

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Friday, 8 February 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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Exclusive

Friday, 8 February 2008

Guest Writer

By Rene Wadlow

Charles Taylor has been indicted on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in violation of international humanitarian law. However, the trial has not yet been held, and it will be of interest to see what elements of proof will be presented.

Charles Taylor's direct participation in war crimes was in Liberia where he still has too many supporters for a trial to be held there. His actions in Sierra Leone were indirect in support of insurgencies whose crimes were many. But it is not clear what control Taylor had over their actions.

The two main insurgents, Foday Sankoh and his deputy, Sam "Mosquito" Bocharie, that Taylor is thought to have armed and advised, have died. They can neither be tried nor asked to testify against Taylor. Three persons, including a US citizen, have been arrested in Sierra Leone for plotting to spring Taylor from jail. These are probably not the only persons promised funds to get Taylor out. Thus, we may be some way from hearing the evidence against Taylor.

Taylor's support for Foday Sankoh and his Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was certainly well rewarded in money. The "Blood Diamond" trade as it was called flowed from the diamond fields held by the RUF through Liberia to Europe, Israel and the Far East. Taylor, nicknamed "Superglue" was able to skim off money from everything he touched. There is little doubt that Taylor "got a cut" from the flow out of diamonds and the flow in of arms. He added Sierra Leone timber to his vast timber exports he controlled in Liberia.

There are currently two unanswered questions: How much did Charles Taylor advise on the strategies of the insurgency in Sierra Leone? Were the insurgencies in Sierra Leone and Liberia part of a wider program of destabilization of West Africa -perhaps in the interest of Libya? Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh had been together in revolutionary training camps in Libya after Charles Taylor escaped from jail in the USA. How long they stayed together in Libya and what they learned in the camps has not yet been established. What is known is that Foday Sankoh, who had been a professional soldier in Sierra Leone, was with Taylor when Taylor began his attack on Liberia from a base in the Ivory Coast on Christmas Eve 1989.

Foday Sankoh stayed with Taylor while Taylor's troops advanced toward Monrovia, but Taylor could not take Monrovia on his first try being

Charles Taylor in Sierra Leone : Was it more than money?

blocked by West African peacekeeping forces. Taylor withdrew to areas he held and developed his timber export business. Sankoh, perhaps less interested in making money than in gaining power brought together a small armed force and in 1991 attacked Sierra Leone from Liberia.

Liberia and Sierra Leone had similar social structures, and the military insurgencies were carried out in the same way. Was Taylor part of the planning for the attack on Sierra Leone? Was there a master strategist in Libya who had trained and advised both Sankoh and Taylor? Conspiracy theories grow quickly on tropical forest soil, but

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they are not necessarily false.

Sierra Leone like Liberia had been founded by freed slaves. Liberia's founders had been for the most part household slaves or artisans in the north-east states of the USA before being sent to Africa. Many could read and write and had participated in a "developed" country. Sierra Leone's founders were recently freed slaves who were aboard ships taking them from Africa to the West Indies. The

slave ships were stopped by the British Navy who controlled the West African coast. There were also slaves freed from slave forts along the coast who were waiting for ships. Although there were a few slaves from Canada and Jamaica, most of the freed slaves were not more educated than the tribes of Sierra Leone's interior. They, nevertheless, reproduced the same pattern as Liberia: a coastal, detribalized group who took up trade and looked down upon the tribes of the interior. When Sierra Leone developed into a British colony, it was normal that the coastal population was first to benefit from education and joined English firms. The coastal population was also the first to create modern political parties on the eve of independence in 1961.

The Sierra Leone government after independence was even more corrupt than that of Liberia. The Sierra Leone governing class played a "winner take all" game of power while Liberia's was more a "share the wealth among us" pattern. Thus Sierra Leone politics was more brutal, and the power/wealth circle smaller than Liberia's.

As with Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh had no tribal authority on which to draw. He followed Charles Taylor's lead and established an armed force of "child soldiers" - disenchanted and impoverished youth for whom Sankoh became "Papa" and Sankoh received son-like devotion on the part of the troops. In return, the troops could loot everything they could carry and rape all the women they could catch.

