

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



PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Monday, 8 November 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Charles Taylor's Trial

Taylor's Last Witness Continues Testimony

By Judith Armatta

For the third day, the prosecution cross-examined defense witness Sam Flomo Kolley (aka Sam Mustapha Karome), Liberian member of the RUF.

As the prosecution sought to connect the accused Charles Taylor to the war and atrocities in Sierra Leone, the witness continued to deny any connection.

Weapons Transport to Liberia from Sierra Leone

In 2000, the RUF captured 500 UNAMSIL (United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone) soldiers with their weapons. The prosecution maintains the RUF transported the weapons from Sierra Leone to Liberia for Mr. Charles Taylor. Mr. Kolley said he was not aware of it, and he was not personally involved in any such transport.

At the end of the war, the RUF was ordered to disarm and turn over all weapons to UNAMSIL and ECOMOG (Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group). Mr. Kolley was in charge of collecting weapons from RUF soldiers in Kailahun. According to UN documents, the RUF had turned over very few weapons by September 2001. Nevertheless, Mr. Kolley insisted he was unaware of any captured weapons that were not returned from Kailahun. Nor did he know anything about hostage taking despite being a senior officer.

Earlier, the witness testified it was physically impossible to transport heavy weapons from Sierra Leone to Liberia because a ferry over the river was not in operation. To challenge this the prosecutor, Nicholas Koumjian, read from the testimony of prior witnesses stating that weapons were stripped from vehicles and transported separately on orders from Issa Sesay, RUF commander. UN Security Council documents also reported that vehicles had been stripped of weapons. This makes them much lighter and easier to transport, the prosecutor suggested. Again, the witness said he knew nothing about it. When one of the judges offered that perhaps weapons could not be transported across the border because Pakistani troops were there, Mr. Kolley readily agreed. When the judge then asked why he had never said so before, he received no satisfactory answer.

Showing a photograph of a large gun said to be a Howitzer, Mr. Koumjian asked if it was possible to transport by canoe, the method of transport used by Mr. Kolley according to his testimony. The witness said it was not. However, Charles Taylor testified earlier that the RUF brought the Howitzer to him from Foday Sankoh, the prosecutor pointed out. The witness did not agree.

Mr. Koumjian also attempted to have Mr. Kolley agree that weapons came to Sierra Leone from Liberia as well as vice versa. Issa Sesay had testified that Sam Bockarie brought ammunition from Liberia to Sierra Leone by a 10 wheel truck. If a 10 wheel truck could cross from Liberia to Sierra Leone, heavy weapons dismantled from vehicles and hidden among sacks of rice on pick up trucks could cross the other way.

AFL and RUF Attack on Guinea

The prosecutor turned to the RUF's attack on Guinea, putting to the witness that the attack was made by a combined force of RUF and Charles Taylor's Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). Mr. Kolleh agreed that both attacked Guinea but insisted they acted separately. While stating he did not participate in the attack, he said he was in the area where he heard sounds indicating the AFL had joined the attack already begun by the RUF. Nor did he change his testimony when told that John Vincent, a member of Charles Taylor's Special Security Service (SSS), had testified that the RUF and AFL attacked Guinea together after the Lome Peace Accords.

Other witnesses, according to Mr. Koumjian, testified that Charles Taylor ordered Issa Sesay to attack Guinea. Reasons given varied from the need to get arms into Guinea before any disarmament to keeping open a route for reinforcements.

Small Boys Unit and Small Girls Unit

As he had yesterday, the prosecutor asked Mr. Kolleh about the SBUs (Small Boys Unit). They were not armed and only helped commanders with domestic duties, he responded. From "Footpaths to Democracy" written by a doctor who accompanied the witness in escorting hostages to the border, the prosecutor read: "The RUF trained and armed a large number of men and women, including elderly, youth, children, and the disabled." Mr. Kolleh responded that the RUF gauged the age of children by their height and trained only those who "appeared" older than 15 years. In response, the prosecution quoted from the RUF anthem: "Go and tell my parents they will see me no more," then quoted a defense witness also an RUF member, stating the RUF armed children from 10 and up. The whole world knew it, this previous witness testified. Mr. Kolleh continued to deny the RUF's use of children.

Nor did he change his testimony when Mr. Koumjian asked him about a boy named Musa who was with him at the time. Mr. Kolleh replied that Musa is 30 years old or more now and was very big at the time. If he is 30 now, the prosecutor noted, he would have been 14 then. He and another youth named Saar or Sahr helped him carry things when he was a transporter, the witness said. They were not on the front line. They were his bodyguards. Denying they were SBU, he said only Saar carried a weapon.

