

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



Registrar Herman von Hebel administers the Solemn Oath to Justice Jon Kamanda during the swearing-in ceremony this morning. See more photos in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Wednesday, 7 November 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 7 November 2007

Justice Jon Kamanda Sworn in as Appeals Judge

Justice Jon Kamanda, a Judge of the Sierra Leone Appeals Court, was sworn in today as Justice of the Special Court's Appeals Chamber.



Justice Kamanda was appointed by the Government of Sierra Leone. Under the Statute of the Special Court, three of the five Appeals Chamber Judges are appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and two are appointed by the Government.

He replaces Justice Geoffrey Robertson, QC, who resigned in August.

The Solemn Declaration was administered by the Registrar of the Special Court, Herman von Hebel, in the presence of Special Court Judges, staff, invited guests and journalists. The Declaration was witnessed by Attorney General and Minister of Justice Serry Kemal, and by Victor de Angelo,

the Executive Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Justice Kamanda trained as a Barrister at the Inns of Court School of Law in London, and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. From 1976-80 he worked as State Prosecutor in the Government Law Office, rising to the rank of Senior State Counsel. In 1980 he entered private practice in criminal law.

He was elected to Parliament in 1982 and was appointed Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources. In 1985 he became Minister of Health.

From 1987-92 he served as Deputy Managing Director of the National Diamond Mining Company. Justice Kamanda has served as an Appeals Court Justice in the Sierra Leone judiciary since 2004 and is the Presiding Judge in criminal appeals. He is also a High Court Judge in the Civil Division.

Appeals are currently pending before the Court in the case of The Prosecutor vs. Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kano (the AFRC case) and in the case of The Prosecutor vs. Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa (the CDF case).

#END

Awoko

Wednesday, 7 November 2007

'Genocide is preventable' - Lawyer Beckley

By Ophaniel Gooding

"I believe that prevention of genocide is not an idealistic [thing]...it is possible," said legal practitioner and human rights advocate Jennifer Nellie Beckley, yesterday, as she explained her perception about the just concluded Global Conference on the Prevention of Genocide.

Lawyer Beckley, who represented Sierra Leone at the International Young Leaders Forum which conceived the Global Conference in Montreal, Canada, explained that she made numerous contributions at the forum, adding that "most of my contributions were based on my personal experience during the civil conflict in Sierra Leone, and also to a certain extent my views and perception about genocide and its possible prevention."

"One of the positive aspects of the conference," she said, was that "it focused on preventing genocide [rather

than impeding it after it occurrence.]

The young lawyer explained that, "the conference was unique in so many ways, as it deals with ways and means of eradicating genocide all over the world."

She emphasized that, "genocide is preventable," adding that in all the genocide that had occurred, they had been preceded by early warning signs, which if they had been tackled would not have degenerated to a situation of genocide."

Sighting the Rwanda case, she said, "one such warning signs was the issuing of identity cards, which stated the ethnicity of the holder." This, lawyer Beckley continued, "enable

polarization in Rwanda." She explained that the media added insult to injury by fueling the

polarization which retrogressed to genocide.

The lawyer noted that "...it is believed that if these radio stations had been barred it would have prevented the genocide."

Lawyer Beckley explained that youth leaders of the forum had taken upon themselves to ensure that they actualized what was being deliberated in the conference, adding that they came up with a declaration: 'Responsibility to Prevent' which states:

"Our origins, lives and beliefs are divers . We are young and we have all been impacted by genocide in different ways. We come together to move our world away from a culture of reaction toward a culture of prevention. "Genocide is a man-made evil, not an inevitable calamity. Although it is often masked by war, each instance of genocide is preceded by identifiable signs of early warning. Genocide is

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'Genocide is preventable'

From Page 2

foreseeable and thus preventable. "History shows us the cycle of genocide. Ideologies of hate and exclusion combine with violence. The absence of accountability and justice makes genocide a cost-free policy for those who perpetrate it. Denial and silence about past atrocities foster further hatred, laying the foundation for genocide to repeat. This cycle can and must be broken.

"Together we can act before lives are lost. We can build a global society that promotes prevention long before the need for reaction. By this declaration, we hold

ourselves accountable to fulfill our responsibility to prevent.

"We bond into a network, which undertakes that:

"Where a society is legitimizing the ideologies of exclusion, we will support initiatives that promote respect, inclusion and common humanity. Through our network, we will use and share our knowledge and experience, working alongside local youth.

"Where a society is at risk of genocide, we will support existing initiatives to deploy resources immediately on all levels, before violence escalates. We will work, in

particular, with the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide.

"In the aftermath of genocide, we will promote recognition and empathy, justice and accountability. We will seek out those who were not complicit in genocide and share their example to reinforce a culture of prevention.