The badge of belonging to the group was to mutilate: to cut off hands, arms, feet, ears or noses of the defeated or of the ordinary villages they controlled. Such mutilation was both a sign of being part of the "in group" but also made them outcasts from traditional society so they could not be easily integrated. They had to remain loyal to Sankoh. Other insurgencies in Sierra Leone such as the AFRC and the pro-governmental Civil Defence Force learned the same pattern and acted no differently. Thus there are leaders from all these forces who are to be tried for war crimes.

Sierra Leone seems even less able to recover from the years of war than Liberia. The economy destroyed, the society is fragile. The court trials are probably a first but necessary step to move beyond havoc.

Independent Observer

Friday, 8 February 2008

JSDP Hands Over New Buildings to the Judiciary and Prisons in Makeni

The Judiciary Sector Development Programme (JSDP), will hand over the refurbished Judges and Magistrates quarters and the newly constructed Prisons Officers quarters in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone, to the judiciary and the Prisons Service, respectively, on Friday 8th February 2008.

Sierra Leone's Justice Sector is under-resourced and facing serious problems of logistical concern, such as lack of infrastructure and equipment. JSDP aims to improve access to justice for the poor by strengthening the capacity of the justice system to deliver fair and equitable justice. Therefore, the JSDP Task Force and the previous projects working with the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), the Prisons Service and the Judiciary, identified and have supported a number of infrastructure and equipment needs within the justice sector across the country. In Makeni, the refurbishment of the Judges and Magistrates quarters, which included the provision of furniture, commenced in March 2007 and was completed in January 2008. The construction of the new quarters and hand pump water well for Prison Officers; and a perimeter wall round the prison compound, in Makeni, lasted from January to July 2007. Total cost of construction, including the services of consultants, was nine hundred and sixty five million, five hundred thousand Leones (Le965,500,000.00).

Other completed infrastructure projects undertaken by JSDP include;

- Construction of Dual Purpose Court, Kenema
- Rehabilitation of Remand Home, Kingtom and Approved School, Wellington.
- Construction of Goderich Police Station, Adonkia, Freetown
- Construction of fifteen Family support units (FSU) in Police Stations in the Western Area and in the provinces
- Construction of new prison officers quarters and rehabilitation of all old prison officers quarters, Bo
- Improvement of prison compound and construction of new water well, Pujehun

The construction of Prison Officers quarters in Kambia, Kabala and Kailahun and the Women's Prison Wing in Kenema, is in progress.

Strengthening the capacity of the justice system through the provision of infrastructure and equipment will not only improve safety and security and respect for human rights, but will also provide an effective mechanism through which, poor people can address grievances. Furthermore, it will also assist in fostering an environment in which the wider aspects of development can take place in Sierra Leone.

[This press release was also reproduced in Awoko]

Awareness Times

Friday, 8 January 2008

Makeni High Court opens this morning

This year's first session of the High Court in Makeni will today Friday 8th February 2008 at 9:00am, be opened by the Acting Chief Justice, Honourable Umu Hawa Tejan Jalloh.

Hon. Justice Alusine Sesay, one of the youngest Judges in Sierra Leone, will now preside over Makeni sessions having taken over the jurisdiction from Gambian Justice Mary Sey.

Today's event is expected to be very colourful and will be the first official function of Justice Tejan Jalloh since she was sworn in as Chief Justice last month. Many of the Magistrates and Judges serving in the Judiciary will be traveling from Freetown and their various locations to grace the pomp-filled occasion. The judges will all be robed in their bright red regalia as the occasion demands.

A Guard of Honour will be mounted by a detachment of the Sierra Leone Police which will be inspected by the acting Chief Justice before she formally declares the session opened.

Following that event will hold a second session under the chairmanship of the Consultant Master & Registrar, Mrs. Julia Sarkodie-Mensah. At this session, His Excellency the President of Sierra Leone, Ernest Bai Koroma will arrive in Makeni from Freetown around mid-day during which he will perform two official functions.

