

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



Rusting World War II-era guns point out to sea from Kingtom.

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:

Tuesday, 8 August 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

Local News

SLPP To Resolve Norman Issue / <i>New Vision</i>	Pages 3-4
ICRC Holds Second Moot Court Competition / <i>Standard Times</i>	Page 5
Transitional Justice Systems in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Pages 6-23
Will Charles Taylor Spill the Beans? / <i>Standard Times (Freetown)</i>	Page 24-26

International News

Sierra Leone: Moot court competition in international humanitarian law / <i>ICRC</i>	Page 27
Illicit Diamond Trade Used by Hizballah and Others / <i>CNN</i>	Pages 28-29
UN Will Act Vigorously to Security Threat - Alan Doss / <i>The Inquirer (Monrovia)</i>	Pages 30-31
Ivory Coast President Says He Will Not Step Aside in October / <i>Voice of America</i>	Page 32
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 33-36

Special Court Supplement

Edward Wilmot Blyden / <i>Sierra Leonean Heroes</i>	Pages 37-38
-----------------------------------------------------	-------------

New Vision
Tuesday, 8 August 2006

SLPP to Resolve Norman Issue

By Sadio Toniasola

The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) held an extraordinary meeting over the weekend after the announcement of the date for the next Presidential and Parliamentary Elections now slated for July, 28, 2007.

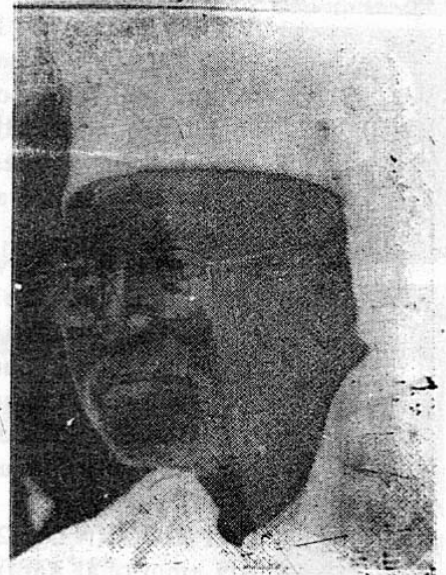
This meeting was very broad

-Wife, Son Attend Meeting

based even though held behind closed doors at the party's national secretariat. And in attendance, apart from very many selected influential party stalwarts from all over the country; was the youthful and charming wife of Chief Sam Hinga Norman, as well as his son.

"My husband (Chief Norman) says he has no problems with the SLPP as a party per se; but with certain people within the

Contd. Page 10



Chief Sam Hinga Norman

SLPP To Resolve Norman Issue

party," Mrs. Norman told the well attended meetings, as the National Chairman, Alhaji U.N.S. Jah, the Secretary General, Jacob Jusu, Saffa, the Publicity Secretary, Victor, Reider, all looked on with keen interest.

National Cry for Norman

Speaker after speaker; particularly those from the provinces and especially from the South and East of this country raised concern about the continued incarceration of the former Deputy Defense Minister, Chief Sam Hinga Norman at the UN Special Court of Sierra Leone.

It was resolved unanimously at the said meeting that the Hinga Norman issue will be resolved very shortly to the satisfaction of all; a decision that was applauded by the entire crowded room of SLPP stalwarts who breathed a sigh of relief.

More Work Ahead

According to Mr. Brima of Fourah Bay College; a lecturer in the Department of Anthropology, "we have a lot of ground

work to do in the SLPP", adding that... "we are all happy that the Hinga Norman issue will soon be resolved... besides, we have made it clear that we need funds through registration of members, partly dues and other food fund raising ventures to enforce us sail through to victory in the April 28, 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections that will be very crucial to the future of this country"

"Speaking on behalf of lecturers and teachers all over the country"; the lecturer continued, "I can assure you that continuity with Berewa is our choice; as any new comer, be it PMDC or APC would spend the next five years wastefully on commission of Inquiry and vindictiveness"

He concluded by saying that "Not only that; they will derail all what the present Government has achieved in terms of development with international support... Do we need to start all over again,"?

Standard Times

Tuesday, 8 August 2006

ICRC holds 2nd moot Court Competition

BY ABU BAKARR KARGBO

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with the support of the Special Court in Sierra Leone will be organizing the second Sierra Leone student competition in international humanitarian law.

The event, according to ICRC's communication delegate Philippe Stoll, is aimed at promoting international humanitarian law in general and with Sierra Leone's academic circles in particular.

The competition, will take place today Tuesday 8th

August 2006 at the Special Court, will involve five teams of students from various universities.

"Each team will have to argue a case based on fictitious events resulting in a humanitarian crisis. They will be judged on their abil-

ity to use international humanitarian laws", Stoll said.

He revealed that the winning team will represent Sierra Leone at the Sixth International Moot Court competition scheduled to take place in December this year in Arusha, Tanzania.

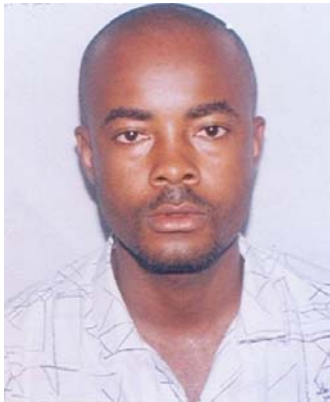
Awareness Times
 Monday, 7 August 2006
 Commentary

Transitional Justice Systems in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone

By Ibrahim Badamasi Kamara (pictured below)

Historical Chronology

Sierra Leone's past ugly experience of war has claimed the lives of thousands whilst hundreds were mutilated. A war characterised by grave violation of human rights. A violent and senseless war, which today has exacerbated the sufferings and poverty stricken conditions of this tiny former British West African Colony. A War which had left Sierra Leone in a bettered state of economic degradation.



Just like most other conflict countries of Continental Africa, the Sierra Leonean civil war has been attributed to host of factors and from a historical perspective suffice it to say that the interplay of bad governance and deteriorating economic conditions were among the key causes of our conflict which started on the 23rd of March 1990.

After the attainment of independence in 1961 from British Colonial domination and exploitation, Sierra Leone went through a transition into a one party system of government in 1978. A one party political system readily dictated by the prevailing international dynamics of the cold war, the quest for African Unity and the apathy against Western exploitation which that country had once suffered from. That one party political system was characterised by political marginalisation and nepotism. A 'one partism' in which liberal political participation criticisms and alternate views became a missing link. A dispensation where Political Elites and academics were seen as target by such government leading to several imprisonment and exile.

One where guarantees and respect for the fundamental rights and dignity of the people was conspicuously absent with the institution of draconian laws and mechanisms aimed at ensuring submission to state authority.

The judiciary for example (which ought to be the residuum of justice) was under the whims and caprices of the one party executive. As a result political opponents were frequently accuse of 'stage-managed' treasonable offences leading to several execution in the 23 years of One Party Rule.

Also became evident in that Post-Colonial One Party System was a corrupt patrimonial system that catered alone for the Capital's population needs, while neglecting the general citizenry especially the rural poor. This disparity in turn, generated a deep mistrust of the rural population on their government and across the country side several political agitations for reform were brutally suppressed. The people of Sierra Leone had suffered a lot from decades of political marginalisation, corruption and mismanagement perpetrated.

So that by the latter part of the 80's the vices of corruption and scism had permeated all sectors of the Sierra Leonean society and this lead an eventual breakdown of state institutions like the police, civil service, the private sector, the army, amongst others. By the year 1991 the State corridors were wide opened for trafficking of arms and ammunition and drugs, all of which eroded national security and facilitated crime within Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone by 1990 was like a powder keg, and it only needed a spark to let the Country into a great upheaval of unquantifiable loss. This small, underdeveloped Country of West Africa, at that material moment had harboured all the flammable elements necessary to ignite a civil wars if not a violent revolution. War was seen by many analysts as a last resort to re-establish of a new order. A new order of democratic pluralism, social justice and viable economic development.

In March 23, 1991 the Revolutionary United Front lead by a former Army Junior, Corporal Foday Sankoh, mounted a first offensive against the government of Sierra Leone from neighbouring Liberia with the support of Charles Taylor (the former president of Liberia) who had nurtured grievance against the Sierra Leonean government by then for creating a base for ECOMOG. A base which Taylor himself saw as an attempt to forestall his ambition of marching through the Capital of Monrovia, Liberia.