"Our commitment is not limited by time or place. Our success will be measured by atrocities that do not occur. Our goal is a world without genocide.

We cannot succeed alone. We ask that you hear us and join us."

Agence France Presse

Tuesday, 6 November 2007

UN helicopter may have been shot down in Liberia: report

MOSCOW (AFP) — A UN-chartered helicopter that crashed in northern Liberia last week, killing three Russian crew members, may have been shot down, a report said Tuesday.

"One of the favoured explanations is that of gunfire from the ground, insofar as numerous cylindrical impact marks were found on parts of the helicopter," said an official from Russian-based UT Air, which operated the helicopter, cited by Ria Novosti news agency.

According to the official, meteorological conditions were good that day.

But Ben Malor, the spokesman for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) told AFP that "any suggestion, until the investigation is complete, is a mere speculation."

In a statement UNMIL said "it has no evidence to indicate that any foul play was involved."

UNMIL on Monday said all three crew members aboard the MI-8 helicopter carrying relief food that crashed Friday were Russian.

Investigations have been launched to determine the cause of the accident which took place on a Nimba county rubber farm, some 265 kilometres (165 miles) northeast of the capital Monrovia.

"Until the findings of the investigation are made known, it is too early to speculate on the causes of the crash," said UNMIL.

The UN announced it had grounded all MI-8 helicopters until further notice.

UNMIL fields 14,000 UN peacekeeping troops and 1,200 police force members in the war-ravaged West African country where it deployed in 2003 after ex-leader Charles Taylor stepped down from office.

Taylor's resignation under international pressure paved the way to an end to the 14-year brutal civil conflicts which claimed some 270,000 lives.

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 November 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Response to Media Reports Alleging Helicopter Was Shot Down

UNMIL Statement 6 November 2007 - The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has become aware of a report in the Russian News and Information Agency, Novosti, claiming that the UNMIL cargo helicopter which crashed near Ganta last Friday was hit by gunfire. The Mission wishes to state that it has no evidence to indicate that any foul play was involved. An extensive investigation, under the leadership of the Liberian Civil Aviation Authority (LCAA) and the UNMIL Aviation Safety Unit, is under way. International aviation experts from the UN and Russia, including the Senior Management Team of UT Air, the owners of the aircraft, and representatives of the Russian Interstate Aviation Committee are also expected in Liberia in the next few days, to assist with the investigations. Until the findings of the investigation are made known, it is too early to speculate on the causes of the crash.

UN helicopter may have been shot down in Liberia: report

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International Clips on West Africa

Fighting FGM from Mosque and Pulpit

Fulgence Zamble

Abidjan, Nov 06, 2007 (Inter Press Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --In certain parts of Africa, female genital mutilation (FGM) has been linked to religion, with Muslim communities

mistakenly believing that the practice is a religious requirement. But in Cote d'Ivoire, religion is also being put at the service of fighting FGM.

Local Media – Newspaper

President Bush Honors Liberian President

(The Inquirer, Heritage, The Forum, Daily Observer and The Analyst)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom at a White House ceremony in Washington, DC. The honour is America's highest civilian award.
- Making the presentation Monday, U.S. President George Bush lauded the efforts of the Liberian leader in improving the lives of her people. The United States, President Bush said, is proud to stand with Liberia, describing the Liberian President as a woman of courage and a giver of hope.

UNMIL Identifies Crash Victims

(The Analyst, The News, New Democrat and National Chronicle)

- The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has confirmed the identities of the three crew members who died in a UN helicopter crash on Friday near Ganta, Nimba County.
- In a statement issued on Monday, UNMIL identified the three as Vitali Drozdov (age 42), Pilot in Charge; Sergey Kolosov, Co-Pilot (age 53); and flight engineer, Nikoli Zhoriko (age 58). Accordingly, the next-of-kin of the deceased have already been informed about the development.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss and the leadership of the mission on behalf of the UN extend their heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families and friends of the three men.

Norway to Build Millennium Development Villages in Liberia

(The Analyst, The News and The Informer)

- The Government of Norway has disclosed plans to support the establishment of two Millennium Development Villages in Liberia. A millennium village seeks to end extreme poverty by working with the poorest of the poor, village by village throughout Africa.
- It is in partnership with governments and other stakeholders, providing affordable and science-based solutions to help people lift themselves out of extreme poverty.
- The Executive Mansion said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is happy about Norway's decision as she has been soliciting the country's support in this regard.

500 AFL Recruits Commence Training Next Week

(The Informer and Heritage)

- The Commanding Officer in Charge of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Maj/Gen S.A. Abdurrahman has disclosed that the second batch of AFL recruits are expected to commence military training next week.
- Speaking Monday at the 20th meeting of the ECOWAS Chiefs of Defense Staff, General Abdurrahman said the process constitutes 500 recruits reflecting the country's ethnic and cultural diversities.

