

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Wednesday, 7 May 2008

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

Ex-Child Soldier Tells of Harrowing Experience... / <i>Independent Observer</i>	Page 3
ICRC Moot Court Competition Ends Today at Special Court / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 4

International News

(Untitled) / <i>BBC World Service Trust</i>	Pages 5-6
Ex-Child Soldier Dwells Into Atrocities / <i>New Democrat</i>	Pages 7-8
Agents of Poverty / <i>New Democrat</i>	Pages 9-10
As Special Court “Pays” Witnesses to Testify.. / <i>National Chronicle</i>	Pages 11-12
Foday Sankor Was Based in Tubmanburg / <i>Daily Observer</i>	Page 13
Over US \$5bn. Discovered in Charles Taylor’s Accounts / <i>The Informer</i>	Page 14
Taylor’s Accounts Discovered...at Citibank / <i>The News</i>	Page 15
“Blah Not Force to Testify”...Special Court Prosecutor / <i>The News</i>	Page 16
Gov’t Must Claim Taylor’s ‘Ill-Gotten Wealth’ / <i>The News</i>	Page 17
Taylor’s US\$5b Eludes Lawyers / <i>New Democrat</i>	Page 18
Taylor’s Lawyers on the Offensive / <i>Liberian Express</i>	Pages 19-21
Sankoh Lived Here / <i>New Democrat</i>	Page 22
What are Taylor’s Crimes? / <i>New Vision</i>	Pages 23-24
Journalism Training on Charles Taylor Trial is Laudable / <i>New Vision</i>	Page 25
Yeaten Smashed Babies Heads / <i>New Vision</i>	Pages 26-27
HRW Wants Perpetrators Account for War Crimes / <i>The Monitor</i>	Pages 28-29
Babies’ Heads Smashed, Pregnant Women Disembowled / <i>Daily Observer</i>	Page 30
UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 31-33

Independent Observer
Wednesday, 7 May 2008

Ex-child soldier tells of harrowing experience at Taylor trial

By Adolphus Williams in The Hague

The trial of the former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor resumed at The Hague on Monday after a three-day Dutch holiday break, with the prosecution putting a former child soldier in the witness stand.

The new prosecution witness, known only as TF1-143, is taking questions from the prosecution and testifying to alleged cruel treatments of civilians by rebel soldiers blamed on Mr Taylor.

The witness alleged that AFRC/RUF rebels used razor blades to mark some 50 boys and girls from among 150 abducted in Koinadugu District.

The former child combatant, now aged 22 years, said children were later assigned to various rebel commanders.

"When they started to mark us, the first person that they marked among us, they carved on his forehead 'AFRC' and on his chest 'RUF'", he said.

Under cross-examination, he said he was marked himself. He also narrated how he took orders from a rebel commander known as Kabila who had instructed

him to rape an old lady, which he refused and for which he was punished.

He continued: "We met an old woman there, so Kabila ordered me to rape [her] and I started crying... Because the old woman could - was able to give birth to my own mother... At that time I had not even started sex. At that time I didn't even have a girlfriend... So he punished me. He asked me to lie down under the sun and open my eyes for the rest of the day... He took me into a bush and he defecated and asked me to eat it up, because he said I had started disobeying his orders. He said I would never have peace in my life. He said if I did not do that he would kill me and leave me there and if anybody asked him he would tell that person that I had run away."

He said at this point he complied.

The witness said he was given tablets to strengthen his courage to using a machete to cut off limbs and kill civilians

The cross-examination continues.

Courtesy of BBC World Service Trust and Search for Common Ground.

[This article was also carried by Awoko and the Concord Times]

Awoko

Wednesday, 7 May 2008

ICRC moot court competition ends today at Special Court

The International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and humanitarian principles and the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) will host this year's National IHL M in Sierra Leone.

This is the first time ever that the National Red Cross Society is organising the competition and the series mark the fourth inter-collegiate contest on IHL in Sierra Leone.

The IHL Moot Court competition is a training event on IHL intended for students and aimed at "taking law out of the books". During the competition, students are placed in a mock armed conflict situation. Assuming the roles of prosecution and defence lawyers, they have to deal with allegations of violations of IHL and to argue their case before a panel of judges (confirmed experts in IHL). This exercise allows the students acquiring knowledge of this body of law while in the same time appreciating its practical relevance.

Altogether six teams, comprising three students from Njala University, Milton Margai College of Education & Technology, Fourah Bay College, International Institute of Islamic Studies and the Northern and Eastern Polytechnics, have been pre-selected to participate in the competition.

The students will be judged on their knowledge of IHL and public international law, their capacity to use the instruments of law to argue a study case, their teamwork and the quality of their oral expression. Whilst the case they will work on is purely fictional, they will face a panel of experts in a real court setting in the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Those who will emerge as winners will represent Sierra Leone at the 8th International IHL Moot Court Competition to be held in Arusha (Tanzania) in November 2008.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) initiated the national IHL moot court competition for university colleges in 2005 in Sierra Leone, within the framework of its mandate to support the efforts of states in disseminating International Humanitarian Law.

More than six years after armed conflict ended in Sierra Leone, the ICRC continues a gradual scaling down of its presence in Sierra Leone giving prominence to the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society in matters related to Red Cross activities in the country.

BBC World Service Trust

Tuesday, 6 May 2008

In the war crimes trial of the former Liberian President Charles Taylor, there are some Prosecution witnesses who request not to be seen by the public while they testify.

Lawyers pressing charges against Taylor say these witnesses fear for their safety and that of their family members and would not like to be known while they give evidence.

At some point, lawyers defending Charles Taylor reject the protective status of some of these witnesses and asked the Court to look at the reasons for keeping them away from the public eye.

So when the Prosecution put another secret witness on the stand Tuesday, Taylor's lawyers resisted that TF1-215 did not meet the criteria to be hidden from the public.

As Alphonsus Zeon reports, the ensuing argument between the opposing lawyers took almost the entire Tuesday after the previous witness, TF1-143, had left the stand.

ZEON: Anyah says the witness should not be given a fake name like TF1-215; he should not give testimony behind the camera, and that his voice should not be distorted, because he is not a child, a victim of sexual violence, neither an insider, nor an expert witness.

Anyah said these categories of witnesses are the ones covered by protective measures and that TF1-215 did not fit in any of these categories.

ANYAH: Indeed I submit to the Chamber that witness 215 who is up next is not covered by this order.

ZEON: Taylor's lawyer Anyah prevails on the Judges to review the reasons for granting protective status to some witnesses, because the British-trained Ghanaian lawyer argues times have changed so much so that some of the ten-year old measures do not hold water any longer.

The Prosecution counter-argues that although TF1-215 is a witness of fact, he does hold security fear.

Prosecution lawyer Julia Baly says the court in its decision of January this year said it was satisfied that potential threats to witnesses still existed, providing the basis why the measure should stay.

The Court agrees with Taylor's lawyers that TF1-215 did not enjoy protection, but Presiding Judge Theresa Doherty says the call for a review of the protective measures remains arguable

JUSTICE DOHERTY: The Defence have opposed and applied to rescind the purported protective measures for witness TF1-215. The Prosecution submit that the witness is protected by an order of Trial Chamber I of 5 July 2004, entitled "Decision on Prosecution motion for modification of protective measures for witnesses", which the Prosecution submits applies to 266 witnesses of fact including witness TF1-215. After careful consideration of that decision and the submissions of counsel, we find nothing in the decision which would entitle witness TF1-215 to any protective measures. In our view, the decision relates solely to those witnesses listed in annexes A and B of the renewed Prosecution motion for protective measures. Witness TF1-215 is not among those witnesses listed in the annexes. Accordingly, the witness will testify in open court

ZEON: Instead of bringing TF1-215 in open court, the Prosecution withdraws the witness they say should have testified to facts.

Prosecution lawyer Shyamala Alagenda announces a different witness instead.

BALY: Your Honour, the Prosecution does not intend to call witness TF1-215. The next witness will be witness TF1-028, to be led by my colleague Ms Alagenda.

ALAGENDRA: This witness, your Honour, is a group 1, category A witness, and the protective measures afforded to this witness previously were for her to testify using a pseudonym, behind a screen and with voice distortion, your Honour.

ZEON: By the time the new witness, TF1-028, got ready to set foot in the courtroom it was time to pack up for the day's proceedings.

This is Alphonsus Zeon for the BBC World Service Trust and Search for Common Ground, reporting from The Hague.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Tuesday, 6 May 2008

Ex-Child Soldier Dwells Into Atrocities

More Witnesses Line-Up

The trial of former President Charles Taylor has resumed following a short break, with a former child soldier, now 22, detailing how he and others were drugged to commit horrendous atrocities, including hacking women to death.

Meanwhile, the Court's press office issued a list of witnesses scheduled to be called by the Prosecution over the next 2 weeks, as well as Prosecution witness summaries identifying evidence that each witness may provide. The list consists of 3 crime-base witnesses (including a former child soldier) and 3 linkage/"insider" witnesses.

The ex-child soldier, known screen & pseudonym

- TF1-143

Excerpts of Prosecutor Mohammed Bangura's questioning former child soldier, TF1-143.

Pros: Do you know what group captured you and the other boys and girls in Koinadugu town?

Wit: Yes. Both AFRC and RUF because they would mark us with their names.

Pros: You said that Kabila came from the meeting and that your group had been ordered to be the advanced team to leave for Freetown, were you ordered to go to the jzo (sp?) bush before that?

Wit: Kabila said that our group



should be in the he took us to that

Pros: What kind receive in the bush

Wit: They show in the bush and and clean guns.

Pros: You ment came from the me munition had be him for your groa who distribu tion?

Wit: That was th were to have for tl

Pros: What happ Koinadugu?

Wit: About 200 i gu.

Pros: Can you te make up of that g

Wit: 55, 05, Ka Samusa (sp?) and

Pros: How old w happened?

Wit: 12 years old

Pros: When did

Wit: We left in dugu town?

Wit: We left in walked through

Pros: Where did

Wit: We went to not know the na That was my firs town.

Pros: You said team was divid

Ex-Child Soldier Dwells Into Atrocities

up into three groups, is that correct?

Wit: Yes

Pros: How was the group divided?

Wit: Kabila was in the first group, the boys and the women were in the middle group and older men were in the back.

Pros: Did anything happen once you entered into Karina town?

Wit: There was firing and we hid in the bush.

Pros: After passing through Karina, where did you go to next?

Wit: We met the advanced team where 55 had captured one soldier and 55 shot the man in his mouth.

Pros: Who was the head of that group?

Wit: 55

Pros: Did anything else happen?

Wit: 55 and O5 ordered that all the boys be trained. Kabila and Mohammed helped train us and he gave me two blue tablets?

Pros: Did you experience any feelings after you took those tablets?

Wit: My eyes were red and I started feeling "bold"

Pros: What group did Kabila, your commander, belong to?

Wit: He marked me RUF on my chest. Then, I knew he was RUF.

Pros: Do you know what group Mohammed belonged to?

