

**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, 9 February 2007

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

Is The International Justice System African? / *The Spark* Pages 3-5

Amnesty International Criticises Government / *Concord Times* Page 6

### International News

Taylor's Lawyers in Town / *The Inquirer* Pages 7-8

Demand Fair Trial,' Taylor's Lawyer Urges / *The Analyst (Monrovia)* Pages 9-10

Former Liberian President Taylor's Lawyer Alleges Bugging at UN Court / *Star Radio* Page 11

JPC Reveals Investigation into Taylor's Alleged Mal-treatment / *Star Radio* Page 12

Karim Khan Press Conference in Monrovia / *BBC Network Africa* Page 13

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / *UNMIL* Pages 14-16

Khmer Rouge Trial Bogs Down in Politics / *Asia Times Online* Pages 17-19

Appeal for Mengistu Death Penalty / *BBC Online* Page 20

Guinea Chaos Sparks Regional Fallout Concerns / *Financial Times (London)* Pages 21-22

## The Spark

Friday, 9 February 2007

### Is The International System African?

*By AY Kallay*

*Charles Taylor, Hinga Norman, Foday Sankoh, Sam Bockarie, are all Human Rights violators. Thus they must stand before the law to answer charges like: killing, murder, rape etc. However, what about those who committed major crimes than theirs? What about those who manufactured or even sold weapons to rebels?*

The recent arrest of Charles Taylor, former Liberian President and indictee Chief Hinga Norman, former Deputy Minister of Defence and former Civil Defence (the Kamajoh) Commander, by the International Court of Justice in Sierra Leone (ICJ) has again drawn attention on the International System of Justice for Human Rights violations. After a 55 year gap since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials, there has been a rapid and impressive proliferation of tribunals amassing facts and coming to judgment on gross abuses around the world.

The ICJ established to investigate charges on killings, rape, looting and crimes against humanity or crimes committed during the war that raged in former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia until 1995 has during the past 10 years or so sentenced more than 30 people and taken another 39 or more into custody including Milosevic. A year after its formation, the UN extended the tribunal to include a new International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), created in Arusha (Tanzania) to try those responsible for the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. The ICTR made history when it became the first court to try and convict a head of government, former Rwandan PM. Jean Kambanda, for genocide and crimes against humanity. In the case of another condemned person, Jean Paul Ayekesu, the Arusha Trial chamber laid down that rape and sexual violence also constitute genocide as long as they were committed with intent to destroy a particular group targeted as such and held that sexual violence been an "integral" part of the process of destruction of the Tutsi ethnic group. Local trials also replicated the same issue.

A Magistrate Court in London ordered the house arrest of the former Chilean President Gen. Augusto Pinochet. This case gained universal attention and concluded in the momentous British House of Lords ruling that decisively negated the defence of "Sovereign Immunity" for acts committed by a government or by those following a government's orders. In the words of a British Barrister, Geoffrey Robertson, he said "for the first time Sovereign impunity". Subsequently, Human Rights Watch and Canadian cam-

paigners sponsored the criminal prosecution of the former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre in Senegal. He was accused of killing about 40,000 people and tortured over 250,000 others during the time he was in power. Although the ousted tyrant narrowly avoided prosecution for these acts, he was promptly declared an undesirable and asked to leave Dakar, Senegal for elsewhere in Africa.

Two Rwandan Roman Catholic nuns, Sisters Maria and Gertrude, were found guilty and jailed for 12 and 15 year terms in June 2001 by a Belgian court for handing over to their killers approximately 6000 Tutsis who were taking refuge in their convent and for providing the militia men with petrol so they could set fire to burn over 600 Tutsis who had taken refuge. A Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands tried two Libyan intelligence officials alleged to have planted the bomb which crashed the U.S. Aircraft over Lockerbie in 1998 and 259 passengers and crew and 11 on the ground below.

One of the two men was convicted while the other acquitted. There are currently established courts to deal with issues of crimes relating to Human Rights Violations in Cambodia, East Timo (Indonesia), Sierra Leone and the Hague...