The first will be cutting of the tape to the newly renovated and built Judicial Residence where Justice Alusine Sesay will reside during sittings.

The residence was done up by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development.

Secondly, President Koroma will also on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone, receive brand new vehicles from UNDP for use by the Judiciary. Statements will be heard from the acting Chief Justice, the Attorney General, the DfID representative, UNDP, the Resident Minister, North and the Keynote Address today will be given by President Koroma himself.

BBC World Service Trust

Thursday, 7 February 2008

By Joseph Cheeseman at The Hague

CHEESEMAN: Charles Taylor's Defence team has termed as a "lie" witness Perry Kamara's testimony that the weapons used to attack the Sierra Leonean Town of Kono (sic.) in 1998 was supplied by the indicted former Liberian President.

The Defence told the Court the weapons used in the Kono's (sic.) attack were supplied by the Liberian rebel Group called ULIMO.

COUNSEL: Sam Bockarie, in a report to Foday Sankoh, is lying when he says that ULIMO provided those weapons. Is that what your evidence is?

KAMARA: That is the evidence I am giving. ULIMO did not give weapons to Sam Bockarie to attack Kono.

CHEESEMAN: Witness Kamara also said the plan to attack Freetown was put together by Charles Taylor and given to Sam Bockarie. But before concluding its cross-examination of the Prosecution tenth witness, the Defence told the Court Mr. Kamara was not telling the truth.

COUNSEL: You said that the arms and ammunition for this particular mission came from Charles Taylor; you were lying about that, weren't you?

KAMARA: I am not telling a lie.

COUNSEL: And you were lying about the fact that Charles Taylor was the one that came up with the plan to attack Freetown, weren't you?

KAMARA: It's not a lie. He came up with the plan to attack Freetown.

For the personal security of the Perry Kamara, the Defence team of Charles Taylor requested the Court to conduct part of his testimony in private session, meaning no press coverage. The request was granted by the Court. Part of Perry Kamara's cross-examination was therefore conducted in private session for more than an hour.

At the same time the Prosecution eleventh witness has begun his testimony against Charles Taylor. He is a Suwandi Camara, a Gambian who says he's a member of the Mandingo ethnic group in that country. Suwandi Camara said he first met Charles Taylor, Ali Kabbah, the first leader of the RUF; and Foday Sankoh in Libya. Suwandi testified that he was taken to Libya by the then rebel leader of Gambia, Kukoi Sabasanyah, commonly known as Dr. Mani. He explained to the Court what happened after the training of the Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Gambian dissident groups in Libya.

CAMARA: I said Charles Taylor and his people left Libya to Burkina. He left Libya to Burkina. Foday Sankoh also left with the Sierra Leonean group to Burkina. We also, Dr. Mani, Dr. Mani and his group also left Libya to Burkina. But the first group I was not among.

The eleventh witness, Suwandi Camara now testifying in open court was initially a protected witness with the pseudo name (sic.) TF1-548.

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

Western News (The University of Western Ontario)

Thursday, 7 February 2008

War, peace ... and everything in-between

By Karen Otto

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Valerie Oosterveld says her research topics sound like "dry issues" but by examining hate, brutality, war, and peace, nothing could be further from the truth.



Photo by Craig Glover - Law professor Valerie Oosterveld is trying to ensure a Special Court reviewing brutalities in Sierra Leone serves the needs of the citizens of that country.

The assistant professor is examining legal obligations that continue after the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone closes its doors in 2010.

And just as the Special Court was groundbreaking, so too are the topics she's researching.

"The only other time the international community has dealt with the closure of a war crimes tribunal was with the Tokyo and Nuremburg tribunals after World War Two," she says.

The international criminal law, international human rights and public international law professor is looking specifically at three legal obligations the United Nations and Sierra Leone will face after the court closes: continuing protection of those who testified, tracking of those convicted by the court and serving lengthy sentences and conservation of the court's archives.