Wit: Yes, he was RUF also.

Pros: You said that the men who came with Camba (sp?) were speaking a different language, is that correct?

Wit: Yes. Kabila said they were Liberian soldiers who came to reinforce us so we could go to Freetown and they were carrying loads.

Pros: What people were suppose to be trained by the orders of O5?

Wit: Both boys and girls who were captured.

Pros: Did anyone else join the group?

Wit: After they trained us, Camba brought his group and they were speaking a different language. Kabila told us it was the Liberian language.

Pros: What happened after you took the two blue pills?

Wit: 55 told us to loot and kill the people in the village and we went to a house with 5 people including two men, a woman, and two children. Kabila demonstrated to us how to do it and hacked the first man on his neck. I then hacked the woman next to him and hacked her on her chest and hacked her on her side and I hacked the child with her.

Pros: Can you slowly take us through how you killed these people?

Wit: I hacked the woman on the back of her neck and on her breast with a machete. I hacked the child on his neck and on his side. One of them begged me not to do it but Kabila told me to do it or he would kill me, so I hacked him as well and cut off his head.

Pros: After that incident did anything else happen in that village?

Wit: Some of the fighters on the other side were looting and burning down houses. Then, we left.

Pros: Can you tell us the name of the village?

Wit: That was my first time going to that village and I did not know that village. It was three villages from Karina town.

Pros: Where did you go next?

Wit: My boss told me we were in Kamalu town.

Pros: What happened next?

Wit: We waited in the bush until the fighting ceased. Then, we waited for

Wit: Kabila brought marijuana and I smoked it until I started vomiting.

Pros: Were you the only one who was smoking it?

Wit: No, there was others smoking.

me that he was given an order by his boss, Musa. This order was to go to Freetown and we were to overthrow the government that was in power. We should not loot or kill. Kabila

my family ran to Konkoba, my mother's village. Other people were running to Konkoba as well. When arrived we spent the night, and next day we heard they had pushed the rebels out and were coming towards Kayakoh. Me and my family ran to my grandfather's farm miles from the village.

Pros: You mentioned the rebels I been pushed from Kabalala to Kankoh, what do you mean?

Wit: Nigerian and Guinean soldiers had pushed the rebels of Kabalala so the rebels were running from them. The Nigerians were called Oga Men. At that time I did not know why they were called that.

Pros: Where was your grandfather's farm?

Wit: 3 miles from the village.

Pros: Anything happen when there?

Wit: When we ran to the farm, we spent the night. The next day we were there until the evening and then the village to spend the night (in Konkobah). We were sleeping when we heard knocking on the door and were taken by the rebels to another house.

Pros: Don't have to say everything all at once, I will guide you so you can give answers in bits. You said that evening there was a knock at the door. Right?

Wit: Yes sir.

Pros: What happened then?

[technical difficulty]

Wit: The rebels took my family at that point to another house. At that time I didn't know who they were. I then myself. I noticed that they had guns.

Pros: Any particular outfit you remember?

Wit: It was in the morning I noticed that. When we were taken to house next door, we were all looking up in the house and other people were brought there as well.

Pros: Were all kept there until morning, including Kabila and Mohammed, and 2 said they had come to "mark" the boys and girls. There were 150 total that had been captured, including 50 boys and girls.

Pros: What do you mean by it us?

Wit: When they said they were going to mark us, I didn't know, then they carved AFRC on forehead of a boy and RUF on his chest using a razor blade. The marking done by Kabila and Mohammed.

All the boys and girls were marked this way. The older ones were marked out. The younger ones were in number, and were both boys and girls. They marked me as well as Kabila carved RUF on my chest.

Pros: What were the ages of boys and girls?

Wit: I couldn't tell at that time.

Pros: ...



CHILD SOLDIERS FEATURED PROMINENTLY IN THE LIBERIAN CIVIL WAR

a boat to go to Karina.

Pros: You have already mentioned in your testimony that you went to Karina, where did you go after Kamalu?

Wit: It was Kukuna after Kamalu.

Pros: Was there fighting in Kamalu?

Wit: Yes

Pros: After the fighting what happened?

Wit: It was getting dark and they told us they had arranged for boats so we could go to Kukuna.

Pros: Did you make it to Kukuna?

Wit: Yes

Pros: What happened next?

Wit: There was a White Priest who was captured and we went into the forest and heard heavy fighting. Then, we laid down in that forest because we were told to do so.

Pros: Did you perform any role?

Wit: I carried ammunition for Kabila and I had my machete.

Pros: Were you forced to carry anything else?

Wit: Sometimes, he would give me the gun but it was heavy for me so he took it away from me.

Pros: Do you know what type of gun he was using?

Wit: He told me that the gun he was using was GMG.

Pros: Do you know what GMG means?

Wit: No.

Pros: At Kukuna, you told us there was some fighting, how did you proceed from Kukuna?

Wit: We rested at another village and Kabila was able to get another gun that had two handles. Kabila already told me how to dismantle and clean the gun but then he taught me how to shoot it. I shot the gun into the water.

Pros: Why did you shoot it into the water?

Wit: Kabila did not want them to hear that we were in that town.

Pros: After that shoot, did anything else happen?

Pros: Prior to this time, had you ever smoked a cigarette?

Wit: No, that was my first time smoking anything.

Pros: Did anything happen next?

Wit: We slept in that town and then we went to Konelele town (sp?)

Pros: What happened in that town?

Wit: We met Samusa, John, Guillet and there was other fighters there.

Pros: Before you got to this town, did anything happen on the way?

Wit: Camba ordered his boys (Bazuz and another) to capture one girl and they put her into a house and Camba raped her. John was standing outside as the bodyguard. We stayed in that village looting and taking things and then left.

Pros: Do you recall this girl's age?

Wit: I don't know her age. She was fatter than me but we had the same height.

Judge: We have no record of the height of the witness at this time.

Pros: You were twelve years of age at the time, how would you describe the ages of the boys you were trained with.

Wit: Some were older than me and others were the same age as me.

Pros: Did anything happen while you were at Konelele town?

Wit: I saw my friend, Alagi (sp?) and he introduced me to his boss, Junolion (sp?) and then I introduced him to my boss, Kabila.

Pros: What happened next?

Wit: I met with Kabila and he told

said that won't work but kill everything including goats, sheep, everything. He said, "spare no soul."

[Judges confer]

Pros: Who gave Kabila his order to "spare no soul?"

Wit: It was O5 that gave this order.

Pros: What happened next?

Wit: We walked during the night. In the morning, we found a forest where we would stay during the day and then walk during the night. We were going to Freetown.

Pros: Who was the group that was going to Freetown?

Wit: It was mixed with the RUF.

Pros: Mr Witness, do you recall Sept. of 1998?

Wit: Yes sir. Sept. 1998 I was with my mother and my family. It was in the rainy season.

Pros: Where were you living at this time?

Wit: At Kabalatown in Koinadugu district.

Pros: Who were members of family at that time?

Wit: My brother and sister.

Pros: How old were you at that time?

Wit: I was 12 years old. I was going to school.

Pros: What level of school?

Wit: I was in class 4.

Pros: How do you recall Sept. of 1998?

Wit: Well, during that time my mother and I were at home. My mother was cooking and in the evening when we heard heavy firing. My mother and

Some were contending that penalties should be "life imprisonment or death by hanging" across the board, an action some see as a strong deterrent.

The proposed bill is expected to pass overwhelmingly today to be sent up to the Senate, where it is also expected to pass unhindered.

The bill, which is calling for armed

robbers and hijackers to be put to death, gained momentum after increased armed robbery, which left peaceful residents across Monrovia, raped and wounded. The draft Act called for amendments of chapter 14 and 15 of Liberian code of the new panel law to make armed robbery, terrorism and hijacking an unbalable offense.

According to section 14.54, 15.3, 15.33 of the proposed act, "an individual convicted of terrorist armed robbery and hijacking of citizens must be sentenced imprisonment not less than 15 years with possibility of parole after serving three quarters of the sentence in the case of a life sentence."--Joe K. Roberts

TO BE CONTINUED

New Democrat (Liberia)
Tuesday, 6 May 2008

Agents Of Poverty

More Than USD140Billions Stole

When former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo declared that sub-Saharan Africa has lost US\$140b via theft since independence, he was probably speaking with a definite time span. Now, lawyers chasing the fortune of former President Charles Taylor have found evidence that he amassed US\$5b in two accounts at the American bank, City Bank.

It is unlikely that anyone has estimated how much leaders that preceded Mr Taylor, dating from WVS Tubman, William R. Tolbert and Samuel K. Doe, stacked away in foreign banks, since there has been no international interest in their fortunes like Mr Taylor's, because of his trial on war crimes and claims he is too poor to cover his legal expenses.

But the new US\$5b revelation shows that Mr Taylor, who ruled from 1997 to 2003 (although he began wealth accumulation far earlier when he launched the war in 1990), is three times wealthier than late Nigeria's Sani Abacha, who ruled from 1993 to 1998.



Page 6



TAYLOR: USD 5B



MOBUTU: USD 3.2B



ABACHA: USD 2.2B

Agents Of Poverty

almost the same time span. Abacha amassed US\$2.2b within 5 years, while Taylor amassed US\$5b within the same time, according to reports. Moreover, Nigeria is Africa's leading oil producer, thus establishing its wealth compared to Liberia, sunk in war that Nigeria played a leading role in ending.

Nigeria's GDP stands at 167,919, ranking 52 on the global scale. Liberia's GDP stands at 3,180, ranking 154

1998 - and said an inquiry proved it had criminal origins.

An agreement was worked out under which Nigeria's government promised to invest the returned money in the country.

The funds will be spent on development projects, such as hospitals, schools and roads.

Although the ruling by Switzerland's highest court opens the way for the bulk of the cash to be returned to

come under pressure to disclose, and freeze, whatever part of the vast sums he is believed to have looted from Zaire that he may have deposited or invested here. So far, however, they have decided not to do so.

It is widely assumed, here and abroad, that some or much of President Mobutu's fortune has been deposited in Swiss banks, but unless the Government acts to block the assets, nobody can say how much. While estimates of the Zairian leader's fortune

range well into the billions of dollars, some officials say only a small part of it may ultimately be traceable to bank accounts to which he can be linked.

In an interview with the Swiss national radio, Finance Minister Kaspar Villiger added that Mr. Mobutu, "in terms of international law, is a head of state."