At the initial start, the RUF rebellion succeeded in attracting a broad spectrum of support from the rural population. Unemployed and marginalised youths of the rural part voluntarily joined in the RUF rebellion. This huge support of the rural youths enabled the RUF to overrun principal diamond districts of Sierra Leone making it almost impossible for government to finance the war and at the same time providing the basic needs of loyal fighting forces and the country at large. This and other factor lead to an eventual Military Coup in April 1992 which ousted the one party government.

After this successful bloodless coup, a new political order was established in Sierra Leone under the National Provisional Ruling Counsel lead by an Army Captain, Valentine E Strasser. The RUF still continued their rebellion despite several attempt at negotiation.

It was at this point in time it became realized by most people and the international community that such a rebellious group was a disguise, because since their primary objective was to get rid of the one party government and now such government has been overthrown, fighting still continued. Questions began to be posed as to the rationale for continuing the rebellion. It became realize that the RUF only wanted absolute power and would not recognised and would not negotiate with any government. This brought about a decline in the rural sympathy and association with the RUF. Consequently, the support which the RUF had acquired in the rural areas became significantly reduced.

In response to the existing hostile atmosphere, the RUF resorted to the use of terror, committing large scale atrocities against innocent civilian population including women and children. Such terror was used as a war strategy to ensure submission and they thought by doing so it becomes easier to march in to the Capital City, Freetown.

That Military Junta as a result mobilize local community support in areas adjacent to the RUF controlled territories through the formation of Civil Defence Units. These individualistic units (at district levels) were to assist the army in pursuing the rebels because they were more familiar with terrain . To a large extent they succeeded in overrunning RUF basis.

Throughout the period of the Junta rule i.e. between 1992-1996 the RUF succeeded in committing large scale atrocities against innocent civilians and narrative stories still linger in the minds of victims and communities.

With the help of the International Community especially the United Nations, the US and UK a transitional plan was framed from Military Rule to Democratic Multi-Party System of Government and in 1996 general elections was conducted and the Junta was succeeded by the now ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP).

The RUF still continued fighting, targeting and unleashing terror on innocent civilians

As part of a transitional plan, a peace map was drawn known as the Abidjan Peace Accord of 20th November, 1996. This accord did not materialize due to insincerity of government and the recalcitrant nature of the RUF. It was at this stage of virtual failure that we experience large scale atrocities and mutilation of arms and limbs of women and children (more than ever before). Both sides of the conflict- the Government paramilitary forces known as the Kamajors and RUF in the struggle for supremacy committed large scale atrocities and destruction of property.

Thus, the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party, in a reaction to past political marginalisation and also (now) the RUF rebellion, created a paramilitary force called the Kamajors who were mainly drawn from the party's political stronghold of the South and East of Sierra Leone. This Armed group was intended to entrench them in power for years to come irrespective of prevailing circumstances.

The Kamajors, as an armed group of ruling party supporters became hostile to the Constitutional Army. An army which they had long ago nurtured grievances for its loyalty to the ousted One Party government. Such hostility led to large scale confrontation resulting into loss of lives and destruction of property. Subsequently government reacted by arming the Kamajors more than the Army. Later it was proposed that the Kamajor paramilitary forces was to replace the Army. This implies that the entire Army was to be disbanded.

As a result the Army reacted by ousting the Ruling government in May 1997. This led to a temporary exile of the President of Sierra Leone, Ahmed Tejan Kabba. After that Coup a Junta government was established called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) under the leadership of Major Johnny Paul Koroma who is now a fugitive.

In response, the Kamajor Pro-Government Faction with the support of their exile government in Guinea mounted an offensive brutality against innocent civilians- women and children- including those suspected of having family ties with army officers. Also a form of ethnic cleansing came into light as those who failed to speak the native language of the political elites of that ousted government were brutally killed and maimed. Such ethnocentrism though visible in the conflict was not in any way comparable in magnitude to that of states like Rwanda and Yugoslavia.

The coup of May 25, 1997, we had three factions in the conflict in Sierra Leone- the RUF, AFRC and Government forces. Before the final Lome Peace Accord large scale and systematic violation of rights of innocent civilians had been committed by all factions and it is due to these crimes that there is now in existence transitional justice

mechanisms to address human rights violations and also ensure that perpetrators are made accountable for their acts.

Crimes Committed in Sierra Leone

The almost 12 years of conflict in Sierra Leone was characterised by savage display of weapons against innocent civilians with great disregard of international law and morality.

One could recall those ugly incidents of brutal and barbaric act of fighting factions. Acts of large scale murder; mutilation of arms and limbs of women and children; Rape of girls as young as 10. Crimes of forceful conscription of children below 15 years into fighting forces. Women and children were used sex-slaves in the conflict

One could recall those event of indiscriminate bombing of concentrated civilian settlement by Nigerian and Kamajor government back forces; one could recall the Nigerian bombing of Central Freetown (known as PZ) and the Mabala incident which claimed the lives of hundred of people. One could look back at those violent times when individuals were burnt alive by opposing sides of the conflict. Those pathetic days when there was no food to eat and families were starving to death. Days when Sierra Leoneans torn each other apart in the struggle for political supremacy.

In the rural interior of Sierra Leone one can now see the remains of houses and public infrastructure. Families who have lost their dear ones. Families who have to start afresh to rebuild their lives with little to live by. I believe that never again would they wish to go through such an experience.

These ugly events after the war was what precipitated the establishment of transitional justice mechanism mainly the Special Court for Sierra Leone(SCSL) and The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which represent two of the most significant machinery in our post-conflict transformation.

Transitional Justice Systems

In societies where violent conflicts had ended there is need to address and attempt to heal divisions which arises as a result of human rights violations. There is the need to heal the wounds of individuals and society in general. There is the need to provide justice to victims and making perpetrators becoming accountable. A need to create an accurate account of what happened for future reference which generations would learn from. A need to restore the rule of law. A need to create and reform existing institutions that promote democracy and the rule of law. A need to ensure that human rights violations are not repeated. A principal way to achieve such is through the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms.

From an academic point of view, transitional justice is a process of establishing judicial and non-judicial measures that addresses wrongful acts of conflict. It means in simple terms a process that enables society to correct its past and reintegrate former adversaries whilst fostering the rule of law.

Now that the war is over, Sierra Leone has lived up with the expectation of addressing the root causes of war, and impunity. With the support of the United Nations, the UK, US and the wider world community there are two principal institutions

established aimed at actualising the objectives of our post-conflict transitional strides. As mentioned earlier these two are the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. With the establishment of these institutions, perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity are now made to account for their act.

One may now proceed firstly with the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

THE SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE

Following the signing of the Lome Peace accord in 1999 between the Government of Sierra Leone and the fighting factions including the Kamajors, the AFRC and the RUF, it became glaring that crimes perpetrated by fighting forces would not go 'unredress' according to international law. This was restated in series of discussions held at the UN headquarters and other international platforms. This mean in effect that the Amnesty granted to former fighting factions under the Lome Peace Accord is limited in so far as international law is concerned. Individuals as well as groups could be brought to justice and made accountable for atrocities committed under international law.

In that respect the Special Court was established between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. This Court came about through a request by the President of Sierra Leone in June 2000 to the United Nations Secretary General indicating the need for establishing a UN backed tribunal. After subsequent discussions the United Nations Security Council by virtue of Resolution 1315 adopted on August 14, 2000, requested the UN secretary General to enter into negotiations for the creation of a court to prosecute for "crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and to try those "persons who bear the greatest responsibility" for these crimes.

On the 16th of January 2002, U.N. and the government of Sierra Leone signed an agreement that created the legal framework for the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), an independent court administering both International and Sierra Leonean law. Subsequently in March 2002, the Sierra Leone Parliament passed an act implementing this agreement into law.

The Special Court is a mix international tribunal administering both International and Sierra Leonean law. According to article 2 of its statute the Court could prosecute persons who committed the following crimes as part of a widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population including: Murder; Extermination; Enslavement; Deportation; Imprisonment; Torture; Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and any other form of sexual violence; Persecution on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds;

Other inhumane acts. The Special Court is also prosecuting persons who committed or ordered the commission of serious violations of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the Protection of War Victims, and of Additional Protocol II thereto of 8 June 1977. Accused are tried for :

Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment;
 Collective punishments;
 Taking of hostages;
 Acts of terrorism;
 Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;

Pillage;

The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgement pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples;

Threats to commit any of the foregoing acts.

