Taylor wanted to speak with leading members of the RUF, Reeves would be sent to get them and bring them to Monrovia. He says he never took part in fighting, but he saw hundreds of amputee victims and RUF commanders guarded by children whose fanaticism made them more loyal than adults.

One of Reeves's other jobs was to coordinate the diamond pipeline that ran between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Diamonds flowed out of RUF territory in Sierra Leone, and weapons flowed in. This made Charles Taylor, who was elected president of Liberia in 1997 during a brief lull in his own country's fighting, powerful and extraordinarily rich. International arms dealers and shady businessmen from all over the world converged on Liberia to purchase diamonds. Reeves would meet them at the airport and arrange their accommodation, protection, and transportation to the diamond fields of Sierra Leone. These buyers came to include Arabs willing to pay top dollar to secure as much merchandise as possible. Reeves arranged a guest house for one such group, whose members plastered the walls with posters of Osama bin Laden and watched videos of Palestinian suicide bombings.

Two months after the Sept. 11 attacks, when Washington Post reporter Douglas Farah showed Reeves photographs of suspected terrorists wanted by the FBI, Reeves recognized three of the men from their diamond-buying visits. They were, in fact, al-Qaeda operatives Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed and Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, wanted for their role in the August 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. It was then clear that al-Qaeda was converting cash assets into diamonds in preparation for an impending crackdown on its financial networks.

Reeves was angry at Taylor's connection to a terrorist group that had attacked the U.S., but he had already begun to turn against Taylor, driven, he says, by a desire to end the civil wars still being fought in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Reeves describes his transformation from someone who blindly followed Taylor to someone who sought to undermine him as a slow process of awakening. "The problem is that when I started all this, I was living in the dark," he says. "When I was living with Taylor, there were certain TV channels I couldn't watch, books I couldn't read. As I got older and went to other countries, I saw people living peacefully. I started to learn that these things, raping women, these things were wrong. But you couldn't tell Taylor this. I saw other people say these things to Taylor, and they were dead."

Reeves began gathering documents that implicated Taylor in criminal activities in the mid-1990s. A few years later, after a journalist put him in touch with the NGO Global Witness, he began secretly reporting details about another of Taylor's illegal activities, lucrative timber exports. "It was very, very risky. Even if I got killed in the process, I didn't care. There was so much suffering and carnage," he says.

The final break came in 2001. Details of a confidential meeting between Taylor and some of his most trusted colleagues appeared in a newspaper. Taylor incorrectly thought that Reeves was the source, and Reeves fled the country. "Taylor had people trying to kill me all over west Africa," he says. By this time, the Special Court for Sierra Leone had been established, and although an indictment for Taylor had not yet been publicly unsealed, he was already covering his tracks. "There were three or four of us who were running diamonds," Reeves says. "I'm the only one left alive."

Reeves says that officials from the Special Court contacted him in Ghana in 2002. They presented him with false identity papers, including a Dutch passport, and flew him to the Netherlands, where he was placed in a witness protection program under a new identity. He lived in Europe for several years, first in Holland and then in Germany, and believed he was safe.

Meanwhile, Taylor had bowed to international pressure and resigned in 2003, living in exile in Nigeria for three years before its government agreed to release Taylor to stand trial. Taylor tried to slip out of the country and was arrested and turned over to the Special Court in March 2006. Last summer, Reeves says that Taylor's men caught up with him in Paris, kidnapping him at gunpoint and driving him two hours out of the city. When the car stopped at a red light in a small town, Reeves bolted from the vehicle and escaped.

Reeves now felt trapped. He believed that his cover was blown and his security compromised. The witness protection program wasn't keeping him safe. He couldn't go back to Africa. He made a fateful decision. Reeves gathered his family and, without informing anyone from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, flew them to Canada.

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Immigration officials at Toronto's Pearson International Airport hear all kinds of dubious stories from people claiming asylum. So it must have surprised them when a lanky man with seemingly legitimate papers from the Netherlands declared that his passport was a forgery and that he was a former intimate associate and brother-in-law of an indicted war criminal. Reeves says he told the officials everything. He also handed over a business card belonging to a prosecutor from the Special Court so the Canadians could check out his story. He says he was then detained for 45 days but was eventually released while his case is considered.