All of these tribunals have done and will continue to do tremendous work. Yet, as has been highlighted out by a number of scholars, all of the indicted or convicted war criminals are citizens of small and underdeveloped countries; Rwanda, Chad, Serbia, Chile, Libya, and many others. The Nuremberg and Tokyo trials after the Second World War tried only the losers. The victors escaped justice! Not once since 1945 has a national of the rich developed world been tried or indicted, as ours in Africa, for war crimes or other Human Rights Violations.

Writing in the Los Angeles Times, a Freelance American Journalist, Robert Scheer, argues that Robert McNamara, the American Defence Secretary during the 1960s, ought to be tried as a war criminal for his conduct during the Vietnam War. Scheer

argues that if Milosevic was accused of using Military means to wage a campaign of terror against the civilian population of Kosovo, then McNamara should also be tried as it was he who "defined the largest part of the Vietnamese country side, populated by peasants, as a fire free zone." McNamara was not brought to trial, nor will he or any other American be made accountable for their misdeeds in Vietnam.

Similarly several allegations have been levied against former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. In his book, 'The trial of Henry Kissinger,' Washington-based British Journalist Christopher Hitchens accused the veteran proponent of real 'politik' of ordering the Christmas bombing of Hanoi that killed over 2000 innocent civilians and flattened Batch Mail Hospital; of organizing the secret bombing of Laos and Cambodia that killed a million civilians and resulted in the reign of Pol Pot, who killed more than a million civilians and aiding Operation Condor, during which the military dictatorships of Latin America assassinated, tortured and murdered leftwing political opponents, endorsed Indonesia's 1975 genocidal invasion of East Timor, the world youngest government, and of facilitating the Phoenix Programme that systematically murdered over 70,000 civilians between 1967 and 1970.

Kissinger called the book, "contemptible." Like McNamara, the 'Noble Peace Prize' laureate Kissinger will never be brought to trial. He continues to be regarded as an elder statesman. Businessmen, academics and policy makers seek his advice. His newspaper column is syndicated by respected news papers like the Los Angeles Times and Washington Post and he has been a consultant to leading networks like ABC News and CBS. Kissinger has refused to help courts in their investigations. Whilst in Paris, Kissinger was asked to give testimony by a French judge investigating the Pinochet case, to which he denied, saying he was too busy.

McNamara and Kissinger are not the only two; there is also Bob Kerry, a US Medal of Honor winner and former Senator. In February 1967 he, as a lieutenant serving in Vietnam, and his US Navy seal team assaulted

Than Phone Hamlet in the Mekong Delta. The mission was part of operation Phoenix. It is alleged that Kerry ordered the execution of between 15 and 20 unarmed innocent women and children.

NATO leaders have also been accused of war crimes for bombing the former Yugoslavia. The Geneva Convention prohibits bombing that is not clearly justified by military necessity. Nato Aircraft bombed railway stations, bridges, power houses, communication networks, factories, ware houses, hospitals and schools in a 78 day bombing campaign, killing at least 500 people in the process. For this, they have been accused of planning and executing a bombing campaign they knew would cause the deaths of civilians. They apologized for what they termed "collateral damage" and a report issued by the tribunal's prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte of Switzerland, absolved them of committing war crimes.

These crimes are not only limited to the West. In June 1989, Chinese Prime Minister Lee Peng and his military commanders ordered tank operators to open fire on armless students massing in Tiananmen Square. There are mounting allegations that Russians committed war crimes in Chechnya and breached the Geneva Convention by refusing the Red Cross access to Chechen prisoners. In a BBC interview on whether Israel PM Ariel Sharon should be indicted for War Crimes for his failure to prevent the massacre in 1982 of Palestinian refugees in the Shabra, and Shatila zones when he was the Commander of the Israeli Army and the massacre of thousands in Jenin when he became Prime Minister. Princeton Professor of International Law Richard Falk replied, "No doubt whatsoever." There have been moves to bring such an indictment in Belgium, using the same Universal Jurisdiction Principle, enshrined in Belgian law that was invoked in the case of the Rwanda nuns.