Also according to article 4 of the Statute the Special Court prosecute persons who committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law like:

Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;

Intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations

Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities.

Furthermore according to article 5 of the Special Court Statute it prosecute persons who have committed the following crimes under Sierra Leonean law. These are as follows:

a. Offences relating to the abuse of girls under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, of 1926 (Cap. 31). These include:

- i. Abusing a girl under 13 years of age, contrary to section 6;
- ii. Abusing a girl between 13 and 14 years of age, contrary to section 7;
- iii. Abduction of a girl for immoral purposes, contrary to section 12.

Offences relating to the wanton destruction of property under the Malicious Damage Act, 1861: These include:

- i. Setting fire to dwelling - houses, any person being therein, contrary to **section 2**;
- ii. Setting fire to public buildings, contrary to sections 5 and 6;
- iii. Setting fire to other buildings, contrary to section 6.

Indictees

Presently there are thirteen accused persons facing trials before the Court. Three RUF members, three Kamajors (CDF), three AFRC and recently the former President of Liberia, Charles . In totality there are thirteen indicted persons including two RUF deceased and one fugitive known as Joney Paul Koroma who was the leader of the AFRC. The Court is presently trying ten accused persons.

Structure of the Court

The Special Court which is based in Freetown became fully operational in 2003. It has certain inbuilt structural mechanism that ensure the proper administration of justice, and fair trial for accused persons. These are principally the Management Committee, the Registry, Chambers, Prosecution section and the Defence section.

The Management Committee

The Management Committee is the highest administrative decision making body of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. It assist the Court on questions of funding, administration and other non-legal matters. It includes representatives of the Sierra Leone government and the United Nations as appointed by the Secretary General.

The Registry

The Registry, headed by the registrar is responsible for those functions which support the Court process as a whole. The Registry is responsible to provide administrative support to sections in the Court. These include the finance, personnel and procurement sections; information technology section; the general service section and security section; the Court Management Section; the Witness and Victims Support Unit; and the Detention Facility. In addition the Registry is the official channel of communication of the Court and consequently a public affair office and an outreach section that provides information about the Court to the international community and to the people of Sierra Leone.

The Chambers

The Special Court has two Chambers i.e the trial and appeal chamber. There are two Trial Chambers created to ensure expeditious trial. Each of the trial chambers has 3 judges sitting at a moment. There is an appeal chamber of five judges. These vast array of judges are recruited on the basis of experience and proficiency in the law through consultation between the government of Sierra Leone and the United nations.

The Prosecutor's office

One of the primary objective behind the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone is to prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility for crimes committed in Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. In that light the office of the Prosecution (OTP) was created. The OTP investigate and developed prosecutorial strategies. In it investigations the OTP developed several network amongst population more especially victims of atrocities. Investigative teams are frequently deployed in the provincial areas where these crime were largely committed and occasionally abroad to interview sources and witnesses and collect evidence including financial evidence.

An important legacy of the OTP division of the Special Court is that through it investigative work in collaboration with the Sierra Leone police and those seconded from that institution the human resource base of these personnel has been greatly improved through exposure into modern training relating to criminal investigation witness management . This without exaggeration helps in the building up of skills crucial to any functioning justice system. This would further help in our transitional period after the court ends it operation.

In addition the human resource capacity of local Sierra Leonean staff in prosecution department is being improved upon through contemporary training and court practices in the prosecution of cases.

The Defence Office

One must state that at the initial process of establishing the Special Court there wasn't much idea in place to ensure that accused persons defence is coordinated. The role of the Defence was inadvertently ignored throughout all the early stages. The Defence office only became operational in February 2003.

However, it became recognised that to ensure fair trial and equitable administration of justice the Defence Office should be created. The Defence Office is more or less regarded as the forth pillar of the Court and is an innovation in International Criminal Court Systems. It ensures compliance with the human rights principles that adversarial trials must manifest the cardinal principle of equality of arms. As a matter of fact while other international tribunal have administrative bodies to deal with the defence of accused persons, none have a permanent institution within their structures entrusted with ensuring that the rights of suspects, like the Special Court's Defence Office.

The Defence Office is headed by a Principal Defender, next is the Deputy Principal Defender, a Defence Advisor and Three Duty Counsel, together with administrative support staff.

Functions of the Defence Office

There are several functions associated with the Defence Office, all geared towards ensuring adequate representation and protecting the accused rights.

Selection and Payment of Defence Counsel

The Defence Office recruit and pay for individual lawyers to defend the detainees. In this regard, the Defence Office created a list of those counsel interested in appearing before the Court who fulfilled the requirements of excellence in either domestic criminal law or international criminal law. Each defendant is represented by a team of lawyers. Each team has a legal assistant and an investigator. It is instructive to note that this also assist in creating a legacy from the Special Court, by providing local lawyers with knowledge of international criminal law that they limitedly possessed.

Representation

The second task of the Defence Office is to represent accused persons at stages where for whatever reason they are without representation. For instance, where a defence team either withdraws due to professional difficulties or their services are no longer required, the Defence Office is able to stand in.

Also on occasions when assigned counsel has been unavailable to attend court, the Defence Office have been able to step in through its duty counsel, hereby preventing unnecessary delay in the trials.

Detention issues

The Defence Office also advise on detention issues. Because of the immediate proximity of the detention facility the Defence Office plays an active role in negotiating with the detention staff (as and when situation arises) in order to ensure that no problems arise in the treatment of the prisoners.

Provision of materials and literature

Also the defence office is responsible to provide legal materials and literatures as and when requested by accused persons.

Plenary session

The Court organised plenary session before the commencement of the respective trials. These plenary sessions are designed to carve out the manner in which trials are to proceed. The Defence Office presenting arguments before the Plenary Session of the Court in respect of any outstanding issues that helps in adequate representation of accused persons.

Adequate Facilities for the Preparation of the Defence

Defence Office ensures that there are adequate facilities for the preparation of the defence. In basic terms the Office provides litigation support for the defence teams. This includes provision of office space, computing facilities and other assistance that can be given by Duty Counsel and other staff in the office.

Recruitment and training of defence investigators.

The Defence Office also assist in the recruitment and training of defence investigators. Whilst the choice of individuals who can undertake investigations for each team is clearly a choice of the defendant and the lawyers involved, under the contract system the candidates are required to have certain qualifications before they will be approved for payment, giving the Defence Office the chance to prevent some of the difficulties that have occurred in previous tribunals whereby family members are often recruited to investigate.

The Defence Office also conducted training programme for investigators, in order to explain the legal process and enhance skills that are necessary for adequate investigations.

Research

The Defence Office is also able to assist with legal research in detailed areas of law and procedure, both through the staff and also by the provision of legal research teams in universities around the world.

Outreach

Comparatively, one of the criticisms of the tribunals of other post-conflict societies like Rwanda and the Former Yugoslavia is that, by virtue of the fact that they are not based in the country of conflict, the people of the country feel very distanced from the justice that is being done in their name. Reports of the hearings are limited to key events. In Sierra Leone the situation

is very different. Because the Court is based in our country where the conflict took place, it is the main news story and everyone has an opinion. Defence Outreach team are better placed to meet with the people explaining to them developments in the trials of accused persons and also important concepts of international criminal law.

Legacy

The Special Court is only in Sierra Leone for three years, and is keen to leave a lasting legacy for the people of the country. The Defence Office has also contributed as a section that provides legacy to the Sierra Leone. It plays an instrumental role in developing training programmes mainly in the field of education, human rights and international law for lawyers, law students and civil society who would in future contribute in strengthening legal and administrative institutions of the state.

The Defence Office has organised training programmes together with other agencies such as the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales. These have included detailed courses on international humanitarian law early on in the life of the court, which enabled members of the Sierra Leone Bar to enhance their knowledge of this area of law. The Defence Office has also undertaken advocacy training with law college students and junior members of the Bar.

The Defence Office has experience placements and short internships for Sierra Leonean students. This helps to prepare individuals for future undertakings in this post-war recovery times.