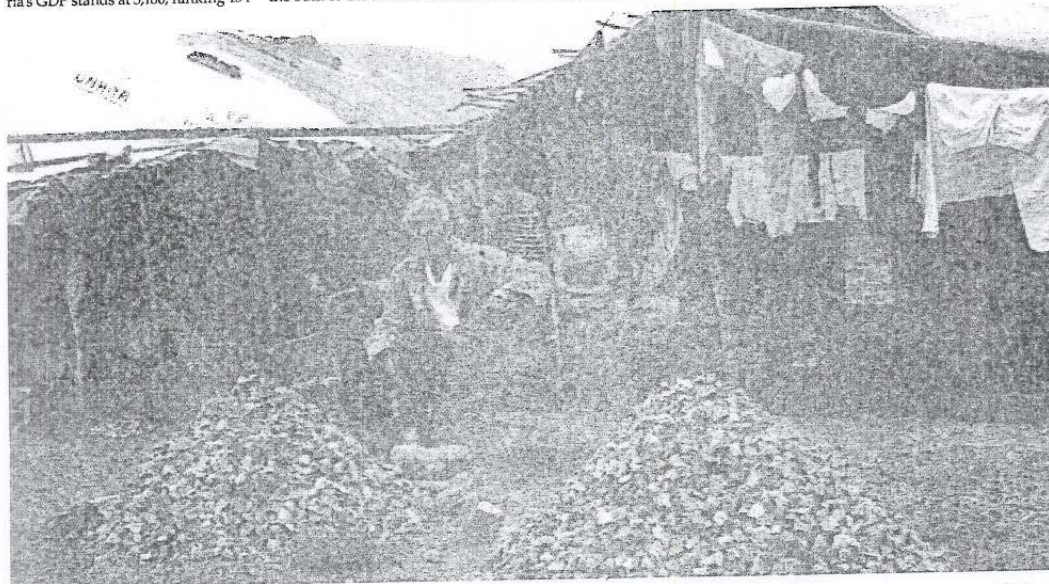
Nevertheless, if the governing council acted to freeze the assets, the banks would then be legally obliged to report to the country's banking

commission which accounts are in Mr. Mobutu's name, and how much money is in them. Swiss banking law has been changed in recent years to require that banks know who their depositors are, rather than allowing them to deposit money in anonymous accounts.

That does not guarantee full disclosure, however. Dictators, drug dealers and tax evaders can and do use false names or send relatives or friends to do their banking. That was the case with Raul Salinas de Gortari brother of Mexico's former President who used a phony passport with another name when he deposited money in Geneva's Banque Pictet & Cie. His wife was later arrested trying to close the \$84 million account.

In Mr. Mobutu's case, the Swiss Banking Commission took the unusual step of reporting last month that the 12 largest banks have denied holding Mobutu deposits. "Either banks have chucked him out or he has left himself," said Danie Zuberbuhler, managing director of the commission. "There's no excuse to take money from someone who is known to be corrupt. And it certainly would not be billions in Swiss banks."

Still, many people remain skeptical that Mr. Mobutu has abandoned Switzerland. "The banks said the about the Marcos monies too," said Mascha Madorin, an economist for the Action Swiss Financial Center, an organization that campaigns for Government controls on the secret accounts. "And the wartime monies. But then when they looked, they found them."



on the world scale in terms of wealth. That a Liberian leader, as the figures reveal, has more money than a Nigerian leader is therefore self-explanatory.

In the case of the late Zaire dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, there are no firm figures of his accounts in Swiss banks, but his country sought to retrieve at least US 3.5b of the vast amounts.

Fresh from his presidential victory with the slogan that since "he spoilt it he will fix it", Mr Taylor presented his bill to donors and the international community, declaring he needed US\$3b from them to fix it.

But with the country's much-talked about debt standing at US\$3.5b, Mr Taylor would have paid it off and be left with at least US\$1.5b, still just US\$500m poorer than Abacha.

In Nigeria's case, Switzerland returned \$458m invested in its banks with a clear proviso on what the money should be used on—development.

The BBC: It comes after the Abacha family failed in a last-ditch court appeal to prevent the money being handed back to Nigeria.

Switzerland agreed last August to hand over the money - which has been frozen since Abacha died in

Nigeria, a further \$40m will remain frozen until the Abacha family can prove it was not obtained illegally.

Switzerland is currently seeking the extradition of Sani Abacha's son, Abba Abacha, from Germany on suspicion of money-laundering and fraud.

The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo also sought to get back the money Mobutu deposited in Swiss banks as the dictator was falling from grace."

Switzerland was poised to hand over \$535m in blocked Abacha funds to the Nigerian government, but local difficulties in Nigeria mean the funds stay in Switzerland for the time being, reports Lokongo Bafalikike.

The London-based New African, reported in November 2002: The Nigerian government's attempt to have Swiss banks return millions stashed abroad by General Sani Abacha has suffered a blow. Switzerland's federal court says it wants to hear an appeal by the Abacha family following the collapse of an out-of-court settlement between President Olusegun Obasanjo's government and the family. All transfers of information and funds will consequently cease until the court has ruled on the case.

The New York Times in May 1997: With Mobutu Sese Seko's power waning, the Swiss authorities have



National Chronicle (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

As Special Court "Pays" Witnesses To Testify:

NO MONEY TO TRY TAYLOR

STORY ON PAGE 6

Donors To Give US\$23m; Court Needs US\$68m



Former Pres. Charles Taylor



Special Court Judges

NATIONAL CHRONICLE FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2008

TAYLOR

Information published in the media say that the Special Court now trying ex-President Charles Taylor in The Hague, Netherlands, will run out of funds in the autumn (September to November 2008), and there are complaints about witnesses being paid.

It is a common complaint in Africa that even the most heinous crimes of some of its leaders and warlords merit barely a flicker of attention in the rest of the world while they are being perpetrated.

As the genocidal slaughter began in Rwanda in 1994, TV viewers in Britain and United States were transfixed by the high-speed Californian car chase that ended in the arrest of O.J. Simpson. And for much of the 1990s, the murder and mutilation inflicted on the population of Sierra Leone in a conflict about "blood diamonds" was largely ignored outside West Africa until Britain's military intervention in 1999.

Now, Charles Taylor, the former Liberian leader accused of backing those who committed the atrocities is standing trial in The Hague, the first African leader to face a war crimes court. True to form, the world remains largely uninformed about a trial that is throwing up legal issues that have international tribunals.

One is payment of witnesses. For the prosecution, some of the most valued testimony has come from "insider" witnesses, senior figures in the rebel groups in Sierra Leone who negotiated with the Liberians to secure guns in return for supplying diamonds.

In the past year, one of these witnesses, Isaac Tamba Mongor, a self-confessed killer who admitted in court that he has burnt down villages and slaughtered civilians, received payments totalling \$4,800 for food, medical and childcare expenses, visits to his relatives in the provinces and to buy top up cards for his mobile phone. All these payments have been made by the victim and witness service section of the court registry. The chief prosecutor and registrar say everything is declared and above board. The defence is crying foul.

Terry Muryard, of Garden Court Chambers, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, Taylor's co-counsel, outlines the charge sheet: "Reimbursing witnesses for genuine expenses is entirely legitimate. A handout to help them with school fees and buy uni-

forms for their children, which has happened in some cases, is not. Some people have approached us offering to give evidence for the defense if we will pay them more than they are being offered by the prosecution. Frankly, this corrodes the whole system of justice that the international tribunals are supposed to be upholding."

The defense also complains that press conferences given by the prosecution in West Africa, while the trial has been in progress, have made it more difficult to find those prepared to testify for Taylor. "When the chief prosecutor stands up in Monrovia," Muryard says, "and makes extravagant claims about Taylor and the millions of dollars he has supposedly salted away, it clearly has an inhibiting effect on potential defense witnesses. They fear that they will be put on some UN war crimes list if they come forward."

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is not the first international tribunal to be the focus of such criticisms, nor the first where some observers detect a legal culture clash between US and UK practices.

Taylor's defense team comes mainly from the English Bar. The two key figures in the office of the prosecutor are American. Stephen Rapp, from Iowa, is the chief prosecutor. "In the jurisdiction I come from, witness payments can be made by a US marshal where appropriate. But listen, we are talking about reimbursement of expenses here. Nobody is being enriched through testifying."

"In cases where we have had to relocate a witness because of fear of reprisals, it's right that we should take care of things such as school fees if their children can no longer go to the local mission school. The principle is that nobody should be worse off as a result of testifying."

The monetary issue of greatest concern to the Special Court is the continual struggle to garner the contributions to keep it alive and functioning. Unlike the ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the Sierra Leone court relies on voluntary payments from states rather than assessed contributions from the UN.

Four states have borne the brunt: the US, Canada, Britain and the Netherlands.

"Other contributions have been sporadic," Herman von Hebel, the registrar, admits. "I spend about a third of my

time going around with a begging bowl. We need \$68 million to complete our work by 2010 and we have guaranteed funding of only \$23 million. The present funding will last until the autumn. It is a great worry."

Though this is an African tribunal albeit one sitting in Europe for the Taylor trial for security reasons, the only financial contributor from Africa is Nigeria. This is ironic because Taylor was given sanctuary there for three years before his protection was removed and he was arrested.

Despite everything—the financial uncertainty, the death threats to witnesses and an attack on the family home of a witness in Liberia—the trial is progressing and impressing many seasoned observers. Professor Michael Scharf, an expert on war crimes tribunals, says: "Although Taylor's very presence is intimidating to witnesses, he is not disrupting proceedings and his legal team is doing an impressive job. For now, the court is setting a good precedent for the future".

WILLIAMS

Daily Observer (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

Foday Sankor Was Based in Tubmanburg

- Witness Mustapha Nyei

A witness told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the late Sierra

Leonean rebel leader Corporal Foday Sylvanus Sankor was based in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, in 1990 before launching an incursion in neighboring Sierra Leone.

Testifying Wednesday at the ongoing rural public hearings of the TRC in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, a resident of Tubmanburg, Mustapha Nyei, 60, said former president Charles Taylor then

leader of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) visited Sankor at his base in Tubmanburg in 1990.

Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters were transported from Robertsport City, Grand Cape Mount County, to Tubmanburg to be briefed by Corporal Sankor.

He said before fighters of Sankor's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked the Bo Waterside frontier to launch their incursion in Sierra Leone,

Following the briefing, See pg 10

TRC Accuses Executive

DAILY OBSERVER

Foday

Nyei explained that the fighters boarded three pick-up trucks for the Sierra Leonean border at Bo Waterside where they launched an invasion.
"Foday Sankor was based here in Tubmanburg. That was no secret around here. When Taylor came here he stayed here with Sankor for two days and everyone saw them here," the witness explained.
He said RUF fighters based in Robertsport and Tubmanburg alike were under the command of General Oliver Vauxey and other commanders he only named as "One Man One," "CO," "Koko," and one "Diallo" Willo.
"Mr. Nyei said at regular intervals, Sankor left his Tubmanburg base to visit his RUF fighters in areas occupied by the group in Sierra Leone."
"Mr. Taylor is standing trial in The Hague for crimes against

humanity allegedly committed in neighbouring Sierra Leone where Sankor was a rebel leader.
"Corporal Sankor has testified in person while standing trial for war crimes at the United Nations-backed War Crimes Court in The Hague."
"The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations, review the history of Liberia, and put all human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1979 to 2003 on record. The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation."
"The ongoing rural public hearings in Bomi County are being held under the theme: 'Confronting Our Difficult Past, For A Better Future.'"