On the surface, Reeves's chances of staying here don't look good. A Jan. 26 letter to Reeves's lawyer from a hearings officer in the war crimes and public security unit of the Canada Border Services Agency outlines the potential case against him. "There are serious reasons to consider that Mr. Reeves may have aided and abetted in the commission of the above-mentioned war crimes and crimes against humanity," it says, referring to allegations against Taylor. "Given the participation of the client, there are serious reasons for considering that Mr. Reeves may be complicit in war crimes and crime[s] against humanity and therefore subject to the exclusion under 1F(a) of the Refugee Convention."

Reeves, however, is not a routine refugee claimant with a murky past. He is a potentially explosive witness in one of the most high-profile international trials in years. As a man who was once one of Taylor's most trusted insiders, his testimony could put the former president behind bars for life. Reeves is also willing to testify. He wants to testify. But he won't travel to The Hague unless Canada guarantees he will be allowed back.

Reeves stresses that this is not blackmail. If necessary, he says he will testify by video link from Canada. Nevertheless, he is convinced that the Special Court has the ability to make a deal with

Canada that will guarantee his safe return to the country. After all, he says, when the Special Court flew him out of west Africa, they provided him with a Dutch passport and a new identity.

Peter Andersen, chief of press and public affairs at the Special Court, told Maclean's that court officials cannot confirm or deny the names of any witnesses. While reluctant to talk about operational details involved in protecting witnesses, he noted that very few have been relocated outside of Sierra Leone. Reeves says he has been in contact with Special Court officials since his arrival in Canada, and produced the business card of a senior investigator as proof. He says that as "the No. 1 witness," he expects to be called to testify late in Taylor's trial. For the time being, he and his wife and children are growing comfortable here. They'd like to stay.

On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, final preparations for Taylor's trial are under way. The court has a new prosecutor in Stephen Rapp, an Iowa native and the former chief of prosecutions at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. A soft-spoken man, Rapp still gives the impression that he is motivated by his task. "This is the most exciting work that I've ever done," he said in an interview with Maclean's. "This is an opportunity to be part of a movement to bring justice to bear on the greatest crimes committed by humankind."

Nevertheless, Rapp and the prosecuting lawyers face numerous challenges. The temporal jurisdiction of the case is after Nov. 30, 1996, a time frame that doesn't cover the early years of the civil wars in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. More seriously, however, Taylor has been indicted for crimes he allegedly committed in Sierra Leone -- a country he is not known to have visited during the conflict. Rapp isn't fazed. "This case has nothing to do with whether he chopped off any arms himself, whether he killed anyone personally, whether he was in Sierra Leone," he says. "Leaders at the highest level are rarely involved directly in committing crimes with their bare hands. But the allegations in our indictment, confirmed by the judges, on which we'll go to trial at The Hague, are that he bore responsibility for the crimes committed by his subordinates."

Rapp likens the legal case against Taylor to one against a Mafia don who is still responsible for the actions of his henchmen. The prosecution's case hinges on proving the links between Taylor, as the don, and the RUF as his brutish pawns in Sierra Leone. Rapp is confident the prosecution has the witnesses and the evidence to prove this connection. "There are literally 10 different ways that we can show his responsibility and find him guilty for what happened there, if the evidence is credited by the court," Rapp says.

Taylor's defence team isn't so sure. The lead counsel is Karim Ahmad Khan, a 37-year-old English barrister with extensive international experience, including at UN international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. A doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford, he comes across as someone who is grounded in British legal tradition. He has a polite and mildly formal manner of speaking and makes a point of declaring his respect for both the Special Court and his opponents on the prosecution. Khan says he was drawn to the Taylor case because of its impact and complexity. "It's a wonderful interface between international law, international criminal law, human rights and politics," he says.

Khan echoes Rapp's contention that the case will be won or lost on the connections that can be drawn between Taylor and the RUF. "We're not disputing the tragedy of Sierra Leone," he says. "The focus is going to be on the nexus. It's going to be on the linkage. On what basis, on what real evidence, is it that Charles Taylor, a head of a foreign state, who never set foot in the country, whose troops, whose armed forces, never set foot in the country, is criminally responsible for the

acts done by other nationals, by Sierra Leoneans, in a neighbouring state? It seems to be quite a leap."

Khan then paraphrases a line from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar about shifting responsibility to others. "The fault is not in the stars, but in ourselves," he says. "Whether it seems to be easy for Sierra Leoneans to blame outsiders for all the problems that befell Sierra Leone, or whether those problems arose from Charles Taylor is a matter for the court to decide. But we say that these crimes had nothing to do with president Taylor."

That international expectations for the Taylor trial are so high partially reflects what a disappointment recent attempts to bring justice to bear against world leaders have been. Slobodan Milosevic used the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia as a soapbox for years, and then died before a judgment was rendered. Saddam Hussein was tried in an Iraqi court, but his tawdry execution tarnished the proceedings and even generated sympathy for the fallen tyrant.