There are other equally important subsets of the Court as mentioned earlier. They include:

The Witness and Victims Support Unit (WIVS) which helps in the preparation of witness of both the prosecution and defence.

There is the detention facility section where detainees are kept and personnel in that section provides security and maintenance of accused persons.

There is also a transport section responsible to provide vehicles as and when needed by staff for purposes connected with the Court.

Thus, one may submit that the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone is an important milestone in addressing our post-war transitional objectives and international obligations. It signals that there are no longer sacred cows. It also points to the fact that whatever one's position and status in the state the rule of law must prevail. The Special Court has pointed out that violent revolution aimed at terrifying civilian population should not go unpunished. It also signals that prophecies of defending the state cannot be used as a pretext to frustrate the fundamental human rights of the individual. For it is a cardinal principle of law that to carry out the object of the law it must be construed so as to avoid to do or doing in an indirect or circuitous manner that which it has been prohibited or enjoined.

The Special Court as one of our transitional pillars has helped without exaggeration to bring about respite to victims of the war as perpetrators of higher ranks in the former factions and government forces are now made to account for their unholy deeds. Though its inbuilt mechanism it has been able to maintain calm on hundreds of victims of our war as those who had once perpetrated these crimes are now being prosecuted and to be punished if found guilty.

Today without a scintilla of doubt the Special Court for Sierra Leone, I would conclude has further helped in the consolidation of peace and enforcement of the rule of law in Sierra Leone.

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION.

Sierra Leoneans have always yearn for a lasting peace. In a situation such as ours in Sierra Leone where indelible scars of the war lives on with us for many years to come because they are written on the minds and bodies of victims, such victims cannot simply forgive and forget. Without attempting to create a space where the stories of humiliation and suffering can be told, where the truth can emerge and collective forgiveness be made, the search for durable peace will be a foregone conclusion..

We do recognised that for this peace to be sustainable, there must be a national process of seeking the truth about what happened during the conflict and what led up to it - the violations of human rights that occurred, as well as the root causes of the war.

Truth is a prerequisite for genuine reconciliation and can pave the way for redress and the deterrence of further abuses. In this way, revealing the truth leads to the addressing of impunity. Reconciliation also becomes possible on the basis of knowing the truth and having the will to acknowledge and learn from the past, in order not to repeat it. Without truth and reconciliation, communities will not heal the deep social and personal wounds inflicted by the years of conflict. Without truth and reconciliation, grievances will remain deep-seated, reintegration will be illusory, development will remain a mirage and peace may be no more than an interlude between periods of war.

As a transition mechanisms the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone exist as an independent organization that was created by the Lomé Peace Agreement of 7th July 1999. Article XXVI of that Accord provides for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address impunity, breaking the cycle of violence, providing a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story, (and) getting a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation.

In the spirit of national reconciliation, the Commission's mandate include dealing with the question of human rights violations since the beginning of the Sierra Leonean conflict in 1991.

The Commission later became a creature of an Act of Parliament on 10th February 2000 and its mandate is to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, from the beginning of the conflict in 1991 to the signing of the Lomé Peace agreement.

The general function of the TRC is to investigate and report on the causes, nature and extent of the human rights violations and abuses, and on the context in which these violations and abuses occurred. It also report on whether or not the human rights violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorization by any government, group or individual. The TRC investigate and report on the role played by both internal and external factors in the conflict. In this respect, it investigate on the role played by foreign individuals, groups or government in the Sierra Leone conflict.

Structures of the TRC

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in order to succeed in its drive of getting an accurate account of the war and ensuring healing and reconciliation has in place several structures in accordance with the Act which created it. It has seven Commissioners and amongst these is the Chairman of the Commission. The staff requirements of the Commission were to be calibrated with the specific requirements of each operational period. The Commission retained a core staff of 28 while another 70 be recruited on short-term basis,

The Commission further deployed 14 teams of 5 persons each to the 12 districts and 2 teams to the Western Area, the capital city. The work of the teams were coordinated by regional coordinators based in each of the four regional headquarter towns of the country.

Administratively the work of the commission is coordinated by its headquarters in Freetown.

Activities of the Commission

The TRC undertook several activities aimed at obtaining an accurate and proper record of events that led to the war and events that took place during the war. It employed several strategies including hearings; community dialogue; workshops; seminars; radio-TV discussions; sensitisation and recollecting written materials before, during and after the war. However the bulk of its work was that of meeting communities deeply affected by the war, bringing perpetrators and victims together. Former adversaries are called upon to tell their stories about past experience of the war and the commission through its facilitators and community people ensure that these former enemies embrace each other.

Statement Taking

Statement taking was the first component of the operational phase of the Commission. According to the Act that created the TRC, the Commission should take individual statements as part of its information gathering exercise. It reached out to every part of Sierra Leone to capture the experiences of the population, including specific groups such as women, children and amputees. This process started on 4 December 2002 at Bomaru, Kailahun District, where the first attack of the conflict had been reported. The statement taking exercise officially lasted for four months and a totality of 7706 statements was collected.

Interactive Sessions

As stated earlier, several workshops and information session were organised to educate people on the benefits of the truth seeking process and the role the TRC could play in helping people recover from their suffering.

The TRC used such interactive session to further create support structures in each districts and to explain the operations, methods and procedures of the Commission for statement taking and hearings, as well as announcing the views of the Commission on other areas of potential concern, such as reparations, relationship with the Special Court, confidentiality, issues of justice and impunity.

Also through these interactive session the Commission met with a range of people and institutions including the Senior District Officers (the public administrators in charge of the respective districts), Chiefs, Town Officials, provincial ministers and secretaries, NGOs and religious groups.

Since the success of the TRC depends on media and civil society participation a series of partnership initiatives was undertaken by the Commission itself, the media and civil society entities.

The Commission developed a sound media policy to ensure that:

- a. The Commission was accessible to the public at all times. It also conducted many open processes that allowed the public to be aware of the commission's activities.
- b. Public education about the TRC process was a joint responsibility that the Commission shared with its civil society partners.
- c. The radio, being the most popular means of communication in Sierra Leone, was utilised as much as possible for sensitisation and public education..

The Commission also developed partnerships with Sierra Leonean civil society organisations for public education on the different phases of its work.

As part of its desire of attracting people of wider communities into its work, the TRC organised a national vision campaigns inviting Sierra Leoneans to construct their images of a future Sierra Leone in the form of scholarly and artistic submissions. This was deemed relevant in terms of helping carve a Vision for Sierra Leone and Commission's recommendations.

Hearings

The Commission held several hearing across the country aimed at obtaining detailed statement of people from various works of life including government, NGOs, Civil society, religious leaders, etc. To ensure wider coverage of hearings a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Commission and the Ministry of Information concerning airing of the Commission's programmes. Hearings were also broadcasted live on the United Nations Radio Station and private radio stations.

The TRC was able to categorise hearings into four.

1. INDIVIDUAL WITNESS HEARINGS.

Individuals who are victims and eye witnesses are called upon to narrate their experience during the war. This type of hearing attracted several victims of factional atrocities and those unharmed.

2. THEMATIC HEARINGS.

The Commission also organised thematic hearings designed to produce a social analysis that describes and explains the past in relation to a number of identified themes. Such hearings enabled the Commission to address patterns of abuse hereby ensuring broader social analysis regarding the enabling background conditions of the war.

3. EVENT- SPECIFIC HEARINGS

The Commission further embark on hearings focused events so as to evaluate whether particular events served an especially catalytic role in the history of human rights abuse in Sierra Leone.

Examples here include the coups; extra judicial executions or other events that offer insight into the patterns of abuse of power, the role of key perpetrators (individuals and institutions) of the sufferings of victims. Specifically the Commission looked at the several events but primarily the events at Bomaru; The Transformation of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) into a fully-fledged fighting force and the establishment of Base Zero; the NPRC executions of December 1992; the destruction of Koribundo; the role of mercenaries in the conflict and the role of ULIMO; the AFRC Coup; the role of the Special Security Division (SSD) in the conflict; Mass graves; The role of ECOMOG; The invasion of Freetown on 6 January 1999; the role of the media in the conflict; hostage taking and killing of British army officers; the killing of UN troops in May 2000; and the Detentions, Treason Trials and Executions of 1998

4. INSTITUTIONAL HEARINGS

The Commission through its institutional hearing called upon specific public institutions like the civil service, military, parliament, the judiciary, etc that warrant particular scrutiny for their role in inflicting, legitimizing or ignoring abuses. Institutional hearings readily provided the Commission with an opportunity to address areas where broader institutional reforms and policy change may be needed.