The Informer (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

Over US\$5bn. Discovered In Charles Taylor's Accounts



Former President Ghankay Charles Taylor

By Jerome Tan

The Chief prosecutor of the UN Criminal Court for Sierra Leone based in The Hague says more than five billion U.S. dollars have been uncovered in two separate accounts belonging to in the United States of America.

Addressing a news conference Thursday in Monrovia, Mr. Stephen Repp said the UN court has made progress in tracing the accounts of Taylor who is now standing trial in The Hague on charges of crimes against humanity.

Mr. Repp said the court discovered the more than US\$5bn in two separate accounts in Cit Bank and another US\$375 million in an unnamed bank.

The court traced transactions conducted by Mr. Taylor and his cohorts during his regime, both in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and

was able to discover these accounts, said the Prosecutor. The court has documents that Mr. Taylor has nine bags of Diamond value at US\$12, he added.

Mr. Repp said the monies from the two accounts in the tune of US\$5 billion have been frozen by the Special court for Sierra Leone based in The Hague.

The Chief Prosecutor also clarified that there has not been any inducement of witnesses to testify against the former Liberian President. The court provides allowances to facilitate the relocation of witnesses to The Hague from their country of residence, he averred.

He said this fund (allowance) is used to meet the daily needs of witnesses while awaiting their term at the court to give testimonies against Taylor. Repp contended that the allowances are not meant to enrich any of the witnesses as being speculated in many quarters.

The mandate of the UN Special court for Sierra Leone was created through an agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the UN to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of International Humanitarian Law and Sierra Leone law, committed in the territory of Sierra Leone during that country's civil war.

The former Liberian leader is reported to have sponsored one of the deadliest rebel groups in the sub region, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which allegedly butchered civilians and hacked limbs of civilians in Sierra Leone.

Taylor is said to have backed the RUF in exchange of blood diamonds, but he has persistently denied all the 11 levied against him and pleaded not guilty.

Firestone Scholarship Recipient Receives Academic Honor

Student Emmanuel Kofeh, a scholarship recipient of Firestone Liberia attending the Booker Washington Institution (BWI), in Kakata, Margibi County, was

among several students of the institution that were honored by the Administration of the school for high academic performance during the first semester of academic year

honors, relatives, in-laws and well wishers took place on Friday, April 25, 2008, in the auditorium of the school.

Speaking shortly following the

TAYLOR'S ACCOUNTS DISCOVERED

... At Citibank

By Alloycious David

The Chief Prosecutor of the Sierra Leonean Special Court trying former President Charles Taylor for crimes allegedly committed in Sierra Leone, Steven Rapp, Thursday disclosed that the court has record that Mr. Taylor has two separate accounts at Citibank in New York, United States of America.

Mr. Rapp told a news conference that the two accounts which bear Taylor's name, have a total of US\$5 billion with transitions.

He indicated that most of the US\$5 billion transitions were movement of money



Chief Prosecutor Steven Rapp

between the two accounts to maximize daily interest.

Mr. Rapp noted that the court has also identified that US\$375 million went out of the two accounts into accounts



Former President Charles Taylor

in different banking institutions.

He said the special court was making effort to trace the banks where the US\$375 million and other money deposited by Mr. Taylor when he was

President of Liberia.

Mr. Rapp disclosed that the court has obtained records from banking institutions throughout the world including banks in America, most of which, according to him, are cooperating.

"We have the capacity and assistance of all the countries in the world to trace Taylor's accounts. Although people make withdrawals in cash, they may not be able to withdraw US\$375 million in cash. So if you are talking about those kinds of funds you do not have the capacity to withdraw large sum in cash," Mr. Rapp said in response to a question.

The Chief Prosecutor was hopeful that there are records that will allow the tracing of the US\$375 million.

Mr. Rapp said 5,000 Sierra Leoneans victimized by Taylor's terror were yet to undergo medical treatment and that Taylor's asset would be used for reparation program.

He noted that proceeds from the diamond sale were used to boost Taylor's war machinery in Sierra Leone.

It can be recalled that in 2002, Mr. Taylor denied depositing money in foreign banks and challenged the international community to seize any in his name.

The News (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

“BLAH NOT FORCE TO TESTIFY”

...*Special Court Prosecutor*

By Alloycious David

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone Steven Rapp says former President Moses Blah is not forced to testify at the on-going trial of ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor in The Hague.

He told a news conference Thursday that the court was concerned about Mr. Blah's health and could not force him to show up in The Hague.

He indicated that the court was not interested in forcing Mr. Blah to appear



Former President Moses Blah

before it, but he

was selected based on a seven-page document he (Blah) provided investi-

gators and prosecutors of the special court relevant to Taylor's trial.

Mr. Rapp indicated that Blah, in the statement, volunteered to testify and even agreed that the special Court subpoena him.

He noted that the subpoena was meaningless and that Blah has agreed to be a witness of truth.

The Special Court Chief Prosecutor disclosed that Blah is a protective witness who decided to go public two weeks ago.

Rapp also disclosed that Blah has agreed to travel to The Hague sometime this month or June.

Cont'd on page 6

Coca-Cola Earmarks Expanded Production

The Coca-Cola Company has earmarked program for the expansion of its production in Liberia

facilities before the expansion project.

Mr. Cummings spoke Thursday when a delegation led by the Chairman of the

BLAH NOT

In a recent interview, a spokesman of Mr. Blah told this paper that the former president's testimony to the special court would depend on a clean medical certificate authorizing him to go.

Mr. Blah said he was suffering from heart problem and other illnesses.

The News (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

Gov't Must Claim Taylor's 'Ill-gotten Wealth'

The Chief Prosecutor of the Sierra Leonean Special Court trying former President Charles Taylor in The Hague for crimes allegedly committed in Sierra Leone, Steven Rapp has disclosed that the court has records that former President Charles Taylor has two separate accounts totaling five billion United States dollars at Citibank in New York, United States of America.

Mr. Rapp told a news conference on Thursday that the court has also identified that US\$375 million went out of the two accounts into accounts in other banking institutions.

He indicated that the special court was also making efforts to trace banks in which the US\$375 million were deposited when Mr. Taylor was President of Liberia.

But what is of additional interest in the discovery of Taylor's accounts of US\$5 billion transactions is that, the Chief Prosecutor is claiming that 5,000 Sierra Leoneans were victimized by Taylor's terror and as such Taylor's asset would be used for reparation programs for the victims in Sierra Leone.

Moreover, Mr. Rapp said most of the money in Taylor's accounts are for Sierra Leoneans based on information that Mr. Taylor got several pieces of diamonds from Sierra Leone.

As much as we sympathize with our brothers and sisters in Sierra Leone for the unfortunate civil war there, we would like to point out that bulk of Taylor's ill-gotten assets are clearly traceable from Liberia.

It is undisputable that for most part of the 1990s (from 1990 – 1997) Taylor as leader of the largest rebel faction controlled within the neighborhood of 90 percent of Liberia's territory in which he looted significant portion of the country's mineral wealth.

And when he was elected president in 1997, through an internationally brokered special arrangement to end Liberia's civil war, Taylor continued his plunder of the country's mineral resources for the next six years for his personal benefit.

Bulk of Taylor's excess assets was therefore amassed through the plundering of Liberia's mineral resources for a total of around 14 years.

In view of this, the current Liberian government must take note of the claims by the chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

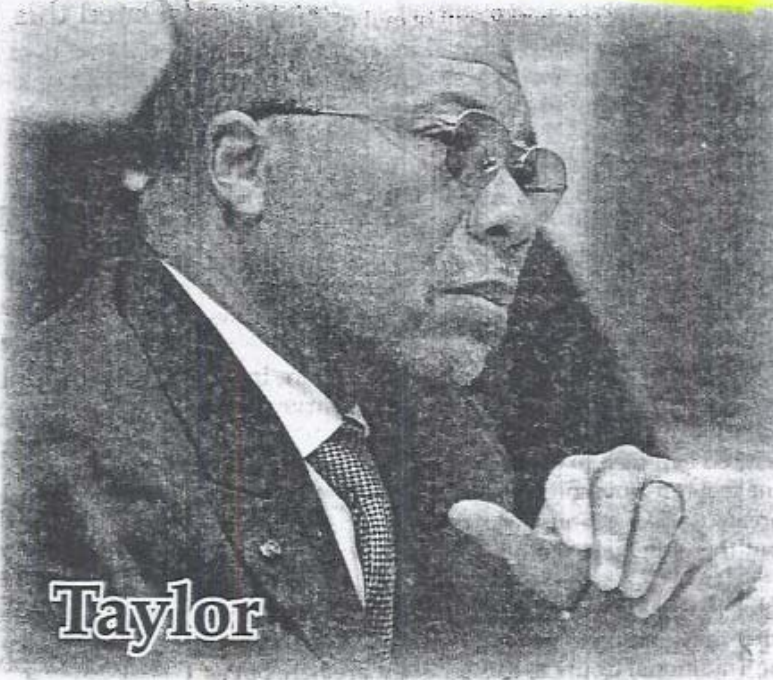
The claims by Mr. Rapp that most of the money in Taylor's accounts are for Sierra Leoneans based on information that Mr. Taylor got "several pieces" of diamonds from Sierra Leone pre-supposes that Liberia may not have claims to bulk of Taylor's ill-gotten assets thereby causing concern among Liberians.

If the Liberian government remains quiet on this matter, we are afraid that bulk of Taylor's stolen assets from Liberia would not be returned.

The government needs to firstly verify as to whether Taylor's accounts have been discovered and if this is true, then Liberia should begin to press for the return of those stolen assets to help with the reconstruction of the country devastated by a prolonged civil strife.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Friday, 2 May 2008

Taylor's US\$5b Eludes Lawyers



Sierra Leone Special Court prosecutor Stephen Rapp told journalists here Thursday that former President Charles Taylor transacted business with City Bank, a US bank, amounting to US\$5b between his two accounts at the Bank. But that amount, he said is no longer within grasp, except for an estimated US\$375m, which he transferred to other banks.

There are good prospects some of the money will be grabbed. Some could go towards the settlement of his legal fees, now paid by the Court, since Mr Taylor has claimed poverty.

"Charles Taylor had about 5bn transaction but many of those transactions were simply movements of money between these two accounts in order to maximize daily interest payments, something that happens



Page 11

Taylor's US\$5b Eludes Lawyers

with very large accounts," Mr. Rapp said at a new conference here Thursday.

"But what we have identified is at least 375m from those two accounts which went out of those accounts and that's the amount, the kind of assets we are tracking, and we will keep tracking. And of course, we are talking about accounts that were back when he was president," Rapp stated.

The Sierra Leone Special Court Prosecutor said the two accounts Mr. Taylor operated at the City Bank in New York were opened when he became President and the US\$375m could have travelled to many places by now.

"So, we are talking about money that could have travelled to many places in 2003 and during that time we didn't have the capacity to have the assistance of all countries in the world to trace that to banking institutions. And of course, people make withdrawals in cash, (but) you will not be able to do that because we are talking about those kind of sum that you don't have the capacity to withdraw large sums in cash. So, we will have records that will allow the tracing of those assets and finding eventually their destinations provided they haven't over spent, we don't think that is possible or likely," Rapp added.