Taylor's case has already generated its share of controversy, notably over the decision to hold the trial in The Hague instead of in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where other cases before the Special Court have taken place. The official reason is security concerns. It is widely understood, however, that Taylor is still politically explosive in west Africa, and that local leaders -- including Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the current president of Liberia -- wanted Taylor to stand trial somewhere else.

"The general understanding is that regional leaders wanted that resolution," Rapp told Maclean's. Rapp concedes that making a distant court's proceedings relevant to those who suffered through the Sierra Leone civil war will be "a challenge," but he stresses that the court is conducting outreach projects in Liberia and Sierra Leone to publicize the trial through school visits and radio and video clips. He believes that the project has been successful and that many people, even in remote areas, will follow the proceedings.

Fears that Taylor's presence in west Africa could provoke unrest do have substance. He might have been a thug, but so was the dictator his forces helped overthrow, Samuel Doe, who ruled Liberia for a decade before he was murdered in 1990. "There are people who love Charles Taylor, no matter what anybody says," says Justinian, a Liberian immigrant to Canada who asked that his real name not be used. Justinian fled Liberia in the early 1990s, "but not before seeing what went on under Taylor's control." He describes checkpoints staffed by Taylor's men, boys and girls, who shot anyone whose ankles bore marks that suggested they had once worn boots. On other occasions, Taylor's soldiers simply shot anyone they felt like.

Today, Justinian would rather forget Taylor entirely. "Going back to dwell on that is a waste of my time," he says. He's not the only one who feels this way. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, in an interview with Maclean's, claimed that Taylor's fate is "irrelevant to us. The media is very excited about Mr. Taylor. We just want to leave that era and put it behind us. And we wish the media would do the same."

Johnson-Sirleaf has practical reasons not to talk about Taylor. She is the first elected female head of state in Africa, and her presidency is in many ways a source of hope and optimism. It is also a lesson in messy, and perhaps necessary, political compromises. She herself was once an ally of Taylor and, as president, has sought to engage those implicated in Liberia's bloody recent history. She leads a fragile country and may believe it is prudent not to stir up the past.

Somewhere in Canada, however, there is at least one man who says he is determined to confront Liberia and Sierra Leone's terrible history, and his own role in it. Cindor Andrea Reeves says that

when he was a young man growing up with Charles Taylor, Taylor didn't really understand him. He failed to recognize that Reeves was learning about the world, and that the more he learned, the more he rejected Taylor. "He underestimated me, because my thoughts were so fast," Reeves says. "I started to compare. How can people live peacefully elsewhere, while we ourselves were wreaking havoc on our own country? So I put myself on a mission. I wanted to right that wrong."

Since arriving in Canada, Reeves says he has been both bribed and threatened by associates of Taylor who don't want him to testify. He claims that John Richardson, Taylor's former national security adviser, offered him US\$100,000 to keep quiet, and cautioned him not to allow himself to be used by white people seeking to bring Taylor down. When contacted by Maclean's, Richardson, currently in Liberia and subject to a UN Security Council travel ban, dismissed the allegation. "Mr. Reeves claims to know me very well and has called me by phone several times for help," Richardson said in an email. "Personally I don't recall the gentleman."

Reeves says he has also received emails that threaten his life and the life of his mother. He is still resolved to meet Taylor in court. "I want to see him. I want to face him. I feel brave that I can do that," he says. "Let him live. Let him regret. There were many people killed who never had the chance of a trial. I'm happy he is being given a fair trial. Whatever he gets will be the fate he deserves."

Ishmael Beah, the boy whose village was attacked by the RUF, did not escape the war unscathed. He was forced to become a child soldier in a pro-government militia and spent two years high on drugs, ambushing rebels and torturing captives. He buried men alive and once took part in a throat-slitting contest with some of his comrades to see who could kill a bound prisoner the quickest.

At the age of 15, Beah was rescued and rehabilitated by a UNICEF-supported centre. He now lives in New York and has written a book about his life: *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*. Beah has closely watched the proceedings of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He says he has personally come to terms with his own past, but he is pleased that those accused of brutalizing children by turning them into killers will face justice. "It's not really a question of forgiving, necessarily, rather than accountability," he says in an interview with Maclean's. "Of course I can forgive them, but I want there to be a mechanism that says if people do this to children, they will be held responsible. I want that to be carried out."