"I know they sound like dry issues but they're very deep issues that link to reconciliation and peace," Oosterveld says.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is very much like the International Criminal Tribunals for both the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, she explains.

Set up in 2002, 13 people have been indicted in Sierra Leone and 10 people prosecuted (one later died). Those who testified to the atrocities of the war did so at great personal risk and are currently being protected by the Special Court but Oosterveld is concerned with what happens to them after the court closes.

"It's not like the threat to their lives goes away," she says. "(I'm looking at) what are the mechanisms and modalities for keeping them safe."

She's also examining how best to create a body to address all of the continuing obligations not only from the Special Court but the two International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda which will also close in a few years.

There are many things to consider, she says. Should the body be a joint mechanism? Should it consist of judges who tried the cases? Maybe judges who didn't hear the cases? Regardless, it all comes down to two simple questions, she says: "Who do you give authority to and how do you give it to them?"

Another question Oosterveld is examining is where and how to keep the Special Court's archives after it closes. Currently, they're being stored in Freetown where all but one of the trials are taking place but whether or not that's the best place for them to stay remains to be seen, she says.

"It's a difficult question," Oosterveld says. Being a poor country, Sierra Leone doesn't have humidity-controlled facilities to keep the archives from deteriorating over time and the country is still recovering from the decade-long war. But, she adds, if they're transported to, for example, the Hague then they're not immediately available to the citizens and that's a problem for Oosterveld.

"Why did we set this Special Court up?" she asks, "To help the people of Sierra Leone."

And helping them is a high priority for her. Prior to joining Western Law in 2005, Oosterveld was a lawyer at the Department of Foreign Affairs and helped set up the Special Court.

That's the reason for the concentration of her academic work, she says. It's extremely personal to her to help the country's inhabitants recover from the extreme brutality of war.

"I really want this Special Court to serve Sierra Leone in its transition from war to peace."

BClocalnews.com

Thursday, 7 February 2008

<http://www.bclocalnews.com/news/15384906.html>

Abby lawyer tells about African horrors

By Trudy Beyak - Abbotsford News - February 07, 2008

"I'll never wear a diamond."

With those few words, a renowned Abbotsford lawyer expressed her outrage over the criminal carnage linked to Africa's diamond trade.

Wendy van Tongeren Harvey talked about the horrific saga of brainwashed boy soldiers brandishing sub-machine guns and machetes in Sierra Leone, and cutting people into pieces like human killing machines.

"As if hell wasn't enough," said Harvey as she took a pause and described the attacks, the torture and the murders.

She's been there.

Harvey is a Crown counsel in Abbotsford and recently returned to the Fraser Valley after working on the prosecution team of the Special Court of Sierra Leone in Africa and the Hague.

She shared some of her experiences during a forum Friday called "Children and Conflict: Children in War Zones," as part of a series at the University College of the Fraser Valley.



Wendy van Tongeren Harvey, a Crown attorney from Abbotsford, was part of a UN genocide prosecution team in Sierra Leone.

JOHN VAN PUTTEN / Abbotsford News

She said North Americans need to question their own complicity in the war that broke out in Sierra Leone. The popular movie *Blood Diamond* offers only a small glimpse of the heartwrenching facts, and explains why she won't wear the precious sparkling gem.

The smell of burning garbage overwhelmed Harvey as she spent time in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone, where the special court tried the worst criminals in a nation suffering corruption, food shortages and few medical supplies.

The local trial attorney said horrendous atrocities were committed as armed criminals took over the country and terrorized the innocent. The violence in this poor West African country ended in 2002 with the help of the United Nations. Foreign troops disarmed tens of thousands of rebel fighters whose trademark was to hack off the hands and feet of victims. Many of the estimated 70,000 combatants were child soldiers.

Harvey explained how the terror unfolded.

Rebel forces killed moms and dads in front of their children and abducted them. They then trained the boys, some as young as four, to labour in diamond mines or indoctrinated them on how to kill people or to mutilate their victims' bodies by cutting off arms, legs, and even noses and cheeks to force submission.

They participated in gang rapes and females became sex slaves.