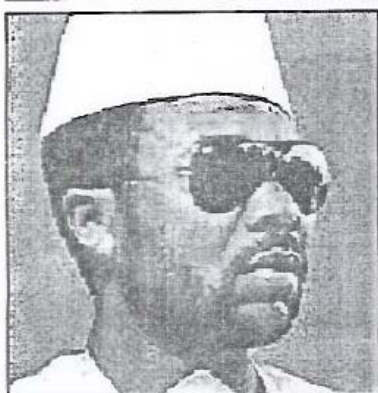
He said Mr. Taylor's accounts at the City Bank have since been closed and that the money had been moving from one country to another. He said the amounts in question are money accrued from sales of Liberian timber that could have gone towards the development of roads and the building of other infrastructure and schools.

"Our goal was to get those money for the victims of pillage in Sierra Leone, but what we have seen is that substantial amount of those were from Liberia through timber sales which could have been used for roads, schools and others but they actually went into Taylor's account," he said in an exclusive interview after the press conference.

Liberian Express (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

TAYLOR'S LAWYERS ON THE OFFENSIVE

*-As Prosecution Witness Admits To Rape, Atrocities
- Pres. Kabbah Killing of AFRC Men Triggered Invasion*



Former Liberian leader Charles G. Taylor

Defense lawyers for former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor on trial for war crimes, have contended that Liberians who fought in Sierra Leone were not under the control of Charles Taylor and that the January 6, 1999 invasion of Freetown was carried out by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC).

Defense lawyers argued that the invasion was carried out by the AFRC with no senior participation by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of the late Corporal Foday Sankor.

In seeking to diminish State witness Alimamy Bobson Sesay's credibility, Defense Counsel Anyah highlighted the witness's participation in atrocities.

Through a review of payments made by the Special Court to the witness, Anyah also implied that Sesay had a financial motive to testify against Taylor.

During re-examination of Sesay, Prosecutor Alagendra focused on links between Taylor and the RUF, and the involvement of senior RUF leadership in the Freetown invasion.

Anyah began the day by asking Sesay

about Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone. He showed the witness prosecution notes from a previous statement in which Sesay had told prosecutors that of the Liberians sent to reinforce AFRC/RUF forces in 1998 and 1999, he only knew of Special Task Force (STF) members. (According to previous testimony, STF members had part of their roots in the army of former Liberian President Samuel Doe and the anti-Taylor rebel movement, ULIMO. Sesay explained that when they

first came, he and others had assumed they were all STF, until the commander, who brought them, "053, introduced a number of them as being former fighters of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Anyah pointed to evidence from a previous witness, Perry Kamara, that the Liberians in the Red Lion Battalion were former bodyguards of Liberian RUF commander Dennis Mingo ("Superman"). Sesay said he didn't know about that and didn't dis-

pute it, but stood by his contention that Commander 05 introduced some of the Liberians as being former NPFL fighters.

Sesay repeated his testimony that a commander named "KBC", a member of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA - a term often used interchangeably with AFRC after May 1997) who had fled to Guinea with a group of SLA members in 1998, had collectively sought refuge in Liberia from

See Story on Page 7

TAYLOR'S LAWYERS

the hostile Guinean government. According to Sesay, KBC said that Charles Taylor reorganized these forces, armed them, and sent them to senior RUF commander Sam Bockarie ("Mosquito") for use in the January 1999 invasion of Freetown.

When KBC arrived he was with only three other Liberian fighters. Anyah pointed to this, and Sesay's testimony that there were about 20 former NPFL fighters in the Red Lion Battalion in seeking to diminish the prosecution contention that Taylor played a significant role in the Freetown invasion.

Sesay responded by saying that KBC told him his group had been much larger, but that they had fought in places including Kono, Magburaka and Makeni, where attacks on ECOMOG forces had been an integral part of the larger invasion plan.

Sesay said that without the rebel attacks in these places, ECOMOG would have been able to reinforce its troops in Freetown to repel the invasion force. Sesay testified that a further 50 reinforcements, some of them STF Liberians, came to reinforce the AFRC/RUF forces retreating from Freetown in the third week of January 1999.

Anyah asked why Sesay had previously only spoken of SLA/RUF fighters with this group of reinforcements, and Sesay explained that apart from the SLA, all other fighters referred to themselves as RUF once they were fighting together.

Anyah read comments from Charles Taylor at a press conference during the war, in which Taylor said that Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone were mercenaries fighting on their own.

Sesay agreed that some were in the STF, which was still officially a part of the Sierra Leone Army, but said that Liberian RUF fighters named by Anyah were not part of the SLA or STF.

He asked to add a comment about the Taylor press conference, but Presiding Judge Teresa Doherty cut him off and told him that the prosecution would have an opportunity to raise the issue on re-examination.

Anyah easily established that Sesay had no first-hand knowledge of diamond transactions between the RUF and Liberia, and had only been told about them by Superman. Sesay agreed with Anyah that this was the case, and also said he had no knowledge of diamond transactions between AFRC leader Johnny Paul Koroma and Charles Taylor.

Anyah tried to establish that the AFRC had its own reasons for invading Freetown. In answer to his questions, Sesay confirmed that there was discontent in the military under the new president of Sierra Leone, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, following his 1996 election. He also agreed that talk of a coup had circulated before the army toppled Kabbah in May 1997, but that prior to this, there had been no cooperation between the SLA and the RUF. Sesay confirmed that when the junta period ended in February 1998, there were still separate AFRC and RUF commanders.

Anyah pointed to the Kabbah government's execution of 24 AFRC (and no RUF) members in October 1998 as a main motivation for the January 1999 Freetown invasion, and cited Sesay's testimony of AFRC leader Saj Musa referencing the executions as a reason for the invasion.

Sesay agreed, but said that on the day of the executions, RUF leader Sam Bockarie had given a radio interview also citing the executions as a reason for the AFRC/RUF to invade Freetown.

Although no RUF members were among those executed, Sesay said that the Kabbah government had imprisoned RUF members, including the group's leader, Foday Sankoh. Anyah cited Sesay's testimony of Saj Musa's exhortation to his fighters that they should

invade Freetown "to reinstate the army" as a further rationale for the invasion held by the AFRC but not the RUF.

Sesay rejected Anyah's main contention that the AFRC acted alone, again stating that the invasion of Freetown was part of a larger, coordinated plan that included attacks on ECOMOG in other parts of Sierra Leone that had been led by the RUF.

In reviewing the movements of the rebel group that Sesay was part of, the witness confirmed that in the lead up to the Freetown invasion, and during the early part of the invasion, the most senior RUF fighter present had been a captain.

However, Sesay said that once the rebels opened up the central Pademba Road Prison, RUF commander Gibril Massaquoi - a major - had become active in the invasion force. Anyah underscored that it was AFRC commander Alex Tamba Brima ("Gullit") who had led the invasion force, and Gullit's requests to the RUF for reinforcement did not arrive or only arrived late.

Sesay testified again that the reinforcements faced delay by fighting in other parts of the country. He did not dispute that Saj Musa and Sam Bockarie had argued over the radio, and that Bockarie had told Musa he would not send reinforcements. However, he said that following the death of Saj Musa on the eve of the invasion, relations improved between the RUF and AFRC. Sesay testified that when RUF commander Issa Sesay arrived with reinforcements after the invasion, Gullit took orders from him for a second attempt at taking the capital.

Anyah asked the witness a series of questions about atrocities that he personally had committed. Sesay admitted to killing more than 60 civilians from 1998 onwards. On further questioning, he also admitted that he had been part of an AFRC force that opened fire on protesting students in 1997, and that his group had killed two students. Asked whether he had participated in notorious rapes on the day of the shooting, Sesay responded, "I did not rape on that particular day." Anyah asked when he did rape. He testified that in Kono he captured a young girl of about 16, kept her as his "bush wife", and raped her. Then in Freetown, he said, he also captured a girl of around 15-16, kept her as a bush wife, and raped her.

Sesay further admitted to ordering 10 year-old soldiers to amputate the arms of civilians, shooting civilians in mosques, participating in the burning-to-death of eight civilians in a house in the village of Karina, the abduction of 30 women there, the killing of one of their babies, killings of civilians in Kukuna, and looting from civilians. He testified that he participated in "Operation Pay Yourself", and "Operation Spare No Soul". Asked how he felt at the time, Sesay said he did not feel good about it. He said these were orders, and that if they were refused, there would be consequences from the commander.

Sesay angrily denied a suggestion from Anyah that he had killed one of his "bush wives" by firing an AK-47 into her vagina after suspecting her of having sex with a junior RUF member, and that Saj Musa had ordered Sesay's execution following the incident. The witness said that if he had done such a thing, he would have told the court, just as he'd admitted the other crimes. He said that the "bush wife" he abducted in Freetown had admitted to witchcraft during the retreat from Freetown and had named several other women. According to Sesay, Gullit then ordered all of these women killed, an order carried out by a commander named Keforkeh. He said that the incident happened after Saj Musa's death. Anyah suggested that a former prisoner at Pademba Road Prison, known to Sesay through shared time there, could be called to testify that there was a time when Saj Musa ordered Sesay's execution for killing his "bush wife". Sesay

said any such accusation would be a "big lie".

Anyah concluded his cross-examination of AB Sesay with a review of documents detailing prosecution payments to the witness. He suggested that Sesay was being paid by the prosecution for meals on days during the period that the court's impartial Witness and Victims Section provided him with a weekly food allowance.

Sesay said that when he was brought to court, he was not given money for food, but was provided with meals paid for by the prosecution. Anyah paid particular attention to prosecution payments during 2006, a year for which he said there were no prosecution records of interviews with the witness. Prosecutor Shyamala Alagendra noted that Sesay testified in the RUF trial in July 2006, and that many previous meetings were witness preparation sessions. Sesay said that sometimes he was called to take prosecutors to a certain location, or to find someone for them. In these cases, he said, the prosecution paid for his transportation. Anyah noted that at one point the prosecution also bought him a new mobile telephone.

Asked about his income in 2006, Sesay said that he was paid a salary by his church, had savings in the bank from his army severance that he had invested, and had business income together with family members. Anyah noted that the sum of all prosecution payments on behalf of Sesay from 2003 came to just over 1 million Leones, or about 345 U.S. dollars, and that during much of this time, the witness had his rent and many other expenses paid by the court's Witness and Victims Section.

Anyah made a request to the prosecution to check that all interview records for the witness had been handed over, and Prosecutor Nick Koumjian ensured that this would be done. After consulting privately with Charles Taylor for about two minutes, Anyah said he had no further questions for AB Sesay.