The inconsistency in the treatment of leaders from the rich and poor nations leaves a lot to be desired and cannot be sustained in the long term. If it is, it will seriously undermine the credibility and authority of the interna-

tional system. Sooner or later the likes of McNamara and Kissinger will have to be indicted and brought before an international criminal court to answer for their crimes just like Pinochet or Milosevic. This will give the system legitimacy. Already there are signs that this may happen. Palestinian refugees have initiated a lawsuit against Sharon for his role in the Sabra, Shatila and Jenin massacres, an Argentine judge has summoned Kissinger to testify about the disappearance of its citizens, and a Chilean judge is seeking to interrogate him concerning the 1973 murder of American journalist Charles Horman.

However, the US is vehemently opposed to any change in the rules. It signed the Rome statute establishing an international criminal court with reluctance, and is not in a hurry to ratify it. The US wants to create a world of universal values, rules and institutions but does not want the same to apply to itself. It played an important role in getting Milosevic to the Hague, it is pressing hard for the Special Courts in Sierra Leone and Cambodia. The Hague and Arusha tribunals were created at the behest of the US; it has invoked international law to arrest Manuel Noriega of Panama and to bomb and impose sanctions on Iraq that have killed and are still killing innocent civilians, engineered Taylor's arrest in Nigeria to stand before the Special Court in Sierra Leone etc.

An Alien act provides jurisdiction allowing foreign leaders to be indicted in the United States for crimes committed in violations of human rights and other crimes committed against nations. Yet they refuse to abide by any of the same rules.

It is great for the West to advocate for the leaders of Third World countries who commit vicious human rights violations to be punished but international justice must not apply to them. When western agents commit similar crimes they must be tried also if we really want this world to be a peaceful place.

The humiliation the Abughuraib prisoners suffered in Iraq, the Taliban and Alqaida suspects that are detained for five years now in Guantanamo in Cuba without trial is also another major human rights violation to be taken into account especially for a country which claims to be the most civilized like America and Great Britain.

Concord Times  
Friday, 9 February 2007

# **Amnesty International criticizes Gov't**

*By Regina Pratt*

**D**irector of Amnesty International, Brima Sheriff has criticized the Government of not being serious about the Child Rights Bill's enactment by the Parliament. He made this statement at the entrance to the Parliament building where about 49 children representing various schools waited endlessly as they claimed

to have been informed of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs Minister, Shirley Gbujama's presenting the Child Rights Bill in Parliament on Thursday.

Sheriff said he was part of a team that witnessed the drafting of the bill last year and now parliamentarians are saying that they are not aware of the enacting of the bill. *Continued page 3*

## **Amnesty International criticizes Gov't**

*From page 1*

Senesi Rogers, a teacher at Albert Academy said they received a letter from the ministry signed by one Mrs. Theresa Vamboi and they had complied with its content. "We assembled at the Victoria Park since 7.30am and nobody came to inform us of our position. Next time if we have any call, we are not going to cooperate," Rogers said angrily.

One student from Vine Memorial

Secondary School said they were not treated fairly adding that they should not have bothered to come and waste their whole day.

Leader of the House, Hon. Mohamed Fofanah said the only person that can authorize such invitation was the speaker so he queried the frustrated students and teachers. "Who invited you to Parliament? I don't know about the Child Right Bill go back and tell them," he shouted.

The Clerk of Parliament, Mr. Kemokai said he received information about the tabling of the bill on Wednesday. He further that the Chief Social Development Officer, Mrs. Theresa Vamboi came to her about three weeks ago to inform him about the bill but never came back until Wednesday to inform him of the minister's presentation scheduled for Thursday. "We do not do things like that," he said.

In his own view, Hon. Justice Edmond Cowan, Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Justice Edmond Cowan told the frustrated teachers and students that "We did not know you are coming here today." He

however informed them that the bill is before Parliament at the 2nd reading stage in their Parliament timetable.

Cowan urged them to talk with the Minister responsible for the bill adding that for it to be passed, they have to follow certain procedures. "We cannot be coarsed or pressured," he said stating that the bill will surely be discussed.

Vamboi later apologized to the teachers and students admitting their fault because of a break in communication. She however promised everything would be put in place before letters will be sent out.