Harvey said the rebels trained certain boys who were hand-picked to become amputation experts. Houses were burned and entire villages destroyed.

She described how one 11-year-old child soldier watched a rebel commander rape a woman and then forced him to rape her too.

Why were children conscripted into the rebellious forces?

The country is extremely poor, there is little food to eat and 44 per cent of the population is under 14 years old, Harvey explained.

Children are easy to brainwash, compliant, agile and limber.

She quoted psychiatrist Dr. Edward Nahim who described how boy soldiers function compared to adults: "Children are more fearless, because they see it as a game. They call automatic gunfire 'music.'"

There is a whole generation of teenagers in this country who didn't care who they killed, took cocaine to make their "hearts strong" and had the power to do whatever they wanted in the "shame free zone."

Now that the outbreak of violence is over, the challenge is to integrate this warped generation into so-called "normal" society again in Sierra Leone. The country must deal with former child soldiers, who are no longer able to wield power over adults, don't have a ready supply of drugs and have to follow rules, Harvey said.

The special court was set up by the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to charge warlords with crimes against humanity, murder, rape, acts of terror, enslavement, looting, sexual slavery and conscription of children.

Several rebel leaders were found guilty of war crimes last year.

Currently the court is meeting in the Hague to try Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, accused of fueling and funding the insurgency in Sierra Leone by selling diamonds and buying weapons for the rebels.

Harvey is best known in B.C. for her expertise in the prosecution of sexual offences against children and persons with disabilities.

She is author of a best-selling book written for children witnesses called *So, You Have to Go*, and co-author of *Sexual Offenses Against Children and the Criminal Process and Trauma, Trials and Transformation*.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 7 February 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

UNMIL Unveils Drawdown Plan... Says Will Be Done in a Cautious Manner

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

- UNMIL Military Deputy Chief Operations Officer, Lt.-Col. Greg Tasker says the mission would remain vigilant in its duty as the troops drawdown continues. Some 2,450 military personnel of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) are expected to depart Liberia by September 2008 as part of mission's drawdown plan which is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1777 of September 2007.
- This means by September 2008, UNMIL will have nearly 12,550 reduced from its initial strength of 15,000 troops. Speaking at UNMIL's regular press briefing on Wednesday, Lt. Col. Tasker said preparation has already been made for the drawdown of troops in Grand Cape Mount, Grand Bassa and Maryland Counties. However, to fill the void, he said troops from Bomi, Montserrado and Sinoe Counties where there is high troop concentration will fill the gap.

Robbers Attack Firestone Rubber Purchasing Station....US\$15,000.00 Stolen

(Daily Observer, Heritage, The News, The Informer)

- A criminal gang recently attacked the Firestone Plantations Company rubber purchasing station in Totota, Bong Gbarnga, forcibly taking away over US\$15,000. A release issued yesterday said preliminary reports revealed that the robbery took place early Wednesday when unknown armed men used single barrel guns, cutlasses and other sharp instruments to scare away employees assigned at the purchasing station and threatened to kill anyone who attempts to challenge them in the process.
- According to the cashier from the Rubber Purchase Department of Liberia assigned to the buying station in Totota, Mr. Fredrick Young, no injuries or deaths occur during the commission of the crime.
- This is the second in the series of robberies that have occurred at rubber purchasing station operated by Firestone since the beginning of this year. It can be recalled that last month a group of men carrying single barrel guns and cutlasses attacked a purchasing station of Firestone located in Palala, Bong County and stole US\$25,000.00 and L\$5,000.00.

Former House Speaker Takes Stand In House Bribery Probe

(The Inquirer, Daily Observer, The Informer, The News, New Vision, Heritage, New Democrat, National Chronicle, Liberian Express)

- The media reports that investigation into the bribery allegations at the House of Representatives commenced on Wednesday with former House Speaker Edwin Snowe submitting into evidence a document and compact disc which he claims has the voice of Representatives Samuel Bondo, Saar Gbollie, Kettehkumuehn Murray and Rufus Gbeor.
- Mr. Snowe said he personally recorded the lawmakers when they visited him to confirm receiving US\$5000 from some of their colleagues to sign a resolution seeking his removal. At the end of the thirty minutes, the proceedings into the bribery claim were suspended until Wednesday February 13. The House Judiciary Committee Chairman Representative Armah

Sarnoh said the four lawmakers linked to the bribery allegation would be summoned for questioning to state their role in the scandal.