Late in the day, Prosecutor Shyamala Alagendra conducted the re-examination of Sesay. Alagendra went back through questions arising in cross-examination, and Sesay clarified parts of his testimony that were vague. He explained that by saying Taylor "had direct hands in the AFRC/RUF", he meant that Taylor had threatened Sierra Leone just before the war started, that Mosquito confirmed support for Taylor, and that he had been present himself in a meeting with Taylor when he confirmed his support for the AFRC/RUF.

He said this was why, when he and others from the West Side had been summoned to Liberia, they believed that Taylor would be able to mediate between the RUF and AFRC.

When read back the quote from Charles Taylor raised by the defense, to the effect that Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone were acting on their own, Sesay disagreed. He said that while some Liberians in the STF had been under the control of the Sierra Leonean government, such people as Isaac Mongor, RUF Rambo, and Superman had been sent by Charles Taylor.

Alagendra also sought to counter the defense argument that the AFRC and RUF were separate organizations, with the former being almost solely responsible for the January 1999 invasion of Freetown. Reading a BBC report in which Sam Bockarie said that he had around 5,000 troops, Alagendra asked which troops Bockarie included to get that number. Sesay said it was the AFRC and RUF. In response to additional questions about ammunition deliveries he saw, Sesay recounted hearing talk within the RUF and AFRC ranks that these had come from Liberia, and had been ordered by Charles Taylor.

At the end of the day, Alagendra reviewed a list of RUF commanders that Anyah had cited to show that none of the senior members had been part of the

invasion force that took Freetown in January 1999.

Sesay described roles of various commanders in the Freetown invasion, despite their absence. He said that Sam Bockarie gave Gullit the order to burn Freetown, that there had been constant communication with Issa Sesay, who eventually arrived with reinforcements, and that Superman had also been in frequent communication with the invasion force. He did not know of any role played by Morris Kallon.

Meanwhile the trial chamber will observe Dutch holidays for the remainder of the week and remain adjourned Monday, May 5.

UNMIL Pledges

165 military observers (MILOBs) and Staff Officers of various nationalities serving in the UN Mission in Liberia, (UNMIL).

Ambassador Løj said that even though UNMIL has embarked on the first phase of its drawdown plan, the Mission will remain committed in its support and assistance to the Government and people of Liberia, so that further progress can be achieved in the areas of Security Sector reform, Rule of Law reform, Governance, Economic Development, and the effective implementation of the newly-completed Poverty Reduction Strategy, PRS.

Explaining the important role that the medal recipients played in work of the Mission, Ambassador Løj, stated, "Our staff officers are the principal advisers to the Force Commander and work within the Force Headquarters to help direct all the military operations".

She said, "These tasks enable our diverse peacekeeping units, out in the field, to undertake the complex and multifaceted duties we assign them."

Staff Officers are military and enlisted personnel possessing knowledge and skills in the fields of personnel administration, intelligence, military operations, logistics, civil military operations, communications, training, engineering, medicine, public information, legal and military justice.

The UN Envoy described the military observers as the eyes and ears of the Mission across the country, providing senior management with regular assessments on security and public order, movements across the country's borders, community disputes, weapons collections and socio-economic assessment.

In remarks, Chief of Staff, UNMIL Forces, Brig.-Gen. Emmanuel Quist, commended his colleagues for their dedication and professionalism. "The Staff Officers and Military Observers in spite of all odds and difficulties have worked tirelessly and have always come up with the desired results and expectations."

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
THE LATE



Jeffrey Jingo Burch

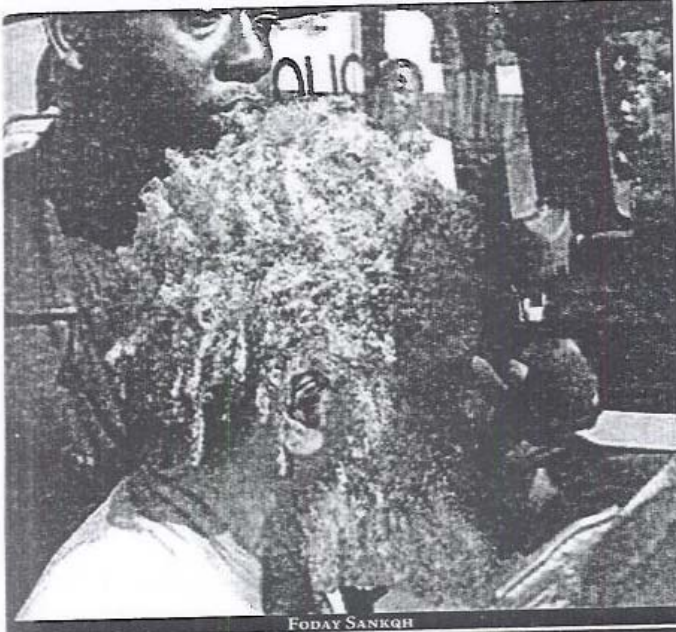
Born: 19th April 1964
Died: 27th April 2008
Buried: 29th April 2008
Funeral: 30th April 2008
Place of Burial: St. Peter's Church, Freetown

The Burch family wishes to announce the death of their son, Jeffrey Jingo Burch, who passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 27, 2008, at the age of 43, after a long illness. He was born on April 19, 1964, in Freetown, Sierra Leone. He was a loving father, a devoted husband, and a kind friend. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Burch, and their children, Jeffrey and Jingo. The family will receive friends at their home, 123 Main Street, Freetown, on Thursday, April 29, 2008, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. A funeral service will be held at St. Peter's Church, Freetown, on Friday, April 30, 2008, at 10:00 AM. Interment will be in the family plot. Condolences may be expressed to the family at the home. The family wishes to thank the medical staff of the Freetown General Hospital for their care and support.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

Sankoh Lived Here

Tubmanburg Witness Tells TRC



FODAY SANKOH

Tubmanburg outside Monrovia was the home of the late Sierra Leone rebel leader Foday Sankoh, where Mr Charles Taylor, also then rebel leader, frequently visited Mr Sankoh, a resident of the town has told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Mr Taylor is on trial for his alleged backing of Sierra Leone's rebel.

Tubmanburg, May 30, 2003 (TRC): A witness told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the late Sierra Leonean rebel leader Corporal Foday Sylvanus Sankoh was based in Tubmanburg, Bomi County in 1990 before launching an incursion in neighboring Sierra Leone. Mustapha Nyei, 60, told the TRC Wednesday before fighters of Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked the Bo Waterside frontier to launch their incursion in Sierra Leone. **Page 10**

Sankoh Lived Here

Leone, Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters were transported from Robertsport City, Grand Cape Mount County to Tubmanburg to be briefed by Corporal Sankoh.

A TRC release quoted Mr Nyei as saying following the briefing, the fighters boarded three pickup trucks for the Sierra Leonean border at Bo Waterside where they launched an invasion. "Foday Sankoh was based here in Tubmanburg. That was no secret around here. When Taylor came here he stayed here with Sankoh for nine days and everyone saw them here," the witness explained.

He said RUF fighters based in Robertsport and Tubmanburg Cities were under the command of General Oliver Varney and other commanders he only named as: "One Man One," "CO Korto," and one Dixon Wollo.

Mr. Nyei said at regular intervals Sankoh left his Tubmanburg base to visit his RUF fighters in areas occupied by the group in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor is standing trial in The Hague for crimes against humanity allegedly committed in neighboring Sierra Leone where Sankoh was a rebel leader. Corporal Sankoh himself died in prison while standing trial for war crimes at the United Nations backed War Crimes Court in Freetown.

New Vision (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

What Are Taylor's Crimes?

...Special Court Reveals, 50 Journalists End Int'l Training



Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor is presently in The Hague before Her Honor, Justice Julia Sebutinde charged and prosecuted for war crimes and crime against humanity. But what are the specifics for which Taylor is being judge? The **NEW VISION** looks inside the docket Special Court for Sierra Leone and pieced together the specificity of Taylor's crimes.

Referred to as Charles Ghankay Taylor otherwise known as Dankannah Charles Ghankay Taylor or Dankannah Charles Macarthur Taylor, Mr. Taylor was with crimes against humanity, violations of Article 3 Common to Geneva Conventions and of addition protocols II and other

serious violations of international humanitarian law, in violation of Articles 2,3 and 4.

According to the second amended indictment issued against Mr. Taylor, the accused "by his acts or commissions in relation to events described below pursuant to Article 6.1 and or alternatively Article 6.3 of the State [of the Special Court for Sierra Leone] is individually criminally responsible for terrorizing the civilian population."

Count one of the second amended indict, copies of which were distributed by court actors who facilitated a recent workshop for the coverage of Taylor's prosecution convened in Monrovia alleged that Mr. Taylor committed Acts of Terrorism, which is violations of Article 3 Common to Geneva Conventions and

of addition protocols II and punishable under Article 3.d of the Statute.

Mr. Taylor was also charged with "unlawful killings" which crime was described as "murder" in Count two of the indictment-a crime against humanity; Count three charged him with violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of a person which is common to Article 3 Common to Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II; while Taylor is also charged with Sexual Violence which in Count four include rape, in count five involved sexual slavery and which count six describes as outrages Upon personal dignity a violations of Article 3 Common to Geneva Conventions and of

Cont'd on page 6

What Are Taylor's

addition protocols II.

Taylor was also charged with physical violence under which the indictment Count seven say is violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of a person in particular cruel treatment, a violation in count eight referred to as other inhumane acts.

Mr. Taylor, according to the indictment's count nine conscripted children under 13 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities which the indictment considers another serious violation of international humanitarian law, while he is also accused of abduction and force labor which under Count ten borders on enslavement of peoples, looting under Count eleven and other individual criminal responsibility committed by his acts or by omission.

Signed by the prosecutor Stephen Rapp, and dated 29 May 2007, the second amended indictment discussed the specificities of the accusation and the laws under which the acts are punishable.

Accordingly, Count One explains, "Members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), AFRC/RUF Junta of alliance and/or Liberian fighters including members and ex-members of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), assisted and encourage by, acting in concert with under the direction and/or control of, and/or subordinate to the accused burned civilian property and committed the crimes set forth" as part of a campaign to terrorize the civilian population of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The Indictment also provides that between 30 November and about 18 January 2002, members of the RUF, AFRC, AFRC/RUF Junta or alliance and/or Liberian fighters assisted, under the direction of and/or encouraged and subordinate to Mr. Taylor engaged in widespread destruction of civilian property by burning various towns in Kono District [between about 21 December 1998 and about 28 February 1999].

Towns burned by the fighters, according to the indictment, include Koidu, Tombodu, Njaima Sewafe, Wenedu and Bumpé. The fighters also between about 21 December 1998 and about 28 February 1999 burn Freetown and Western Area in various locations, including and eastern Freetown and the Fourah bay, Uppun, State House, Calaba Town, Kingtom and Pademba Roar areas of the city as well as Hastings, Godwerich, Kent, Willington, Tumbo, Waterloo and Benguema in the West Area.