Vice President Boakai Calls for a new Military Culture

(Heritage, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Analyst, The News, New Democrat and The Forum)

- The media reports that the Vice President of Liberia, Joseph Boakai has called for a new culture within the military of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which must be firmly rooted in the rule of law and respect for democratic institutions and processes.

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

Vice President Boakai Calls for a new Military Culture

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

Grand Kru Senator Decries Deplorable Road Condition

- Correspondents said that Grand Kru County Senator Blamo Nelson deplored the bad roads which have already hampered about 70,000 people of the County. He contended that although President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf had instructed the Ministry of Public Works to recondition the Pleebo-Barclayville road, the Ministry was yet to act supposedly due to the lack of experts on the part of the Ministry.

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

Liberians React to President receiving Award from America

- In a Radio Veritas interview, some Liberians said that they were not interested in the Presidential Freedom awarded on Monday to President Sirleaf by United States President George Bush, instead they needed improvement in their lives, citing as an example of hardship, the high exchange rate between the Liberian and United States dollars. But other Liberians welcomed the honor bestowed on the President and were proud of the good work she is doing to rebuild the Country considering that everything cannot be done in a day's time.

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

District in Lofa Embarks on Self-Help Electrification Project

- Lofa County Foyah District Representative Eugene Fallah Kpakiah announced that the District will shortly benefit from electricity and that an extensive work was underway with the erection of light poles and bulbs along the streets, awaiting the installation of a 65 KVA generator provided by the Lands, Mines and Energy Ministry.

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

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

BBC Online

Wednesday, 7 November 2007

Serbia war crimes tribunal opens

The trial of Serbian ultra-nationalist leader Vojislav Seselj has opened at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

Mr Seselj denies the charges of murder, torture and the persecution of Croats, Muslims and other non-Serbs during wars in Bosnia and Croatia in the 1990s.

He has said he will rely on a political defence and use the tribunal to show there is a conspiracy against Serbia.



Mr Seselj surrendered to the court in February 2003

His Serbian Radical Party (SRS) is the biggest party in Serbia's parliament.

Dressed in a dark suit and flanked by two guards, Mr Seselj showed no emotion at the start of his trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

'Bellicose nationalism'

In her opening statement, prosecutor Christine Dahl accused the former close associate of the late Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic, of making several inflammatory speeches calling for the creation of a "Greater Serbia".

She said hundreds of people were tortured and killed by Serb forces, who had been recruited or indoctrinated by Mr Seselj.

Ms Dahl then told the story of a Muslim woman who was raped by Serbs and whose husband and two young children were killed.

"The destruction of her community, her life, her family exemplifies the product of the belligerent, bellicose nationalism propagated by the accused," she told the tribunal's three judges.

“ **The destruction of her community, her life, her family exemplifies the product of the belligerent, bellicose nationalism propagated by the accused** ”

Prosecutor Christine Dahl

Both he and Milosevic planned to "ethnically cleanse" large parts of the former Yugoslavia, Ms Dahl alleged, "but while Milosevic would not dare call aloud for the liberation of Serb territory, Seselj would, and did".

Mr Seselj, who like Milosevic is acting as his own lawyer and displays contempt for the court, does not deny making nationalist speeches, but insists they do not constitute war crimes.

"I am being tried for atrocious war crimes that I allegedly committed through hate speech as I preached my nationalist ideology that I am proud of," he said at a pre-trial hearing.

"I have no other involvement in these crimes except for what I said or wrote."

Mr Seselj's trial began a year ago, but was almost immediately stopped when he went on a hunger strike for 28 days to push various demands, including that he be able to defend himself.

The ultra-nationalist leader surrendered to the ICTY voluntarily in February 2003, vowing to clear his name of three charges of crimes against humanity and six counts of war crimes, including persecution, deportation, murder and torture.

Other key war crimes suspects, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his military chief, Gen Ratko Mladic, remain at large.

Milosevic died in detention in The Hague in March 2006 before his war crimes trial ended.

Political rhetoric

The BBC's Nick Hawton in Belgrade says Mr Seselj still has influence over political developments in Serbia.

MPs from his party turn up to parliamentary sessions wearing t-shirts or badges with his face emblazoned on them.

The SRS may not be in power, but political stability in Serbia is fragile and with the sensitive issue of Kosovo still to be resolved and a presidential election expected in the next two months, the party could benefit from the trial of their leader, our correspondent says.

Serbian state television has agreed to broadcast substantial parts of the trial, which is expected to last for about a year.

Many people will watch, either for the political rhetoric that Mr Seselj is sure to produce, or for the colourful and dismissive language that he employed in many of the pre-trial hearings, our correspondent adds.