## The Inquirer (Monrovia)

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### Taylor's Lawyers in Town

By C. Winnie Saywah

Former President, Charles Taylor's Defense Team says it is encouraging all Liberians to demand justice in the trial of the former leader in The Hague.

Mr. Karim Khan and Mr. Avi Singh who are visiting the country for the first time and are seeking information from citizens of honest and highly ethical standards said, Liberians should not be distracted by petit politics and allow their citizens languish not only in a foreign court but on a foreign continent for crimes allegedly committed in a different country.

He said that he is encouraging all Liberians to challenge the process with evidences in due course by bringing out information that would aid the proceedings.

The two foreign investigators who have sought leave from the court to await the commencement of the trial scheduled for June 4, are requesting more time to prepare an effective defense as former Justice Minister and one time Solicitor General, Cllr. Lavella Supuwood joins the team.

Addressing newsmen for the first time, one of the hired United Nations defenders of the former Liberian leader, Taylor, Mr. Khan said Liberians should begin to demand that the trials of their client is broadcast live on international radio that every citizen would determine myth from Hollywood fiction in the case.

The lead counsel for Mr. Taylor, Khan said it is the legitimate right of every Liberian to ensure that his client's rights to a fair trial are observed and called on the judges to rise to the level of determining facts from fictions.

Khan said there might be numerous discrepancies at The Hague but cited the placement of a camera in the conference room of former President Taylor, that, he said has been reported to the president of the court pointing out, "much of these cases need respect and justice"

He said they did not speak to the citizens of Sierra Leone noting that it is appropriate to speak to the people of Liberia who elected former President Taylor through a majority vote and are in the right position to speak on his fate thereby placing them in a highly difficult position.

Khan, who has practiced before the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the East Timor International Tribunal, said Mr. Taylor would be a proud citizen if Liberians engage in the process and scrutinize the proceedings.

He admitted that Mr. Taylor's defense team is actively seeking adequate time; facilities and resources to ensure an effective defense for its client and have applications currently pending on Mr. Taylor's conditions of detention.

He said they are hoping that the judges would seek justice rather than vengeance and that, that can only be done through a transparent process pointing out that the people of Liberia deserve nothing less.

Khan said as they galvanize relevant information from Liberians, in continuation of the defense team's preparation for the pending trial, anyone with information related to Mr. Taylor's case should contact the Defense team at 06874134 and promised that all interactions would be purely confidential.

Meanwhile Khan, a member of the English Bar, has for several years been a Barrister in private practice at the specialist criminal law set, 2 Hare Court, Chambers of David Walters, Q.C., Temple London and co authored numerous articles and publications in international law including the leading treaties on international criminal law- Archbold International Criminal Courts.

Mr. Singh who will be coordinating under the legal counsel's supervision in the country as a member of the California and Indian Bar, is a specialist in the international criminal law with extensive experience in investigations, evidence gathering and criminal trials in various jurisdictions and has been centrally involved in the government cabinet case at the ICTR for the past years.



## The Analyst (Monrovia)

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### **Demand Fair Trial,' Taylor's Lawyer Urges**

By Elwood Dennis

Seeks To Recruit Liberian Investigator

Prosecutors in the Sierra Leonean capitol, Freetown, say the D-Day for Taylor's trial on an 11-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity is set for June 4 this year.

Before and after that announcement, the prosecution reportedly setup liaison offices in Liberia to recruit witnesses to testify against the former Liberian leader.

There are even weird, unverifiable stories, last week, of attempts by agents of the Freetown Special Court to kidnap an active of aide of Mr. Taylor to do the job.

Now there are countermeasures by Taylor's defense counsel to thwart any such measures plus more.

The counsel is calling for a Liberian defense chain while it scouts for an investigator with integrity.

Defense counsels of detained former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, are calling on the people of Liberia and the media to rise up in demand of a fair trial for Mr. Taylor at the War Crimes Court in The Hague.

The head of Mr. Taylor's legal team, Mr. Karim Khan, told a press conference in Monrovia yesterday that it is time Liberians engage the process through scrutiny to make sure that the former president is given his rights in court.

The British lawyer didn't say what prompted the rally for fair trial when it is for Mr. Taylor's quest for free and fair trial that he was transferred from Sierra Leone, where public sentiments were high against him, to The Hague.