On the unlawful killings, members of the RUF, AFRC, AFRC/RUF Junta or alliance and/or Liberian fighters assisted, under the direction of and/or encouraged and subordinate to the accused unlawfully killed an unknown number of civilians between about 30 November 1996 and about 18 January 2002 in areas such as Kernema districts, Kono Kailahun, Freetown and West Area, while the same groups or fighters

during the same period committed widespread acts of sexual violence against civilian women and girls in Kono, Kailahun, Freetown and West Area amongst other allegations of physical violence, child soldier, abduction and force labor, looting and individual criminal responsibility.

Meanwhile, 50 Liberian and Sierra Leonean journalists have ended three-day training on the reporting of the trial of Former Liberian President Charles Taylor. The international training which runs from the 26-27 of April was organized by the Advocates for International Development in partnership with the International Center for Media Studies and Development in West Africa (INCEMSADWA).

Serving as keynote speaker at the opening ceremony Information Minister Dr. Laurence Bropleh said the training has a widespread implication.

He stated that is not the job the journalists' job to opionate stories while discharging their reportorial duties. Rather he said it is the responsibility of the journalists to report the facts. Dr. Bropleh urged the journalists in the Country to leave their opinion out of a story they publish or air.

The Information Minister admonished the journalists to be analytical and yet not to be opinionative, saying that Liberian journalists are to lead the lives they change to produce their best outmost result, to command higher salary, and to live up to high standards among others, which values he noted could be achieved if the practitioners by effective capacity enhancement.

He said during the formation of the poverty reduction strategy, the Ministry of Information underscored the need for media actors to be strengthened and developed.

For her part, the Executive Director of the Advocate International Aid, Afua Hirsch, spoke of reports that Liberians do not have access to the trial of former President Charles Taylor.

Madam Hirsch stated that senior journalists and editors in Liberian and Sierra Leone have a crucial role in imparting information about the trial of the Liberian former President and also Sierra Leoneans.

She added that the training was intended to assist journalists from the both countries to present an objective and balanced picture of the trial by the Special Court for Sierra Leone through their reportage.

Also speaking was the Executive Director of the International Center for Media Studies and Development in West Africa, Josephus Gray, who said the process was about training journalists for the coverage of Special Court trying former President Charles Taylor. Mr. Gray admonished the participants to go back and share the knowledge they have acquired to their reporters as to assist build their skills not only for the Special Court's trial of Mr. Taylor but also for their career advancement.

He said out of the 50 journalists who attended the international training thirty five were from Liberia while fifteen came from Sierra Leone. The

New Vision (Liberia)

Thursday, 1 May 2008

Opinion

OPINION

Journalism Training On Charles Taylor Trial Is laudable

OVER FIFTY West African journalists from Liberia and Sierra Leone last week gathered in the Liberian capitol, Monrovia, to gain insights into criminal proceedings in general, particularly the War Crimes trial in The Hague of ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor.

THE TRAINING BROUGHT together a panel of distinguished journalism trainers and lawyers with wealth of experience in criminal trials. The program was organized by the United Kingdom Advocates for International Development (A4ID), in collaboration with the West Africa media rights group, International Centre for Media Studies and Development (INCEMSADWA) with funding from the Open Society Initiative of the Soros Foundation Network Media Program based in the UK.

SINCE THE ARREST and prosecution of Mr. Taylor on charges of War Crimes allegedly committed in neighboring Sierra Leone there has been a substantial expansion in public and media attention to such criminal proceedings. The peoples of both Liberia and Sierra Leone, mainly war victims are anxious to know the outcome of a trial that has drawn so much international media attention.

THE ATTEMPTS TO offer justice to victims of war crimes are one of the bright spots of our age. Most journalists — who are the people most likely to witness war crimes, other than the perpetrators and their victims are under increasing pressure from the public for information and analyses regarding the administration of justice in the ongoing trial.

WE BELIEVE THAT one of the primary goals of a criminal trial is to ensure an accurate determination of the facts in a criminal case. Journalists from the two countries are under social and professional obligations to justify the confidence repose in them by the organizers of the three days international media training program to objectively, balance and fairly report on the trial in The Hague.

WE APPLAUD THE organizers- Advocates for International Development (A4ID) and the West Africa media rights group, International Centre for Media Studies and Development (INCEMSADWA) for realizing the importance of media reporting in informing the public on such criminal proceedings that allows public scrutiny of the trial.

WE THINK THAT the training was an eye opener and will put journalists from both countries in the position to remove their biases and personal feelings from the case and better help the public make informed decision regarding the trial of Mr. Taylor.

THE PARTICIPANTS WILL be held personal responsible if they fail to justify the confidence repose in them by sharing their experiences, expertise and knowledge with their colleagues in the newsrooms and adequately inform the public in both Liberia and Sierra Leone on the Taylor trial by reporting unbiased.

WE SAY THANK you A4ID, Thank You INCEMSADWA and also thanks a million to Open Society Initiative of the Soros Foundation Network Media Program based in the UK for supporting the training exercise.

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New Vision (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

Yeaten Smashed Babies Heads

..Opened Pregnant Women's Guts; Survivor Explains Ordeal

A survivor of the Mahel River Massacre in Bomi County said Charles Taylor's government militiamen under the command of General Benjamin Yeaten smashed the heads of scores of babies and disembowel pregnant women during the killings. Moses Bridge, 77, said the fighters mutilated the dead before dumping their bodies in the Mahel River.

He was testifying Monday before commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission at ongoing rural public hearing in the auditorium of the C.H. Dewey High School in Tubmanburg City, Bomi County. Mr. Bridge said those massacred were transported from Tubmanburg City under the pretense of evacuating them to Monrovia for relief supplies and safety.

He said three truck loads of civilians were transported one after another to the Mahel Bridge where Yeaten and his men were awaiting them. "After the empty truck returned to

Tubmanburg after carrying the first batch of people I saw blood stains all over the vehicle and suspected that our people had been killed by General Yeaten and his men."

Following the returned of the truck, Bridge explained dozens of others including him and his wife boarded the truck headed again for the Mahel.

At the Mahel River Bridge, the witness explained, the fighter responsible to carry out the slaughter first singled out his wife to disembark from the truck.

Drawing the emotion of the audience, he said his wife bided him farewell saying, "I know I am going to die

so goodbye. Remember we promised each other that only death will do us apart."

Mr. Bridge explained that after saying those words, the fighter carrying out the killings shot his wife in his presence before mutilating her body.

He said the fighter then asked him: "you see what happened to that woman," and he responded in tears: "that is my wife you have just killed." Following the verbal exchanges with the fighter, Bridge said he requested that he wanted to say his last prayer, but the fighter responded: "we are not here for God business."

He said he was then asked to sit on the rails of the bridge and was pushed by another fighter into the river accompanied by hails of gunfire. He said he successfully evaded



Gen. Benjamin Yeaten

Cont'd on page 6

Yeaten Smashed

the bullets and swam to the fringes of the river where he witnessed the execution of hundreds of people all night.

The witness said the heads of dozens of babies were smashed on the bridge while the guts of the pregnant women were opened by the fighters. The next day after the killings, when I came from my hiding place, the entire surface of the water and bridge were covered with blood.

The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations, review the history of Liberia, and put all human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1979 to 2003 on record. The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation.

The ongoing rural public hearing in Bomi County is being held under the theme: "Confronting Our Difficult Past, For A Better Future." The Chairman of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) says although the TRC process is difficult and painful, it is necessary if Liberia must transcend the bitter past and move ahead with its national development agenda.

Counselor Jerome Verdier said if Liberians ignore the past and the massive human rights violations associated with it, they will be ignoring the victims of such abuses and perpetuating national bitterness, hatred and nursing the appetite for revenge.

"Experience has taught us that indeed truth telling fosters healing and true confession helps to restore ones humanity and foster individual and collective reconciliation," Cllr. Verdier said.

Mr. Verdier was speaking Monday at the C. H. Dewey High School Auditorium in Tubmanburg, Bomi County where he officially declared opened the TRC Public Hearings in Bomi County.

He said the process of acknowledgement and contrition has proven justified for a nation grappling with the challenges of transforming itself from war, dictatorship and oppression to peace and democracy.

Verdier: "When we speak of peace, we mean enduring peace which will last till eternity going beyond the peace agreement and laying foundations for acknowledging and accepting the past and co-existing in harmony as one people and nation."

He urged Liberians and members of the international community to continue to support the TRC and never loose hope of Liberia's great potential to succeed in its national development endeavors.

The commission, he said, should be judged as a whole by its programs and processes, its successes and failures and the commission itself should never compromise with or be compromised by the conduct of any of its member which casts aspersions on its work or undermine the integrity of the commission as a whole.

"Each commissioner of the TRC was publicly vetted and chosen to serve on his or her own merit and as such we must be judged or evaluated based on our actions, conduct and the contents of our characters. As a whole, the commission must be balanced in its perspectives and reflect the true aspirations and diversities of our society.

It must be freed of individual or partisan interest and impartial in its collectivity. This is the posture we have and will maintain as an independent body to justify the high honor and integrity you have reposed, and justifiably so, expect of us," he said.

Chairman Verdier said the foundation of the new Liberia

must be the rule of law saying Liberians may ignore the law, violate the law, misinterpret the law or even be ignorant of the law but must never put themselves above the law. To do that, he said, is impunity as impunity is an impediment to social justice, national development and peace.

"Today, in our new social and political order, there should be no room for impunity; it must be buried with the relics of the past. We all should be subjects of the law and not its masters. We should do what the law says and obey the orders of the courts even when we disagree or feel it is against our intrinsic interest," Mr. Verdier said.

He said no orderly society will succeed without respect for the rule of law and the cherished institutions charged with administering and enforcing it. Verdier said it is time Liberians deal with the fears that reside in our national character. He said fear is a national scourge adding many a time people are afraid to speak out for many reasons which lead to compromising the truth and supporting impunity, thereby harming the society.

"When we permit fear to overcome us we sacrifice the good of society over its ills," he added.

He urged Liberians to be fearless as a people and speak out against the ills of the past and present.

The TRC, the chairman said, provides the opportunity to be bold and fearless, overcoming fear with good and fearing nothing but to do wrong.

The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations, review the history of Liberia, and put all human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1979 to 2003 on record. The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation.

The ongoing rural public hearing in Bomi County is being held under the theme: "Confronting Our Difficult Past, For A Better Future."

A witness told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the late Sierra Leonean rebel leader Corporal Foday Sylvanus Sankoh was based in Tubmanburg, Bomi County in 1990 before launching an incursion in neighboring Sierra Leone.

Testifying Wednesday at the ongoing rural public hearing of the TRC in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, a resident of Tubmanburg, Mustapha Nyei, 60, said former president Charles Taylor then leader of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) visited Sankoh at his base in Tubmanburg in 1990.

He said before fighters of Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked the Bo Waterside frontier to launch their incursion in Sierra Leone, Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters were transported from Robertsport City, Grand Cape Mount County to Tubmanburg to be briefed by Corporal Sankoh.

Following the briefing, Nyei explained the fighters boarded three pickup trucks for the Sierra Leonean border at Bo Waterside where they launched an invasion.