Furthermore I wish to state that, besides the four types of hearings stated above, the Commission organize closed hearings and adopt such other measures as it deems fit that enable it to respond to the two important components of its mandate that require it to "capture the experiences of women and children". The closed hearing is designed to respond to the cultural sensibilities of the community and the best interest of the witness. Circumstances in which a closed hearing may be advised include

Where the violence is of a sexual nature.

If the re-entry of the witness into the community after the testimony will be jeopardized.

Where there is a threat level of the security.

where the witness is a child.

Where the testimony may jeopardize the witness' on-going reintegration / re- absorption in the community

Compiling list of Victims

The Commission adopts the definition of a victim that is now generally accepted in international.

Victims according to the Commission was considered as "persons where as a result of acts or omissions that constitute a violation of international human rights and humanitarian law norms, that person, individually or collectively, suffered harm, including physical oriental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss, or impairment of that person's fundamental legal rights". A 'victim' may also be "dependant or a member of the immediate family or household of the direct victim as well as a person who, in intervening to assist a victim or prevent the occurrence of further violations, has suffered physical, mental or economic harm"

The Commission was able to compile two lists of victims based on the statements it collected. In line with the requirement in its mandate to pay specific attention to the experiences of women and children, the Commission devoted its first list to victims of sexual violence and forced conscription. In total 1,012 victims of these violations were named in TRC statements. The Commission's second list excludes those in the first, giving the names of the persons who suffered all other violations recorded in the conflict. In total this second list contains 11,991 victims named in TRC statements.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation from conceptual perspective is another shape of transitional justice because reconciliation in itself is act of restorative justice. While societies emerging from war may prioritised the issue of criminal justice or retributive justice it is also fundamental to for such society to embark on establishing a reconciliatory or restorative system which fosters national healing. In other words Reconciliation or restorative justice (which is an aspect of transitional justice mechanism) ensure accountability and restoration of relationships between victims and perpetrators and between perpetrators and the community to which they belong.

One of the objectives of the Commission is to foster reconciliation in the country. A reconciliation based on a common understanding of the past and which allows both victims and perpetrators to find the space to live side by side in a spirit of tolerance and respect. The setting up of district support committees and the partnership of the Commission with the Inter-Religious Council has brought about significant result in the commission's reconciliatory drive and from empirical perspectives in most if not all communities where the commission had worked there has been a restoration of peaceful coexistence between and amongst formers adversaries.

Powers of the TRC

The Commission has the power to gather any information it considers relevant to achieving its objectives from any source, including government authorities. It can visit any place or establishment and compel the production of information. It can issue summons, interview individuals, groups or members of organisations and can choose to do so in private. It can require statements under oath. However, any information can be provided confidentially and the Commission cannot be made to disclose information given in confidence.

However, there are limitations to the powers of the Commission. It cannot punish perpetrators of violence or order them to compensate victims. It can only recommend reforms and other measures, whether legal, political, administrative or otherwise, necessary to achieving its aims. It can make recommendations regarding the Special Fund for War Victims provided for in the Lome Peace Agreement, but it has no control over the distribution of funds and its operations.

Though not a court in the traditional strict sense, these powers of the Commission are akin to those available to traditional methods of justice, including criminal justice. The Commission used them, although sparingly, because as a general rule Sierra Leoneans were committed to the truth-seeking process and as a result they cooperated fully. But on occasion it was as a result of the threat to use these powers that witnesses appeared before the Commission, that official documents were provided, and that access was gained to premises normally closed to the public and to human rights investigators from NGOs and the United Nations

TRC Recommendations

The TRC in its protracted activities have been able to carve out a comprehensive list of recommendations. These recommendations are incorporated in the final report of the commission. Among a host of suggestion is reparation by government through the establishment of a trust fund. Also it contains other issues of increased representation of youths and women in the governance systems of the country. It further recommend on the proper utilisation of mineral resources and proffer several accountability mechanism to ensure good governance.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL COURT AND THE TRC

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone serve two different purposes. Although both are intended to hold people to account, they approach their objectives in different ways. While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was to hold a person accountable for the truth and some show of compassion to victim in the name of reconciliation, the Special Court is established to hold persons accountable as principals for gross violations of international humanitarian law and the criminal law of Sierra Leone involving crimes of particular gravity. Therefore, while the Special Court will deal with only a few people, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will embrace the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans, perpetrators and tormentors as well as their victims.

Indeed Sierra Leone became involved with the Special Court as part of the responsibility of all nations to uphold the rules of international law and justice. Such responsibility is generally assumed pursuant to the several treaties and conventions which now form part of public international law, under which States parties have undertaken to assist in the enforcement of their treaty obligations. In the instant case, the Sierra Leone Government specifically requested the setting up of this Special Court.

It may also be necessary to state by way of emphasis the divergent approaches adopted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court in addressing the issue of impunity. As stated earlier, the main purpose of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is to heal the wounds of the nation. Thus, far from being fault-finding and punitive, it served as a legitimate and credible forum for victims to reclaim their human worth; and a channel for perpetrators of atrocities to expiate their guilt, and chasten their consciences. The process has been likened to a national catharsis, involving truth telling, respectful listening and above all, compensation for victims in deserving cases. Despite the assistance of the international community, in its establishment, it must be stressed that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is essentially a domestic forum subject to the laws of Sierra Leone exclusively in the sense that it is to be established under an Act of the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

The Special Court, on the other hand, is to operate as an international entity subject generally to international criminal law. It is to be established by an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations and that agreement will need to be sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Its objects are therefore entirely punitive and like any court, it will apply predetermined laws and rules of procedure.

The Court is therefore not for petty criminals but instead it is for those specified in the Preamble and Article 1 of the agreement for the Special Court as "persons who bear the greatest responsibility or are most responsible for the commission of serious violations of international

humanitarian law committed in Sierra Leone since 30th November, 1996 and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 7th July, 1999..

Other Important Comments.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) worked alongside an international criminal tribunal, the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In recent times, truth commissions have worked in tandem with national criminal justice processes and in one case a commission has functioned in parallel with a criminal tribunal established under UN regulations. However the Sierra Leonean case has brought into sharp focus the different roles of these institutions. This has ignited great interest in the issues that arise when two such institutions operate contemporaneously.

Most truth commissions have operated as an alternative to criminal justice systems, because criminal prosecution was either unlikely or inappropriate in the circumstances, or because an amnesty was provided for perpetrators. Given the pardon and amnesty provisions of the Lomé Peace Agreement, the Commission was proposed as an alternative to criminal justice in order to establish accountability for the atrocities that had been committed during the conflict.

As a matter of fact, The transitional justice initiatives of the TRC and the Special Court have been viewed by some as a unique experiment, which advances reconciliation through justice combined with reconciliation through truth. In reality, the two institutions were not created as part of a grand design.

Furthermore, the jurisdiction of the Special Court could also be contrasted with that of the TRC. This could be viewed in many respects.

Temporal Jurisdiction

There is no end-point to its temporal jurisdiction of the special court which indicate that the Court may continue to exercise jurisdiction over events until the completion of the “peace process”.

The temporal jurisdiction of the Special Court begins and this time frame was chosen so as not to impose a “heavy burden” on the Court in prosecuting long standing cases of human rights violations.

In contrast the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is to prepare an impartial historical record of the conflict from 1991, when the war began, until the Lomé Peace Agreement of 7 July 1999.

Also since the Commission is also charged with addressing impunity, responding to the needs of victims, promoting healing and reconciliation and preventing a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered, this signals that its mandate has no precise temporal framework.

Territorial Jurisdiction

According to its Statute the Special Court has jurisdiction over violations” committed in the territory of Sierra Leone”. The ability of the Prosecutor or the Defence office to gather evidence outside Sierra Leone depends upon the co-operation of foreign governments.

The mandate of the Commission covers “violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone”. The Truth and Reconciliation

Act of 2000 encouraged the Commission to look abroad without little or no support of foreign government and foreign institutions.

Personal Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of the Special Court is not limited by the nationality of the perpetrator. Unlike the Commission, which can also examine the responsibility of “groups”, the Special Court’s jurisdiction is confined to “persons”.