In his memoir, Beah recalls a riddle that a storyteller used to tell children in his village. A hunter finds a monkey. Just as he aims his rifle to shoot, the animal presents the hunter with an impossible choice, but one that would be recognizable to countless child soldiers who were forced to murder their parents. "If you shoot me, your mother will die, and if you don't, your father will die," the monkey says. The boys listening are asked what they would do if they were the hunter. Beah says he always avoided saying anything, but even at the age of seven he knew what his answer would be. He would shoot the monkey so it would never have the chance to put other children in the same predicament.

## Stabroek News

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[http://www.stabroeknews.com/index.pl/article\\_editorial?id=56521911](http://www.stabroeknews.com/index.pl/article_editorial?id=56521911)

### Visible Justice

In legal matters, history is not kind to those who preach one thing and practice another. The British Lord Chief Justice Hewart famously opined that "[i]t is not merely of some importance but is of fundamental importance, that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done." Sadly, Justice Hewart fell short of this ideal during his time on the bench. An eminent legal historian subsequently described him as "the worst English judge in living memory". A few years later Lord Devlin went even further: "I do not think that this [opinion] is quite fair. When one considers the enormous improvement in judicial standards between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, I should say that, comparatively speaking, he was the worst Chief Justice ever."

The United States would do well to remember this precedent as it prepares its inevitable lectures for the Caribbean heads of government meeting in the wake of the recent terrorist plot in New York. In the current political atmosphere, its urgent desire to extradite alleged terrorists from Caribbean territory should be used as an occasion for some long overdue introspection, a moment to revisit its own record as a safe haven for a variety of terrorist suspects -- Guyanese will think first of Luis Posada Carriles, but there are many more like the Haitian death squad leader Emanuel "Toto" Constant. While mulling over that anomaly, the US might also want to consider what sort of justice the rest of the world believes is on offer when the current administration has gone to such lengths to weasel out of full responsibility for its violent excesses at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib. But even if these lapses could be excused -- they can't -- it is passing strange that a country that has shown such strenuous resistance to the International Criminal Court, (ICC) (a Caribbean initiative) should seek transnational justice with dispatch when its own national security is suddenly at stake.

In *Lawless World*, Philippe Sands provides many detailed examples of British and American hypocrisy in matters of international law, some of them quite breathtaking in their bad faith. One of the main US objections to the ICC, for example, was that "the court's jurisdiction over individuals is too broad" -- an oversight that allegedly undermines "the independence and flexibility that America needs to defend our national interests around the world." Sands comments: "The flexibility to do what? The flexibility to commit war crimes? The flexibility to provide assistance to others in perpetrating crimes against humanity? The flexibility to turn a blind eye when your allies commit genocide? Let us be clear what 'flexibility' means here: it means that no American should ever be tried by the ICC under any circumstances..."

When, however, it finds itself chasing a handful of foreign nationals whom its authorities have charged with the help of a convicted drug dealer, America leaves no room for honest questions. Its demands are inflexible. Doubt and delay are seen as anti-American.

Coincidentally, the war crimes trial of the former Liberian president Charles Taylor began this week. It is a case that could establish another landmark for international justice, building on recent successes such as the prosecutions of General Pinochet and President Milosevic.

Regrettably, however, even here there is a glaring double standard. Sands remembers appearing before the Special Court to advise them on head-of-state immunity. He was puzzled by US efforts

to assist the Taylor prosecution. "in principle ... there was no difference between Charles Taylor and the Sierra Leone court, on the one hand and George W. Bush and the ICC, on the other ... How could it be, then, that the United States could support the indictment of Charles Taylor? ... How could Donald Rumsfeld's objection to the ICC exercising jurisdiction over any American national... be reconciled with his support for the Sierra Leone court and Charles Taylor's indictment?" How indeed?

International law degenerates into rhetoric and bureaucracy if the world's leading countries do not commit themselves to its principles-as Roosevelt and Churchill tried to do with the Atlantic Charter. Far too much has been tolerated for far too long. Wouldn't it be refreshing if we could find it within ourselves to put more pressure on Washington to understand that justice, and the appearance of justice, ought to be a two-way street? The Caricom-Cuba Foreign Ministers meeting recently urged America to grant Venezuela's extradition request for Carriles. If the American administration does not believe Carriles could get a fair trial in Venezuela would it consider Barbados, off whose coast the fatal bombing of the aircraft containing Guyanese, Cubans and others took place, which should give it jurisdiction. Terrorist actions of any kind are despicable and should not be condoned for ideological or other reasons.