Death of Sam Bockarie

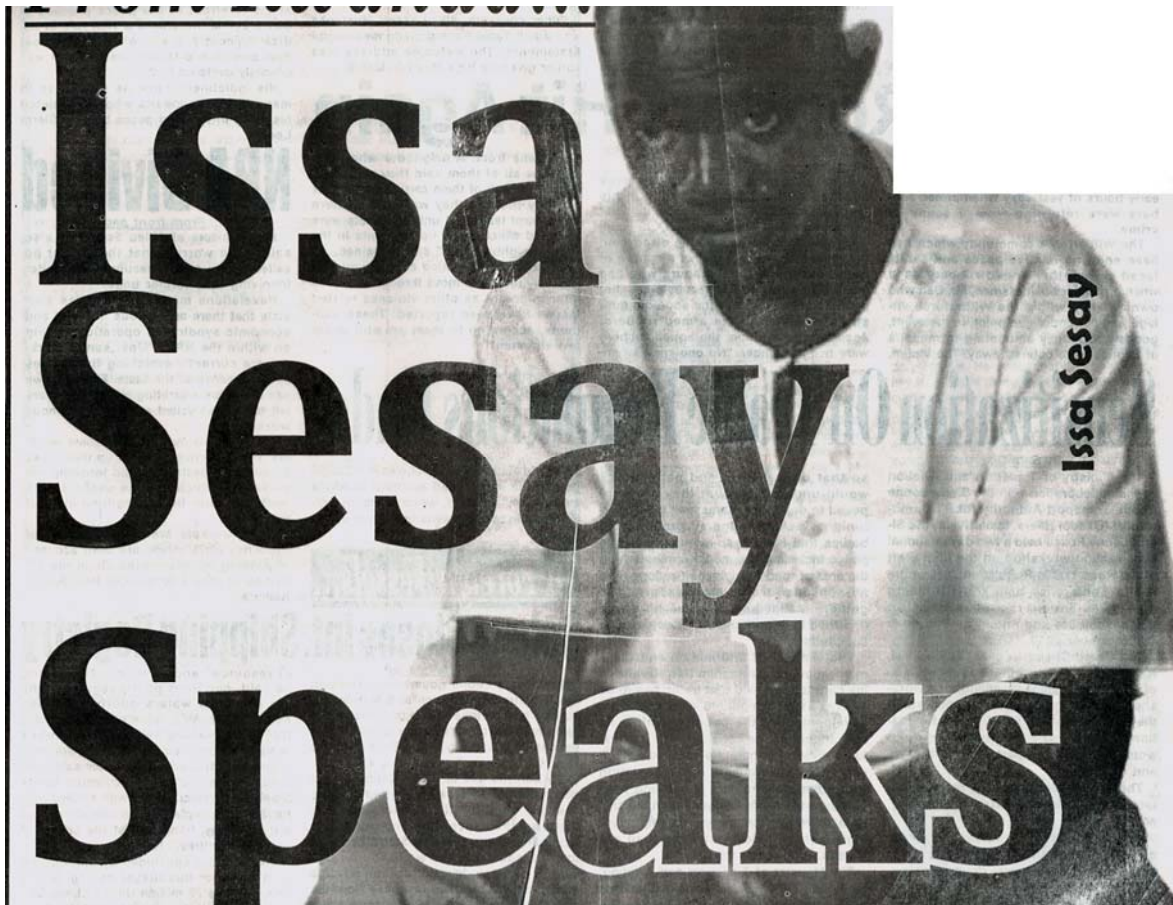
The prosecutor turned to the defense summary of the topics Mr. Kolleh would testify about. As required by tribunal rule, the defense provided the summary to the prosecution prior to Mr. Kolleh's testimony. While it stated he would discuss the death of Sam Bockarie (a.k.a. Mosquito), he had not. The prosecution gave him the opportunity to do so.

The witness said that in 2006 Pa Maribo (another Vanguard) told him how Mosquito died. Benjamin Yeaten, former Director of the SSS, took Mr. Bockarie's wife to the border claiming that her husband wanted to see her. After two days they heard Mosquito, his wife, and children had been killed. Though Mosquito was his friend, Mr. Kolleh did not ask who killed him or the circumstances of his death, the prosecutor noted, implying that he already knew.