- Meanwhile, the Liberian Express, Heritage and The National Chronicle newspapers report that the Foundation for Human Rights and Democracy (FORHD) has called on the House Judiciary Committee to halt further investigation into the bribery claim saying they lack the qualification to conduct the probe. FORHD Executive Director, Aloysius Toe said there is a need for an independent panel outside the Legislature to investigate the scandal.

(The News, National Chronicle, The Analyst)

Liberian Businesses Oppose Presidential Bill - Vows to Lobby against its passage

- The Liberian Business community has vowed to resist attempts by the Executive to amend the Liberian Business Law which sets aside 26 businesses to be run by Liberians only, saying they would lobby with lawmakers not to pass the 2007 business act submitted by the Executive which opts for those businesses to be opened to foreigners. The bill seeks to amend the investment incentive act of 1973 and replace it with the act of 2007.
- Reports say the Liberian Business Association (LIBA) has encouraged lawmakers not to pass the act because it runs contrary to the Liberianization policy.

USAID Donates US\$ 375,000 Anti-Malaria Drugs

(The News, Heritage, The Analyst, New Vision)

- The United States government through its Agency for International Development has donated 496,000 doses of anti malaria drugs to the Ministry of Health. The combined therapy, considered the most effective anti malaria drugs, would help Liberia fight the disease, which is prevalent in the country. A 2005 health indicator survey showed that malaria accounts for 44 percent of in-patient deaths and 38 percent of cases at hospitals across Liberia.
- USAID puts the cost of the drugs at US\$375,000. The Acting Head of the National Malaria Control Programme at the Ministry of Health said the donation is a boost to the programme.
- Mr. Tolbert Nyeswa said the drugs would be transported to County Health Depots and distributed to health facilities with trained staff across the country. Mr. Nyeswa described the donation as timely as the NACP was low on malaria drugs. According to Mr. Nyeswa, the drugs would last for four months.

Grand Bassa County to Get US\$4M School.... Netherland Sponsor Breaks Ground

(The News)

- An insurance Company, the National Academic has broken grounds for the construction a community school in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County. According to a representative of the Netherlands-based company, Mrs. Josephine Gbaa the project would cost over US\$4 million and said the construction of the school would enhance the education capacity of Liberian children.
- Speaking at the ground breaking ceremony, Mrs. Gbaa said when young people are educated they would contribute immensely to the decision making and rebuilding process of the country. She assured the people of Grand Bassa County of her organization's support and commitment to the project. Mrs. Gbaa called on the community to take responsibility of the project by ensuring its success. When completed, the campus would host a dormitory and a medical centre.

Radio Summary

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

Former Speaker Snowe Takes Stand In House Bribery Probe

(Also reported on Star Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Liberian Businesses Vow to Resist Attempts to Amend Business Law

Government-UNMIL Hold Talks on Liberia's Agriculture Sector

- A Ministry of Agriculture release issued in Monrovia Wednesday said Agriculture Minister Dr. Chris Toe and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Liberia, Ellen Løj have been holding talks aimed at developing Liberia's Agriculture sector.
- Speaking during an acquaintance visit, Madam Løj expressed the hope that long term solutions will be reached to normalize the situation in the rubber industry in Liberia.
- Earlier, Dr. Toe spoke of government's programme and the policy of the Agriculture sector in the country.

Women Legislative Caucus Frowns at Delay in Releasing Autopsy Report

- The Women's Legislative Caucus has expressed concern over reported delays by the Justice Ministry to release the autopsy report into the death of a teenager, Angel Meideh Togba, who reportedly "hanged" herself in the bathroom of her guardians.
- The Chairperson of the Caucus, Representative Alomiza Barr said unless the report into the girl's death is released, justice is being delayed and denied.
- Representative Barr also frowned at the Justice Ministry for allegedly failing to conduct autopsy into the death of two other children, Alvin Jarba and Tenecce Doe who she said died under "mysterious" circumstances last year.