1954: Born in eastern Herzegovina

1984: Jailed for criticising Communists

1990: Sets up Serbian Radical Party (SRS)

1991: Elected to Serbian Assembly

1993: Forces dissolution of

1999: Resigns as vice-president in

2002: Stands in Serbian presidential elections

2003: Indicted by UN war crimes tribunal

2007: War crimes tribunal opens at The Hague

Profile: Vojislav Seselj

Voice of America

Wednesday, 7 November 2007

Uganda Rebels Plead for Forgiveness, Draw Mixed Reaction

By Peter Clotney
Washington, D.C.

Uganda Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels' plea for forgiveness for atrocities committed during more than 20 years of insurgency has received mixed reactions from victims of the war. While some of the victims want the rebels to be forgiven for the sake of peace, others claim they should be severely punished for the atrocities committed against innocent civilians in northern Uganda. But the rebels say their consultation process as part of the third agenda item of peace negotiations is on course.

The rebels are in Gulu mainly to canvas local opinion about what kind of justice people want the rebels to undergo. Many of the LRA's victims have reportedly said they would happily forgive rebel leader Joseph Kony if he makes peace.

David Matsanga is the deputy leader of the rebel's peace delegation and the technical advisor on ICC matters. He tells reporter Peter Clotney that the rebels are committed to finding a lasting peace to the violence in northern Uganda.

"Our consultations and mobilization of the stakeholders have started today in Uganda, and our first meeting was held in Gulu. And it is the first point of call of this 21-year conflict. We are very pleased with the reception that we got. The questions that people asked were very encouraging. And generally, we have come here to seek peace for our country, and that is why our delegation has come down here -- to consult, to get views, to mobilize the people for a bigger conference in Ri-Kwambga," Matsanga noted.

He admitted that both the rebels and the government are tired of the conflict that has long affected the population of northern Uganda.

"You should know that this war has taken 21 years, and after 21 years, definitely, people get tired on both sides. And we hope that the Uganda government is aware that this war should not continue at all. We should all seek this peaceful resolution of the conflict and have this matter resolved once and for all. And we shall continue to consult in all areas of Uganda," he emphasized.

Matsanga explained that under the third agenda item, described as accountability and reconciliation, both sides agreed to accept complicity for the lengthy armed conflict.

"Both sides in the conflict agreed that both sides are accountable. Uganda government is accountable for its part that it played. The LRA also agreed that it would be accountable for its part. You should know that this conflict was not fought only by one side. That is why people are consulting, to put ideas together to see what is the best alternative means of justice. What is the best way to solve this conflict so that it does not resurrect again?" Matsanga asked.

He dismissed as speculation news that the LRA's second in command, Vincent Otti, is dead, adding that it is an attempt to undermine the peace process.

"I think one problem that we have as human beings is speculations and idle talk. The speculations that are going round the world are baseless, are useless and they don't help the peace process at all," he said.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 6 November 2007

EU Looks to Further Tighten Blood-Diamond Trade

The European Union is hosting a meeting this week to assess the progress in eradicating conflict diamonds - illicitly traded diamonds that have fuelled a number of wars across Africa. From Paris, Lisa Bryant reports that despite strides, conflict diamond experts say more needs to be done.

The Brussels diamond meeting marks five years since the start of the Kimberly Process - a global watchdog group that includes the European Union and aims to stop the flow of so-called conflict or blood diamonds.



AP Photo
European External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner hailed the progress made since the start of Kimberly in 2002. She said diamonds are no longer a rebel's best friend - referring to warlords who have used the jewels to fuel conflicts in such African countries as Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. And the diamond industry, which has been accused of being opaque, revealed its production figures this year for the first time.

But despite strides in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Annie Dunnebacke, a campaigner for the London-based watchdog Global Witness says more needs to be done.

A valuer counts diamonds at the government diamond export office in Freetown, Sierra Leone (file photo)

"In many countries, especially in many African countries, we are seeing an increase in official diamond exports and that is a very good sign," said

Dunnebacke.

"Unfortunately, on a global scale, we are also seeing an increase in illicit flows of rough diamonds that are being trading outside the Kimberly process. So we are really hoping that this week, the K.P. [Kimberly Process] with the E.C. [European Commission] chair addresses these weaknesses. But also that India - which is the incoming chair - continues to address them effectively next year," she added.

During the Brussels meeting that ends Thursday, participants will try to strengthen existing controls against the flow of illicit diamonds. The 27-member European Union is a Kimberly Process member - and 80 percent of rough diamonds end up in the Belgium city of Antwerp, where they are finished.

Belgian media reported last weekend that police had seized \$20 million worth of diamonds believed to have come from Ivory Coast, which has been torn by conflict in recent years. The country faces an international embargo against exporting diamonds.

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