Credit charlestaylortrial.com

The Exclusive

Monday, 8 November 2010



Issa Sesay Speaks

By Ibrahim Foday

The former leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) self styled Gen. Issa Sesay past weekend spoke to The Exclusive from their detention centre in Rwanda.

According to Issa Sesay, their current situation in the Rwanda detention centre is not that conducive especially when they are far away from home.

Explaining further, Issa Sesay said, he contributed greatly to the peace process in Sierra Leone. He however expressed dissatisfaction over his indictment and subsequent imprisonment by the Special Court. The Special Court, according to Sesay is bias when it comes to justice.

He concluded by saying that, both the government and the Special Court should have taken certain issues into consideration before indicting persons to face for such a Court.

Issa Sesay frowned at the Special Court for depriving them from interacting with their families because according to him, although the Special Court said they will provide air ticket for a member of their family to visit them once a year he is yet to receive any visitor this year.

It could be recalled that, Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon, Augustine Gbao and Alex Tamba Brima all of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) together with Alie Kondowa and Moininah Fofanah of the Civil Defense Force (Kamajor) plus Santigie Kamara a.k.a 55 of the Salone Military were indicted, arrested, charged and sentenced to prison by the United Nation's backed Special Court for Sierra Leone for war crimes.

Prior to his indictment, Issa Sesay was at the forefront of the peace process in Sierra Leone. He played a vital role in the disarmament process which, to a great deal contributed to the peace which was officially declared in 2002.

His indictment came as a surprise to many Sierra Leoneans who appreciated his effort in bringing peace back to Sierra Leone.

Bar Association gets new prexy

By Chrispin Davies

Following the appointment of the former president of the Bar Association of Sierra Leone, Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara as the commissioner for the anti-corruption commission, a just concluded by-election has made Reginald Fynn Esq. the new president of the Bar Association.

Speaking to this press, lawyer Fynn expressed happiness over his election as the new president of the Bar. He explained that he was called to the Bar in 1998 and that he had been practising for the past twelve years with no bad record. He

went on to say that if he hadn't been doing his work well his colleagues would not have voted for him and that he is relatively a young lawyer considering the fact that there are other lawyers who are much more senior than him.

Lawyer Fynn has served the association in various executive positions such as assistant treasurer, treasurer, general secretary and vice president. He said he is very well determined to transform the association into a much better one by way of doing so many great things just

like his predecessor whom he owes great respect for.

He said as the association is normally known for taking up human rights issues, they will through his leadership be looking at other areas like being involved in developmental programmes, commenting on the running of the judiciary, economic development and also how the executive is carrying itself.

He went on to say that as the Bar is currently engaged in a project which provides legal aid for the poor and less privileged which he takes very seriously, he will also be continuing the gender and sexual based violence issue that the former president started during his tenure of office.

He said as current president of the Sierra Leone Bar Association he will not only be working in the interest of making a mark for himself but for that of the association so that its name will be placed higher than it is now.

Note: Reginald Fynn was a prosecuting attorney in the Office of The Prosecutor.

Itar-Tass News Agency

Monday, 8 November 2010

ICTY chief prosecutor to attend Nuremberg Trials conf in Moscow

Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Serge Brammertz will arrive on a three-day visit in Russia on Monday.

Brammertz will meet with the top officials of the Russian Foreign Ministry on Monday, Brammertz's Special Adviser Frederick Swinnen said. The chief prosecutor will dwell on the ICTY current work and the strategy to complete its activities, as well as on the level of cooperation between the Hague Tribunal and the former Yugoslavian countries, Swinnen said.

Brammertz will deliver a report at the conference "The Nuremberg War Crime Trials: Historical and Legal Aspects" that will open in the Russian capital. The RAS General History Institute, the RAS Institute of State and Law and the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) under the Russian Foreign Ministry organized the conference.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was established under UN Security Council Resolution № 827 of May 25, 1993, for the persecution of the criminals responsible for blatant violations of the international humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia since 1991. The Hague Tribunal held a constituent session on November 17, 1993. The Hague Tribunal tries the crimes committed in Croatia (1991-1995), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995), Kosovo (1998-1999), Macedonia (2001). The Hague Tribunal also tries such crimes as the breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions (violations of the laws and customs of war, genocide and crimes against humanity).