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

USAID Donates US\$ 375,000 Anti-Malaria Drugs

BBC

Thursday, 7 February 2008

Congo warlord flown to The Hague

A ex-rebel leader from the Democratic Republic of Congo has been flown to The Hague to face war crimes charges at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui, now a colonel in the Congolese army, was arrested on Wednesday, a court statement said.

He is alleged to have planned a brutal attack by his National Integrationist Front (FNI) fighters on Bogoro village in eastern Ituri region in 2003.



Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui's militia disarmed and he joined the army

He is the third Congolese warlord to be sent to The Hague.

Child soldiers

Some 200 civilians were murdered in the attack on Bogoro on 24 February 2003.

Col Ngudjolo's arrest warrant lists nine counts:

- Three counts of crimes against humanity including murder, inhumane acts and sexual slavery
- Six counts of war crimes including the use of children soldiers.

Prosecutors allege the Bogoro attack - committed together with the Patriotic Resistance Force in Ituri (FRPI) group - was part of a systematic campaign in 2003 directed against Ituri's ethnic Hema people by the majority Lendu community.



Fighting in the gold-rich Ituri region broke out in 1999 and continued until 2003.

The BBC's Mark Doyle says the conflict in Ituri manifests itself as an ethnic war, but its root cause is the criminal mining of the region's gold and other minerals.

An estimated 50,000 people were killed and hundreds of thousands left homeless.

Under a peace deal, several Congolese militias have disarmed and been integrated into the national army.

Associated Press

Friday, 8 February 2008

Victim confronts ex-Khmer Rouge leader

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) -- A Cambodian genocide victim confronted a former Khmer Rouge leader in the courtroom for the first time Friday, questioning him on who was responsible for the death of some 1.7 million people in the late 1970s.



Nuon Chea is shown at a session of the U.N. tribunal of former Khmer Rouge leaders on February 4.

Theary Seng, whose parents died during the Khmer Rouge regime, took the stand as a representative of the civil party in a hearing on Noun Chea's appeal against his pretrial detention at Cambodia's U.N.-backed genocide tribunal.

Nuon Chea, who was the main ideologist for the now defunct communist group, has been held since September 19 on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his involvement in the group's brutal 1975-79 rule, which caused the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people.

The former Khmer Rouge leader said Thursday he would not try to flee the country to escape from justice as he pressed for an appeal against his pre-trial detention by Cambodia's U.N.-backed tribunal.

He is one of five former Khmer Rouge leaders detained by the tribunal, which is expected to begin holding trials later this year, and the second former Khmer Rouge leader to appear before the judges.

Many victims of the Khmer Rouge have long feared that some of the defendants, now aging and infirm, could die before facing trial.

The 1975-1979 communist Khmer Rouge regime is widely considered responsible for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people through execution, overwork and starvation.

"We try our best to take care of all the defendants without thinking about the costs ... so that they remain healthy to confront the law," Reach Sambath said earlier this week.

The tribunal earlier said detention of Nuon Chea was necessary to prevent him from pressuring witnesses, destroying evidence or escaping.

The judges said the safety of the 81-year-old Nuon Chea could be at risk if he was released.

His Cambodian lawyer, Son Arun, claimed the tribunal's investigating judges did not have sufficient grounds to detain him and asked the court to postpone the hearing so a foreign lawyer could join him.

He was given until Wednesday to explain how much time was needed.

In December, the pretrial chamber judges ruled against a similar appeal for release by Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Duch, who headed the Khmer Rouge's notorious S-21 prison and torture center.

The tribunal is expected to begin holding trials later this year. The other defendants are Ieng Sary's wife Ieng Thirith, who was minister for social affairs in the Khmer Rouge government, and Khieu Samphan, the former Khmer Rouge head of state.