Conclusion.

One may conclude by stating that Sierra Leone has gone far ahead possible more than other post war societies in addressing the causes and events of our conflict. I see empirical benchmarks of success in out our transitional justice mechanisms irrespective of the numerous frustrating conditions. We hope that through the support of the international community and improved governance all Sierra Leoneans would be able to live a worthy that reflect a country which is potentially one of the richest in the world. Once more I thanks you for you kind attention.

Standard Times (Freetown)

Monday, 7 August 2006

Will Charles Taylor Spill the Beans?

By Thomas Kargbo

The fears that a Charles Taylor trial within the shores of Sierra Leone would have a negative impact on the peace processes in both Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia are now over.

That is to say the Special Court's legal acrobats succeeded in mitigating such fears with cogent arguments that witnessed the transfer of the Special Court's jurisdiction to The Hague.

Today the former butcher of West Africa is under lock and key awaiting a marathon trial that would either rope him in or absolve him of serious international humanitarian and other crimes committed during the over a decade long brutal and bloodletting war.

It is very common these days for people to taunt and deride Charles Taylor referencing his complaints about not receiving the diet of his choice or complimenting the Special Court prison in Freetown. I reserve myriads of compliments to these people for their attempts at healing their wounds in this way.

However, the Taylor that we all know, that the International community knows, is probably relapsing into some of his famous theatricals, either diverting focus on the real and serious issues or attracting attention to his person.

He may not even be play-acting. Therefore we must concern ourselves with the larger picture-the probability that he would spill the beans. What if he does, who is or are going to be on the receiving end of such a spillage? Besides, would those people Taylor's conduct succeeded in dismembering, dispossessing and destabilizing embrace his posture? You better begin to put this to a bet.

There is a piece by some Sierra Leonean artists contending that Foday Sankoh died without talking.

More or less he died without making any revelations bothering on the war machinery he had callously directed at the people of Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leoneans wanted him to have said it all. Then they would have known the architects, kingpins and other protagonists that oiled the RUF war engines and who have remained faceless. This did not happen. He was catatonic when he died, we were told.

Foday Sankoh's death tore several pages off the TRC's booklet of submissions. The same can be said of Sam 'Maskita' Bockarie.

Ironically others that are living equally tore off pages from that booklet. They did not talk 'all,' or were not allowed to do so. The case of Chief Sam Hinga Norman fits in with the latter.

You see why the element of suspicion is still written on the faces of Sierra Leoneans? Asked to forgive when they do not know the other phony characters they should forgive and reconcile with.

Notwithstanding all this Sierra Leoneans still consider the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as one of the post-conflict transitional instruments of justice in Sierra Leone.

Taylor cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand. So the question is still on the floor.

Sound the name 'Burkinabe' and you are sure to behold a Sierra Leonean or Liberian in flight. It is just another way of taking this Sierra Leonean or Liberian back to that nightmarish world in which death and destruction were all over the place. The chemistry they would gladly delete even from the subconscious.

Surely the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Campaore had featured prominently in the theater of war in both Sierra Leone and Liberia. This writer was in Liberia in the genesis of the war Taylor brought to that country. The name Burkinabe then was a synonym for terror.

Through whatever miracle or design Blaise Campaore is not in the web of the Special Court.

Again Taylor trained in Libya, and in Liberia and Sierra Leone Colonel Muammar Ghadafi was also linked to both wars.

Trust the citizens of these two countries. One is talking about those civilians to whom the war machinery was directed. They always know their assailants, but hardly have the necessary instruments to seek redress.

So like Blaise Campaore, David Crane, the author of the indictments did not feature Muammar Ghadafi.

Well, we all know Ghadafi himself is just reeling from supposedly an international isolation. So the question of interest can be mooted here.

By the way, many expect Taylor's journey from the United States of America, the most powerful country in the world, to Libya in the eighties and on to Liberia to have some startling revelations when considering the genesis of the war in that country, and by multiplier effect to the war in Sierra Leone. One hopes this thought would not dry the phantom aid, as the concern is more about a Taylor spillage.

Diamonds and the diamond fields fueled the war. This admission would always be made by many actors and villains in the Sierra Leone war.

There is therefore a possibility that a Taylor spillage would even drown some Lebanese diamond magnates both within and outside Sierra Leone. If it does, one can only help it by restoring some pages in the TRC.

A Taylor spillage could even send shivers down the spines of some Sierra Leoneans to the extent they would think of another TRC2, where they would tell us what they dare not say in TRC1.

What we require and still hunger after is the truth about what happened. Forgiving people or countries, for they do not know what they did or are doing, is already the resolve of Sierra Leoneans. Plain truth!

But it should be at the cost of the perpetrator owning up to his actions. Half truths and aloofness about such conduct have still not bailed us out of our mess.

It is left with the international law gurus to determine whether to use a Taylor spillage to extend the Special Court web. Our concern as Sierra Leoneans is to know the people the TRC asked us to forgive in the name of peace.

ICRC Press Release

Monday, 7 August 2006

Sierra Leone: Moot court competition in international humanitarian law

Source: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) - Switzerland



Geneva (ICRC) – Students from various colleges in Sierra Leone will compete tomorrow in the national stage of the second intercollegiate moot court competition in international humanitarian law. This year, for the first time, the competition is open to all colleges in the country.

Five three-student teams have been selected to take part on the basis of their knowledge of the law.

While the legal case they will work on is purely fictional, they will face a panel of experts in a real court setting – the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The jury will comprise the head of delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Freetown, the legal adviser of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, a Sierra Leonean judge from the Special Court, a representative of the Women Lawyers' Association and the legal adviser of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces.

The students will be judged on their understanding of international humanitarian law and public international law, their capacity to use the instruments of law to argue their case, their teamwork and their speaking ability.

This ICRC-organized event will take place in the Special Court on the afternoon of 8 August.

ICRC, Special Court and local experts in international humanitarian law will subsequently coach and train the winning students, who will go to Arusha, Tanzania in November under ICRC sponsorship to represent their college and their country in the international stage of the competition.

For further information, please contact: Patrick Massaquoi, ICRC Freetown, tel.

+232 76 632 753

CNSNews.com

Friday, 4 August 2006

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/viewstory.asp?Page=%5CForeignBureaus%5Carchive%5C200608%5CINT20060804c.html>

Illicit Diamond Trade Used by Hizballah and Others

By Stephen Mbogo

CNSNews.com Correspondent

Nairobi, Kenya (CNSNews.com) - The international community should speed up efforts to prevent terrorist groups from using the proceeds from illicit diamond trade to finance their activities and launder their funds, campaigners say.

A Nairobi-based African affairs analyst, Adan Mohamed, said it was "very likely" that groups like Hizballah still use the trade to raise additional revenue.

"Nothing much has happened in putting mechanisms in place to prevent diamond trade from being used to clean dirty cash or finance conflicts," he said.

Investigations by researchers, human rights groups, the United Nations and media organizations have revealed how Hizballah exploited weakness in the international diamond trade monitoring systems to hide their assets and raise funds.

The illicit trade was mainly carried out in the West African nations of Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Ivory Coast, and further south in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The trade was allegedly facilitated in part by former Liberian President Charles Taylor, now facing war crimes charges in The Hague.

Taylor was the main sponsor of the notorious Sierra Leone rebel group the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which controlled a significant segment of the country's rich alluvial diamond mines.

The RUF waged a brutal five-year war against the Sierra Leone government in which it targeted non cooperative civilians and punished them by amputating their arms. Some RUF leaders are in the custody of the International Criminal Court.

The gems mined by RUF were shipped to Taylor's Liberia for onward transmission to Hizballah, al-Qaeda and other illicit international buyers, according to published accounts.

The small but influential Lebanese community in West Africa, comprising mostly Shiites, was also found to be instrumental in facilitating the transfer of illicit diamonds to Hizballah.

A 2004 report in the Middle East Intelligence Bulletin, a publication of the Middle East Forum and the U.S. Committee for a Free Lebanon, said that although the U.S. authorities had been able to reduce the flow of Hizballah financing from networks in the U.S., "it appears that one lucrative source of Hizballah financing is still growing: the diamond trade in West Africa."