The Hague Tribunal consists of three Trial Chambers and one Appeals Chamber. There are 16 permanent judges and 12 ad litem judges who serve on the tribunal. They are elected for a four-year term by the UN General Assembly. The chief prosecutor is Serge Brammertz (Belgium, since January 1, 2008). The ICTY headquarters are situated in The Hague.

Reuters

Thursday, 4 November 2010

Karadzic given month to study new material



A video grab shows wartime Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic as he takes the stand at his war crimes trial at The Hague - Source: Reuters

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has suspended proceedings against Radovan Karadzic for a month so that he could consider a mass of fresh material.

The prosecution recently handed in about 14,000 pages of material that contains potentially exculpatory information and Trial judge O-Gon Kwon said that the sheer volume of the material was such that it was in the interest of justice to temporarily halt proceedings.

Karadzic is the former President of Republika Srpska, head of the Serb Democratic Party and Supreme Commander of the Bosnian Serb Army. He stands accused of crimes committed against Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Croats and other non-Serb civilians in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 war.

His trial began on October 26, 2009.

The suspension will start after witnesses scheduled for this week and those for next week already in The Hague or in transit, have been heard.

Hirondelle News Agency

Friday, 5 November 2010

ICTR Prosecutor files new applications for transfer of cases to Rwanda

The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Hassan Bubacar Jallow, has filed new applications for referral of cases of three genocide-suspects to Rwanda for trial.

"Justice Hassan Jallow announced today (Thursday) that he has filed three new applications for the referral of the cases of three accused persons to Rwanda for trial," states a press release made available to Hirondelle News Agency on Friday.

The cases involve detainee Rwandan Pentecostal Church Pastor Jean-Bosco Uwinkindi and two fugitives, including former judicial police inspector of Kivumu commune in Kibuye prefecture (Western Rwanda), Fulgence Kayishema and ex-mayor of Gishyita commune in the same prefecture, Charles Sikubwabo.

According to the Rules of the Tribunal, such applications are filed before the president, who in turn will, for each motion, appoint a bench for determination upon hearing arguments from both the prosecution and defence for the accused concerned.

Each side has the right to file an appeal to challenge before the Appeals Chamber the decision by the lower chamber.

This is the second time Prosecutor Jallow files such applications for referral of cases to Rwanda for trial. In 2007, he filed similar motions of cases involving four detainees and one fugitive. All the requests failed because Trial Chambers were not persuaded that the accused would receive fair trial.

The prosecutor said in the statement, however, that Rwanda has since taken steps to amend its laws and bring them in conformity with what the Trial Chambers would expect to meet international standard of fairness.

Furthermore, he said, the country has also put measures in place to ensure the access of defence witnesses to Rwanda without hindrance, including video link facilities to take evidence of witnesses who could not travel to Rwanda to testify as well as ability of Rwandan Judges to take evidence of witnesses on commission outside Rwanda.

This assurance was made last month by the Rwanda Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga at a press conference in Arusha, after talks with Mr Jallow.

FK/NI/ER/GF

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Daily Nation (Kenya)

Monday, 8 November 2010

Ruto: My trip to The Hague

By PAUL JUMA (pjuma@ke.nationmedia.com)

Suspended Higher Education minister William Ruto returned to the country on Monday from Netherlands where he had gone to meet the International Criminal Court investigators and declared that he was satisfied with the trip.

Mr Ruto arrived at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport shortly after 8am to a rousing welcome. His supporters, friends and relatives who had been waiting at the airport from as early as 5am burst in song, dance and cheers when he emerged from the international arrivals lobby.

Mr Ruto stopped briefly to greet the cheering crowd and thanked them for their support.

He declared that he had returned home glad that there was still room for truth in Kenya, adding: “Ukweli ukidhihirika, uongo utajulikana (When the truth comes out, falsehood will be isolated).”

And using another popular Kiswahili saying, perhaps to drive home his happiness, he added: “Mungu si Athumani, Mungu si binadamu (God is not a human being).”

After speaking for less than 10 minutes, he left the airport as his security detail struggled to keep his supporters at bay.

Rumours and Lies

He later addressed the media at Nairobi's Panari Hotel where he trashed as rumours and lies the contents of the Waki Report on the post-election violence and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Report - the two documents that have become central in the investigation into Kenya's post election violence.

He accused the two commissions of denying those adversely mentioned the opportunity to give their side of the story, and further accused judges who compiled the Waki Report of going ahead and lying that he was given a chance.

He said: “Some of those investigations were compiled and they represent quite a bit of rumours and falsehood and propaganda.”