"Foday Sankoh was based here in Tubmanburg. That was no secret around here. When Taylor came here he stayed here with Sankoh for nine days and everyone saw them here," the witness explained.

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Cities were under the command of General Oliver Varney and other commanders he only named as: "One Man One," "CO Korto," and one Dixon Wollo.

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Mr. Taylor is standing trial in The Hague for crimes against humanity allegedly committed in neighboring Sierra Leone where Sankoh was a rebel leader.

Corporal Sankoh himself died in prison while standing trial for war crimes at the United Nations backed War Crimes Court

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The Monitor (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

HRW wants perpetrators account for war crimes

See Story on Page 6



The Monitor Newspaper, Wednesday, May 1, 2008

war crimes

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has emphasized the importance of accountability for past human rights violations, and is also encouraging the government of Liberia to develop a strategy for prosecuting those allegedly responsible for the most egregious crimes.

The group said given the persistent weaknesses in the Liberian justice system, international support is very likely to be necessary to ensuring justice for these crimes.

The group in a letter addressed to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations recently called on UN envoy to take the issue up with Liberian authorities during discussions with representatives of Liberia's government and civil society organizations.

The letter stated:

"Accountability for War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity: As you are well aware, Liberia's two armed conflicts (1989-1996 and 1999-2003) were characterized by the commission of widespread and systematic violations of international humanitarian law".

"The gravity of these abuses — massacres, mutilations, sexual violence, the recruitment and use of children as soldiers — have been tragically illuminated during the ongoing public hearings of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)."

It is not clear whether the Secretary-General raised the concern of the international acclaimed human rights group with Liberian authorities during his meetings with them.

But meeting with authorities according to an Executive Mansion release, the Secretary-general expressed concern over what he referred to as the persistent scourge of rape among the population as well as sexual abuse and exploitation by UN personnel.

He said the UN will continue to take stern measures to curb such acts, which contravene all that the World Body stands for.

The UN's most senior diplomat also expressed regrets that rape continues to be the most commonly committed crime in Liberia. He

called on community and government leaders as well as traditional chiefs, elders and prominent Liberians to take the lead in combating the scourge of rape and other acts of sexual and gender based violence.

Commenting on the situation in neighboring Ivory Coast, HRW recalled that the Security Council has unequivocally rejected impunity for serious crimes like those committed in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

The group recalled the Secretary-General's remarks to the "Sixth Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, peace and justice do indeed go "hand in hand."

"As such, Human Rights Watch hopes you will maximize the opportunity presented by your meetings next week to not only discuss the role justice plays in consolidating the still fragile peace and stability in both countries, but also to take meaningful and concrete steps to ensure that this commitment to victims of horrific atrocities and to the consolidation of peace moves from rhetoric to action", the letter concluded.

Strike action

but to our utmost surprise only supervisors were given loan leaving the tappers out entirely."

He continued that the buying rate for a ton of rubber is US\$45 and was reduced last year to 18 dollars without prior notice.

The spokesman further said that another issue was the provision of two bags of rice each for the tappers but that is yet to materialize.

He frowned on a new policy introduced by management that has drastically reduced the number of their dependents attending school, noting that the first policy introduced allowed most of their kids to attend but with the introduction of the new policy, only few kids are in school while the rest are paying school and medical fees.

Bieh also spoke the dire need for safety gears for tappers working at the plantation.

He added that there are attempts by the management to meet some of their demands, but the main one which is according to him the most important one, is yet to be resolved.

"We have not yet received our loans. The

Daily Observer (Liberia)
Thursday, 1 May 2008

www.liberianobserver.com

Babies' Heads Smashed, Pregnant Women Disemboweled

- Witness Bridge at Bomi TRC Hearings

A survivor of the Mahel River Massacre in Bomi County said Charles Taylor's government militiamen under the command of General Benjamin Yeaten smashed the

heads of scores of babies and disemboweled pregnant women during the killings. Moses Bridge, 77, said the fighters mutilated the dead before dumping their bodies in the Mahel River.

He was testifying Monday before commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) at ongoing rural public hearings in the auditorium of the C.H. Dewey High School in

Tubmanburg City, Bomi County.

Mr. Bridge said those massacred were transported from Tubmanburg City under

See pg 10



Babies'

the pretense of evacuating them to Monrovia for relief supplies and safety.

He added, that three truck loads of civilians were transported one after another to the Mahel Bridge where Yeaten and his men were awaiting them.

"After the empty truck returned to Tubmanburg after carrying the first batch of people, I saw blood stains all over the vehicle and suspected that our people had been killed by General Yeaten and his men."

Following the return of the truck, Bridge explained, dozens of others including himself and his wife boarded the truck headed again for the Mahel.

At the Mahel River Bridge, the witness explained, the fighter responsible to carry out the slaughter first singled out his wife to disembark from the truck.

Drawing the emotion of the audience, Mr. Bridge said his wife bade him farewell saying, "I know I am going to die so goodbye." Remember we promised each other that only death will do us part."

Witness Bridge explained that after saying those words, the fighter carrying out the killings shot his wife in his presence before mutilating her body.

He said the fighter then asked him: "You see what happened to that woman," and he said he responded in tears:

"That is my wife you have just killed."

Following the verbal exchanges with the fighter, Bridge said he requested that he wanted to say his last prayer, but the fighter responded: "We are not here for God business."

He said he was then asked to sit on the rails of the bridge and was pushed by another fighter into the river accompanied by hails of gunfire. He said he successfully evaded the bullets and swam to the fringes of the river where he witnessed the execution of hundreds of people all night.

The witness said the heads of dozens of babies were smashed on the bridge while the guts of the pregnant women were opened by the fighters.

"The next day after the killings, when I came from my hiding place, the entire surface of the water and bridge were covered with blood."

The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations, review the history of Liberia, and put all human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1979 to 2003 on record. The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation.

The ongoing rural public hearing in Bomi County is being held under the theme, 'Confronting Our Difficult Past, For a Better Future'.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 6 May 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

President Sirleaf Returns Home Healthy - Speaks to Several Topical Issues

(The Inquirer, The News, The Analyst)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf yesterday returned home from the United States of America, after almost three weeks of absence from the country. The Liberian leader was heartily received back home by a cross section of her government officials, officials and members of the ruling Unity Party as well as Liberians from all walks of life.
- Shortly upon her arrival late yesterday evening, the President addressed the press on a wide range of national issues, ranging from issues of armed robbery; increment in the price of petroleum; the last Friday's judgment of the Criminal Court "A," acquitting retired General Charles Julu and Col. Andrew Dorbor among several others.
- On the issue of an increase in the pump price of petroleum products and other basic commodities on the market, the President said the issue was a global matter but however, a national solution needed to be found in addressing it.
- She said while away, she was in constant contact with the relevant government agencies and functionaries that are responsible in addressing price issues on the market, stressing that she was in control of the situation.
- President Sirleaf said some of these increment like for example, the issue concerning the petroleum products, were necessary to avoid shortage on the market.

IMF Opts for Refined Goals to Reduce Poverty in Liberia

(The Inquirer)

- [sic] Following a week-long visit to Liberia by a team of International Monetary Fund (IMF) experts, Fund Mission Chief, Robert Powell, has argued that to help reach the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) goals, the authorities involved should refine the costing of PRS measures.
- He said donors should align their commitment with the PRS priorities at an early stage, saying, "The Fund supports the PRS through the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility." Powell described his visit as successful. Speaking at a news conference over the weekend, Mr. Powell explained that the government and the mission have agreed on the importance of ensuring that the budget for fiscal 2008/09 be in line with PRS priorities.

Findings in Bribery Case due to be released today

(Heritage, The Inquirer, New Democrat)

- Following months of internal investigation into a bribery scandal involving five lawmakers findings into the bribery probe at the lower house are due to be released Tuesday to the plenary. Recommendations in the report would be debated by the full plenary to determine the fate of those involved in the alleged bribery.
- The Inquirer said unconfirmed reports emanating from the House Judiciary Committee suggest that the committee is expected to recommend some tough actions to be taken against some of the accused based on their respective roles played.
- Former Speaker Edwin Snowe last year accused five of his colleagues of bribe taking to remove him as speaker, a claim the men constantly denied.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

Rehabilitation of Monrovia-Buchanan Highway to be Delayed

- Star Radio has gathered that the rehabilitation of the Monrovia-Buchanan Highway will not start until 2010.
- Our sources attributed the inability of the project to start this year to several factors. One of the factors according to our sources, is the in-coming rainy season.
- Another reason provided by our sources is inadequate raw materials needed for effective road-building. According to our sources, the huge rock deposit discovered near Barclay Farm in Margibi County has been sufficiently drained down and could run out of stock.
- The Monrovia-Buchanan road rehabilitation project is one of the major undertakings by the Chinese Road Construction team, CHICO. The project which covers Tubman Boulevard and Somalia Drive is financed by the World Bank.

Community leader suggests use of Ex-security Personnel to Fight Crime

- A local community leader says he would use the expertise of de-activated security personnel to fight criminal activities in his community. The Chairman of the Telecom Community in Paynesville said the inclusion and cooperation of the ex-officers would assist in making the community peaceful.
- He told Star Radio a peaceful community encourages investment and development. Mr. Fayiah said residents of the Telecom community have agreed to embark on a monthly clean up campaign to keep the community clean. He however, appealed to the municipal authorities of Paynesville and NGOs operating in the area to support the efforts.
- Mr. Fayiah also said owners of vacant lands would be encouraged to provide land for the construction of commercial latrines in the community. He assured the community members that proceeds from the latrine project would be used for community development. Mr. Fayiah spoke following his induction as head of the Telecom Community. Other officials inducted in office included James Fallah, Co-chairman and Jallah Saygbay, Secretary of the community.

AWOL Soldiers Begin Returning to Base - Says Defense Minister

- The Defense Ministry says some soldiers who fled the barracks have begun to return following weeks of absence. Defense Minister Brownie Samukai said the soldiers returned to their base at the Edward Beyan Kesselly Military Barracks on the Monrovia-Harbel Highway.
- Mr. Samukai however, did not state the exact number of soldiers who returned. The Defense Ministry last month announced that at least twenty soldiers of the restructured army left the barracks without authorization.
- Mr. Samukai spoke to Star radio following a close door hearing at the House of Representatives on the draft Defense Act. He called for the passage of the draft Act as it provides the legal basis of the Armed Forces of Liberia.
- Although the draft Defense Act has not been made public, it calls for measures to professionalize the armed forces.

Truth FM *(News monitored today at 2:00 pm)*

Lawmakers Passed Armed Robbery Bill

- The Houses of Representative has passed the proposed legislation seeking to make armed robbery and other violent crimes non-bailable offenses. The bill was submitted to the lawmakers in an effort to curb the reported increase in armed robbery.
- At same time, some armed robbers have surrendered to the Police while a manhunt is on for more dangerous criminals.

- Police today arrested several criminals in the vicinity of the Freeport of Monrovia and forwarded more than 20 of them to court for prosecution.