Security information consultant group Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor) said last month that Hizballah could finance new attacks on Israeli targets abroad using funds from a profitable "blood diamond" network in West Africa.

Another group that has in the past documented how Hizballah and al-Qaeda have used diamonds from West Africa to finance their terrorist activities is the international NGO, Global Witness.

In a new report, the group says efforts to monitor the international movement of diamonds have not been successful and more needs to be done.

Global Witness estimates that four percent of illegal diamonds get into the international market every year. The overall global diamond trade is worth over \$60 billion and most of the retail sales are in the United States.

A project known as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was started in 2003 to monitor international diamond movement, in a bid to prevent the gems from being used to fund conflicts and fuel human rights abuses. Seventy countries have agreed to implement the plan so far.

Pamela Wexler, an attorney who authored the new report, said that although there was much to praise about the KPCS inaugural phase, it had not yet evolved into a fully credible check on the international movement of diamonds.

"Foremost are gaps in oversight, specifically of internal control systems in individual countries and of the peer review monitoring system overall."

Another key weakness was inadequate checks on private industry by individual governments.

The KPCS requires governments to implement import/export control regimes and to adopt systems to oversee their private sectors, and so keep a documentary record of rough diamonds as they travel from the mine to their polished state.

Diamonds must be shipped in sealed containers and export agencies must certify that parcels are free from "conflict diamonds."

Members also agree to prohibit entry of uncut stones arriving unsealed or without proper certification.

The Inquirer (Monrovia)

Monday, 7 August 2006

UN Will Act Vigorously to Security Threat - Alan Doss

By Patrick K. Wrokpoh

The United Nations Secretary General Special Representative to Liberia, Alan Doss says the UN Mission in the country, will act vigorously to any threat that seek to undermine the peace and stability of the nation.

Mr. Doss issued the warning over the weekend, when he spoke at program marking the dedication of the refurbished auditorium of the University of Liberia and the launching of the University Public Policy Forum.

The program was also held for the Recognition of Adjust Professors, provided to assist the university by the UN Mission in the country.

Speaking at the occasion which was attended by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and a cross section of government officials and foreign diplomats, Mr. Doss warned those who may want to pose a threat to the country's security, not to underestimate the resolve of the mission.

He said the mission would continue to play its role by consolidating the peace process, stressing that the mission also have the capacity to deal with threat on the peace process.

Mr. Doss emphatically stated that UNMIL would not sit and allow the massive investment made by the international community and the Liberian people to reach in the peace process this far go down the dream, reiterating that the mission would continue to play its part.

It is not clear what prompted Mr. Doss warning that the mission would deal vigorously with any threat on the security of the state but it has come less than two weeks after a mysterious fire gutted the fourth floor of the Executive Mansion and subsequently destroyed the office of President Sirleaf.

On matters of University concerns, Mr. Doss described the occasion as an important move by the UL to come back alive.

He added that the nation needs a university that would groom the youths for the future.

Mr. Doss said the challenges at university is enormous but called for patience stressing that it will take time, for the university to come back as it use to be.

Also speaking when she dedicated the auditorium, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf welcomed the remarks of Mr. Doss warning that the mission would act vigorously to threat on the peace process.

The Liberian leader who arrived one hour beyond the official time set to start the program, said she was late for the occasion because as she put it, she was dealing with a security related matter that spring out just about the time she was preparing to attend the occasion.

On the university issue, President Sirleaf urged the UL administration to strengthen its programs and raise up to overcome the many challenges facing the UL.

President Sirleaf said her administration is looking up to the university to produce the highest human resource development of the nation.

She called for support to the drive strategic plan of the university, put together by the UL administration to upgrade the standard and capacity of the university.

Earlier in his remarks, UL President Dr. AL_Hassan Conteh, commended the Liberian government for the level of support to the university and expressed the UL family regret over the July 26th, fire incident at the Executive Mansion.

During the ceremony, 40 staff of the UN Mission in Liberia were recognized and presented letters of appointment by President Sirleaf to teach at the UL in different field of studies. Their services will be on a voluntary basis.

Voice of America
Monday, 7 August 2006

Ivory Coast President Says He Will Not Step Aside in October



Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo has announced he will remain in power until presidential elections can be organized in the war-divided country. His, already extended, mandate expires in October, and the United Nations had been due to make a decision on his fate next month.

Speaking in a televised address marking the anniversary of his country's independence from France, President Laurent Gbagbo said he would not step aside in October, if a scheduled presidential election fails to take place.

Laurent Gbagbo (File photo) He said that, conforming to the constitution, the president of the republic and the national assembly will continue to function until the next presidential and legislative elections.

Mr. Gbagbo's five-year elected term expired last year, when polls were deemed impossible, following a failure to disarm by northern rebels and southern militias loyal to the president.

The U.N. Security Council granted him a 12-month extension to his mandate to allow more time to organize polls. But many experts and observers now believe another election delay is unavoidable.

A U.N.-backed disarmament program was suspended Friday. And violent confrontations between youth supporters of the president and militant opposition groups have repeatedly stalled a controversial scheme aimed at identifying millions of undocumented Ivorians and foreign residents.

Both processes are prerequisites for elections.

During a visit to Ivory Coast last month, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said a decision on Mr. Gbagbo's fate would be made in the General Assembly in September. He said the body would make any changes to the election timetable at the same time.

In his speech, President Gbagbo hinted that an election delay was a possibility, but said polls should go ahead before the end of 2006.

We want elections, he said. We want elections, absolutely, before the end of this year.

Civil war erupted in Ivory Coast following a failed attempt by elements within the military to overthrow President Gbagbo in late 2002.

The New Forces rebels currently control the northern half of the country. And though both sides have agreed to a long series of peace deals dating back to 2003, none has ever been fully implemented.


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 7 August 2006

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

International Clips on Liberia

Associated Press 08/06/2006 16:39:21

Guard assigned to director of Liberian security service shot and killed

By JONATHAN PAYE-LAYLEH

MONROVIA, Liberia_ A security guard assigned to protect the newly appointed head of Liberia's presidential security service was shot and killed, the Justice Ministry said Sunday. The Saturday shooting occurred at the home of Christian Massaquoi, appointed head of Liberia's Special Security Service by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in the week following a fire at the presidential palace that interrupted Independence Day celebrations. A ministry statement said police were interrogating suspects in connection with the incident. Massaquoi was not harmed. He previously was head of Liberia's immigration bureau.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast president says he plans to stay on to next elections

ABIDJAN, Aug 6, 2006 (AFP) - Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo, whose mandate was extended last year to October by the United Nations as part of peace efforts, said Sunday he plans to stay on to new elections. "I want to reassure Ivorians that, in conformity with the constitution ... the president of the Republic will remain in office until the next presidential and legislative elections," Gbagbo said in a national television address on the eve of the country's Independence Day.

Local Media – Newspaper

Security Guard Killed in Shootout at SSS Director's Residence

(The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, Daily Observer, New Democrat, National Chronicle, The Informer, Liberian Express and Public Agenda)

- A security guard assigned to the Acting Director of the Special Security Service (SSS), Chris Massaquoi, was shot and killed on Saturday morning at the GSA Road residence of the Director.
- Details surrounding the death of Emmanuel Williams, alias Silver J, are still sketchy, but reports have it that the incident occurred when Deputy SSS Director Ashford Peal fired a "warning shot" in the air in the premises of Mr. Massaquoi.
- According to the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Peal is suspected of masterminding the killing and is now helping the police in investigations into the circumstances.

Senate Debates Approved Fiscal Budget Today

(The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, New Democrat and Liberian Express)

- The Liberian Senate will today convene a special session to debate the national budget which was approved and sent to it by the House of Representatives over the weekend. The presentation followed weeks of acrimonious debates among lawmakers regarding various aspects of the budget.
- However, the budget was increased by US\$1.7 million, an extra amount which the House of Representatives believes can be obtained from the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company, the National Port Authority and the Roberts International Airport, despite arguments by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and other financial experts that these public corporations have been running at a deficit for the past decades.

Citizen Group and Rights Activist Want Chief Justice Impeached

(The News, National Chronicle and Public Agenda)

- In a letter addressed to Speaker Edwin Snowe, the Citizens United to Promote Peace and Democracy in Liberia urged the House of Representatives to begin the formulation of a bill of impeachment against Chief Justice Johnny Lewis for violating the Constitution of Liberia. The group said the suspension of Judge James Zota of the Criminal Court 'A' by the Chief Justice was a major violation of Articles 70.71 and 73 of the Constitution.