That, he added, was the reason he went to The Hague – “to set the record straight” – and held successful discussions with ICC investigators.

When asked whether he met Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo, his reply was short, and indirect: “As to whether I went to the ICC to meet a taxi operator, that is for you to decide.”

Present at the news conference included his wife, Mrs Rachel Ruto, his mother Ms Sarah Samoei, and MPs Charles Keter, Joseph Kutuny and Linus Cheruiyot.

Profiles of ICC 'key' witnesses put their credibility to question

Katwa Kigen. Photo/FILE

By KATWA KIGEN

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has been in a fishing expedition lately as it seeks to move forward with the planned indictment of suspects alleged to have either masterminded or funded the post-election violence in the country.

The court has in the process ruffled many feathers in the way it is carrying out its investigations, especially with demands for high level security meeting minutes at the height of the skirmishes which left thousands dead, displaced and property worth millions of shillings destroyed.

Many people expected the ICC to carry out its investigations in a manner that is not only acceptable but in line with international standards – or at least be seen to be doing so.

Unfortunately, the unfolding scenario with the ICC intervention, even before it takes full charge of the investigations into the PEV cases, has left many not only baffled but also tongue-tied.

For starters, the spiriting out of the 13 "key" witnesses to foreign countries in what was termed an effort to protect them following a threat on their lives has kicked off a major debate as to whether the ICC is serious with its work or it is seeking to dramatise the process for political expediency.

At least seven of the so-called witnesses are people of questionable integrity with some having not only done time in jail but also subject of investigations by security agents.

Interestingly, most of the witnesses are those with a background in political or human rights activism for financial gain as they operate NGOs whose funding has ended up lining their pockets instead of benefiting the intended groups as contained in their proposals to donors.

Still, questions have been raised over the choice of link people by the ICC in the zones they intent to carry out their investigations and zero in on suspects.

Waki list

Most of the link people are politicians who have differences with some leaders who have been mentioned as possible suspects on the Waki list of 12 which was handed to the ICC and awaits to be opened when indictments are issued in due course.

Still, as the investigative arm of the court carries out its inquiries, it has emerged that the point men are NGO operatives whose activities have been questioned by the public, local authorities and government departments.

One of the people, a top manager of a human rights organisation based in Eldoret, has several cases pending in court, including issuing inflammatory statements and issuing a death threat against a woman who declined his sexual overtures. The records are available at Eldoret divisional police headquarters and the law courts.

The rules on trials demand that a lawyer appearing before the ICC shall not engage in any improper conduct such as sexual relations, coercion, intimidation, or exercise any other undue influence in his or her relations with a client.

It is expected that the same people the ICC will be dealing with either as point men on the ground or witnesses uphold the same standards so as not to be seen to be engaging in double standards.

Most of the witnesses do not meet those standards. They are "mercenaries" for hire specialising in character assassination, and political hirelings who can do anything for monetary gain.

Some of the so-called witnesses have not only been yearning to be flown out of the country in the belief they get greener pastures but they also have no responsibilities at the family or social setting.

We also expect the ICC not to over-rely on the Waki commission report and that of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) and that of Prof Phillip Alston, the UN special rapporteur, which is littered with unsubstantiated claims, insinuations and innuendos without care to substantiate or establish its credibility.

We expect the ICC to start independent investigations and get to the bottom of the matter without seeking to sacrifice anyone for political reasons or otherwise to please the international community.

It is clear that in such investigations, no one is above the law and it is the general feeling and mood of the country that those with the highest responsibility be held to account for the loss of life and property.

In that regard, the investigations should start with the President and the Prime Minister as the people fought because of them and the chief security officers at the time before moving down the ladder to those who played various roles.

If that would not happen, and if the two principals would not be among those to be flown to The Hague for trial, then the process would be deemed to be biased, a public relations stunt, and politically engineered to suit the interests of donors who have a keen interest in the process.

Mr Kigen is one of the lawyers who accompanied William Ruto to the ICC in The Hague

The Badger Herald
 Wednesday, 3 November 2010

International tribunals worth the time

By Stephanie Sykes



*Matt Hintz*The Badger Herald

Journalist Thierry Cruvellier spoke on campus Wednesday night about how international criminal tribunals can create justice for victims in countries that have experienced war crimes. While most of the earlier courts only had international members, now there are efforts to include citizens from the actual countries.

Focusing on the workings of international criminal tribunals in countries such as Cambodia and Rwanda, an international journalist told a University of Wisconsin audience Wednesday the results are worth the wait.