Central Bank Opens Payment Centre in Voinjama

(The News, The Informer and Liberian Express)

- The Central Bank of Liberia on Friday opened the doors of a newly constructed payment center to the public in the provincial city of Voinjama in Lofa County.
- The center will enable civil servants in that part of the country to collect their salaries without having to travel to the far-away capital city of Monrovia. The construction was financed by the United Nations Mission in Liberia, through its Quick Impact Project.

Eight South African Experts Arrive to Investigate Executive Mansion Fire

(Liberian Express)

- Eight South African Police investigators have arrived in the country to investigate the Executive Mansion fire incident. The investigators arrived on Friday with "police dogs."

President Johnson-Sirleaf Launches Public Policy Forum

(Daily Observer and The Informer)

- President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf on Saturday launched a Public Policy Forum at the University of Liberia with specific demands that the Forum formulates policy options, strategies and programs to improve the social, political and economic situations in the country.

Former Local NGO Director Faces Prosecution for Corruption

(Daily Observer)

- A former Executive Director of the Liberians United to Serve Humanity (LUSH), Albert S. Lombah, has been turned over to the Criminal Court 'A' at the Temple of Justice for prosecution on charges of misapplication of entrusted funds to the tune of US\$342,000. According to a complaint from LUSH, a local NGO, Mr. Lombah misapplied the money during his tenure as executive director.

Sanction Victim Challenges UN to Prove Evidence

(The News)

- Speaking to reporters in Monrovia on Friday, a victim of the United Nations travel ban challenged the World Body to show evidence that he is a threat to peace and stability in the Sub-region, notably the Ivory Coast.
- Kai Farley, a Representative of Grand Gedeh County and former commanding general of the disbanded rebel Movement for Democracy in Liberia, denied any involvement in violent activities in neighboring Ivory Coast.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored yesterday at 6:45 pm)*

President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Urges Liberian Youths to Prioritize Education

- Addressing graduates of a high school outside Monrovia over the weekend, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf challenged Liberian youths to prioritize education and forge ahead to be better citizens. She admonished them to be committed to whatever they do.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Aggrieved Lawmakers Call on President to Reject Amendments to National Budget

- House of Representatives Bhoufal Chambers, Nohn Kidau and Dixon Yassiah have called on President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to reject the amendments to the national budget, increasing it by US\$1.7 million.
- Speaking on behalf of his colleagues during the weekend, Maryland County Representative Chambers said that the additions were inconsistent with economic principles and were intended to put the people against the government.
- During the debate of the budget, members of the House of Representatives increased civil service salary by US\$4 on the US\$26 earlier proposed by government. The Lawmakers also increased the allotment for health, education and security.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Presidential Nominee Submits New Credentials for Senate Confirmation

- Mr. Jonathan Sogbie, a nominee for the position of Assistant Youth and Sports Minister, has submitted another set of credentials to the House of Senate for his confirmation after he had filed fake academic credentials which resulted to his rejection by the Lawmakers early this year.
- Sources in Monrovia yesterday said that Mr. Sogbie presented to the Senate a diplomat from a sports academy in Côte d'Ivoire and requested the House to confirm him.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Governance Reform Commissioner Supports Government's Plan to Recruit Partisans as Guards

- Governance Reform Commissioner David Kortie said that he remains supportive of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's desire to recruit Unity Party members in her security apparatus, adding that self-preservation is the first "law of nature."
- He noted that for the President to be focused on rebuilding the country, she needed to feel secure and asserted that the issue of inclusion in government was incomparable to security of the President of Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Border Closure Impedes Revenue Collection

- Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh said that the closure of the Liberia-Sierra Leone border has hampered the collection of needed government revenues.
- Dr. Sayeh assured Senior Customs Collector Nathaniel Johnson and his co-workers that her ministry would exert effort to reopen the Border post at Bo-Water and provide the needed logistics to ensure efficiency.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

International Group Arrives to Capacitate Local NGOs

- Addressing a news conference in Monrovia yesterday, the visiting Micro-Finance Institution Network Executive Director, Worde Marcus, said his organization would participate in the process to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations in Liberia as part of initiative to reduce poverty in the country. Mr. Marcus lauded the Action for Greater Harvest, a local farming-support group for working with farmers in rebuilding their lives

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Suspected Juvenile Rapist Arraigned

- Police sources said that a 17-year-old boy was over the weekend arraigned before a Magisterial Court for allegedly raping a 16-year-old girl in July, 2006. But the victim said the accused was her boy-friend and that both of them have been having sex since February, 2006.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Security Guard Killed in Shootout at SSS Director's Residence

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Central Bank of Liberia Opens Branches Upcountry

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Special Court Supplement

History of Sierra Leone – Edward Wilmot Blyden



This statue of Edward Wilmot Blyden stands on Wallace Johnson Street in Freetown.

The inscription on the base reads “To the memory of the life and labours of EDWARD WILMOT BLYDEN, Born May 1830 at St. Thomas W.I., Died 7th February 1911 at Sierra Leone W.A. A great African”.

The biography below is taken from the book “Sierra Leonean Heroes: Fifty Great Men and Women Who Helped to Build Our Nation”.

EDWARD WILMOT BLYDEN (1832-1912) THE FATHER OF PAN-AFRICANISM

Edward Wilmot Blyden was the foremost African intellectual of the 19th century. His brilliant career, in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, spanned the fields of religion, education, journalism, politics, and philosophy. He is best remembered as an African patriot whose writings contributed significantly to the rise of Pan-Africanism.



Edward Blyden was born in the Virgin Islands in the West Indies, a descendant of Ibo slaves from Nigeria. He was a gifted student, and at the age of eighteen, attempted to enroll at a theological college in the United States. But the college would not accept him because he was black, and he experienced many frightful scenes in the U.S. at a time when slavery was still lawful. In 1851, young Blyden emigrated to Liberia with the intention of building a new life in Africa. He would remain there for more than thirty years, rising gradually to the highest levels of Liberian society. During his Liberian career, Blyden was a Presbyterian minister, a newspaper editor, a professor of classics, President of Liberia College, Ambassador to Great Britain, Minister of the Interior, and Secretary of State. In 1885, he was an unsuccessful candidate for the

Presidency.

But Edward Blyden was also well known in Sierra Leone, where had spent two years (1871-73) as Government Agent to the Interior, leading two official expeditions — one to Falaba and other other to Futa Jallon. In 1885, after his unsuccessful bid for the presidency of Liberia, Blyden based permanently in Freetown. In fact, Blyden was in many ways a greater intellectual force in Sierra Leone than in Liberia. He stirred controversy and lively debate in the Krio community by opposing the indiscriminate emulation of European culture. He told the Krios that they were "de-Africanised," scolded them for holding themselves aloof from the upcountry peoples, and advised them to remember always that "you are Africans." After the 1887 publication of his masterpiece, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race*, some Krios under Blyden's influence began to adopt African names and even to emulate traditional African dress.

Edward Blyden was one of the most original thinkers of his time, and although some of his ideas seem archaic today, he was a major force for the defence of Africans and of black civilisation. Blyden looked forward to the rise of an

independent West African nation, and he encouraged British colonial efforts as a means of uniting this vast area. At the same time, Blyden regarded Africans as having a unique "personality" and a distinctive culture equal to, but different from, that of Europeans. He urged the British to allow Africans more autonomy in political and church matters, and argued against the imposition of European culture. As early as 1872, Blyden called for an independent West African University to be run solely by Africans, teaching African languages, cultures, and values. Blyden, though a Christian himself, viewed Muslims as more authentically African, and he repeatedly urged the British authorities to involve Muslim Africans in various ways in their colonial enterprise. Blyden taught himself to speak Arabic, and maintained close relations for many years with the Muslim community in Freetown. In his later years,, he was Director of Mohammedan Education in Sierra Leone.

When Edward Wilmot Blyden died in 1912, his funeral was attended by many hundreds of people from throughout the Freetown community, including both Muslims, who bore the coffin, and his fellow Christians. Later generations of black intellectuals, in both Africa and America, have looked to Edward Blyden for inspiration in the areas of Pan-Africanism and cultural nationalism.