Thierry Cruvellier reported on the International Justice Tribunal in Rwanda from 1997-2002 and said the courts are mechanisms of justice used after severe war crimes and genocide in countries such as Rwanda.

While the courts seem good on their face, he said they should not be regarded as inherently good, because they cannot solve all problems for countries.

“In the political world we’re living in, you’re not going to have easy answers,” Cruvellier said.

International criminal tribunals are an important mechanism of transitional justice by which countries transition from war to peace, he said.

Cruvellier said the first few courts were fully international, with no members from countries where the crimes happened.

Because these first courts contained all international members, they were disconnected from the crimes committed, which was exacerbated by the fact many of the earlier courts were also held outside the country where the violation occurred, Cruvellier said.

There is now an effort towards re-nationalization, in which the newer courts are mixed, with shared responsibility between citizens and international participants, Cruvellier added.

Cruvellier also said the length the courts last is something the United Nations did not expect, one more thing the U.N. is learning from.

The U.N. mandated the earliest courts established in Rwanda and Yugoslavia in the early 1990s to last only four years, but they are still in existence today, he said. The courts are expected to last at least twenty years now.

The drawn-out court process has made questions of justice more difficult to discern, he said.

“What is the right time for justice? This is a huge question that I don’t have an answer for,” Cruvellier said.

Despite time and international court members adding distance to the crimes, Cruvellier said these tribunals can still be considered political transitions.

He used the example of Rwanda, where mass murder was followed by mass justice when more than one million people were prosecuted for the human rights violations that occurred there 20 years earlier.

Cruvellier said the four main methods of transitional justice currently in use are trial, truth seeking, reparations and vetting.

He said vetting is when state institutions are purged of military members involved in crimes without trying them in court.

Even with the presence of tribunals, Cruvellier said the damage has already been done.

“There will never be an answer that is satisfying enough for the victims,” Cruvellier said.

UW graduate student Aliza Luft said she enjoyed the talk and thought learning about issues such as criminal tribunals is an important part of being a good citizen.

“We don’t fully recognize countries with so much political clout affect the politics of other nations,” he said.

UW senior Carolyn Lucas agreed and said understanding world-wide issues will help people understand their own countries better.

“Theses lectures help us understand what is going on in our own country,” Lucas said. “If we can learn from other people’s mistake that can be very helpful.”

Daily Trust (Abuja)

Monday, 8 November 2010

Nigeria: ICC is Analysing Jos Crisis, Says Prosecutor

Muideen Olaniyi

The Chief Prosecutor of the Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) Luis Moreno Ocampo has said that the court is analyzing issues concerning the crises that occurred in Jos to establish potential crimes against humanity.

The ICC's interest to launch an examination of the violence that erupted in Jos last year was as a result of petition filed by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) to Mr Ocampo's office.

The petition requested Ocampo to use his position "to investigate proprio motu allegations of unlawful killing of at least 326 people and perpetration of other crimes under international law during the violence in January 2010 in Jos, Plateau State of Nigeria; and the reports that the military and police used excessive force against both Christians and Muslims in responding to the violence."

In the letter with reference number OTP-CR-58/10, dated 5 November 2010, and signed on behalf of Mr Ocampo by M.P. Dillon, Head of Information and Evidence Unit of the Office of the Prosecutor, the ICC said that, "On behalf of the Prosecutor, I thank you for your communication received on 01/02/2010, as well as any subsequent related information.

"The Office is analyzing the situation identified in your communication, with the assistance of other related communications and other available information. Under Article 53 of the Rome Statute, the Prosecutor must consider whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court have been committed, the gravity of the crimes, whether national systems are investigating and prosecuting the relevant crimes, and the interests of justice. Analysis will be carried out as expeditiously as possible, but please be aware that meaningful analysis of these factors can take some time."

SERAP's lawyer, Mr. Femi Falana, who had sent the petition to the ICC on behalf of the group, in his reaction to the development said "this is fantastic news for the victims of the unlawful killing and other abuses that took place in Jos earlier this year, and previous outbreaks of deadly violence in the city.

"It is also good news for international justice especially given the persistent lack of political will by the Nigerian government to address the problem. The intervention by the ICC in this case is absolutely important as the ICC can once and for all address the responsibility of those who instigated the violence in Jos. Ending impunity for the cycle of violence in many parts of Nigeria is essential for sustainable peace, stability and security, and for the country's social, economic and political development," he said.