But he noted that it was the right of Mr. Taylor, who faces an 11-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity for his alleged role in the Sierra Leone, to get justice.

The fight for justice for Mr. Taylor, he noted further without elaboration, was not about cheap politics. Mr. Khan, who is a member of English bar, said the call to Liberians is to encourage them to follow up the case to know the truth rather than what he described as a Hollywood fiction being prepared for a blood buster movie.

He said though the judges at the end of the day will decide the case, the legal team was raising these early concerns to make sure that Liberians rise to the challenge to separate facts from fictions.

The lead counsel is being accompanied to Liberia by a member of the California and Indian bars, Avi Singh. Mr. Singh is a specialist in international criminal law, with extensive experiences in investigations, evidence gathering, and criminal trials in various jurisdictions.

For the past several years, he has been centrally involved in the government cabinet case at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Another member of the Taylor's defense team is former Liberian Solicitor General Cllr. James Lavali Supuwood, who has agreed to assist the team in a 'pro bono' capacity, a press statement issued yesterday by the Mr. Taylor's defence team said.

The team is in Liberia to conduct series of investigations in preparation of the trial and is appealing to members of the public with information relating to the case to contact it in confidence.

According to him, the demand of Liberians could be backed by various analyses of what had transpired to portray the actual accounts of happenings. He said the legal team has nothing to fear as the current campaign was in preparation of the beginning of the process for the real story to be told about Charles Taylor during proceedings.

He noted that preparation for Mr. Taylor's trial was focusing on Liberia and disclosed that the defense counsel was in search of investigators who will help with information to enable them to adequately get ready for the proceedings.

"The Defence is seeking to recruit an investigator of the utmost integrity, unimpeachable character, and professionalism to conduct investigations in Liberia," the statement said.

He then called on Liberians, irrespective of political affiliation or current employment status to apply for the position. The statement did not spell out the terms of reference for the position, but it seems such person will be expected to turn up evidence that will set Mr. Taylor free.

"Applications will be treated in the strictest confidence," the statement noted, prompting observers to believe whether the job will involve extralegal or paralegal activities.

Meanwhile, the Taylor defence team has urged the citizens of Liberia to engage the process and scrutinize proceedings so as to ensure that Mr. Taylor's rights to a fair trial are observed.

"The defence emphasizes that the right to a fair trial is his right as a citizen of Liberia, being in a foreign jurisdiction, on a different continent, for crimes allegedly committed in a different country," the statement quoted the defense counsel as saying.

## Star Radio

Thursday, 7 February 2007

### **Former Liberian President Taylor's lawyer alleges bugging at UN court**

The legal defence team of former President Charles Taylor has complained about the monitoring of private conferences of Mr Taylor and his lawyers in The Hague.

The lead counsel for Mr Taylor told a news conference Wednesday [7 February], a camera has been mounted in the room where legal conferences are held for Mr Taylor in The Hague.

Mr Karim Khan alleged this is a violation of the rights and privacy of the detained former Liberian president and his defence team.

He said the defence team of Mr Taylor has filed a formal complaint to the president of the UN-backed special court sitting in The Hague.

The defence team of the former Liberian leader says it needs adequate time, resources and facilities to ensure the effective defence of Mr Taylor.

The defence team of Mr Taylor also comprises former Liberian justice minister, Lavalu Supuwood and Avi Singh, a member of the California Bar Association.

## Star Radio

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### **JPC reveals investigation into Taylor's alleged mal-treatment**

Written by Sorbor George

The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission says investigation is going on into the alleged mal-treatment of former President Charles Taylor in prison.

The JPC said it is conducting the investigation in collaboration with its international partners in Europe.

The Executive Director told a news conference the JPC and its international partners are taking serious reports of Mr. Taylor's mal-treatment in The Hague.

Cllr. Augustine Toe said the JPC and its international partners would lead a serious campaign against the court if the mal-treatment allegation were established.

Cllr. Toe also accused Justice Minister Francis Johnson Morris at the news conference of violating the rights of a Lebanese merchant.

He said the imprisonment of Chackwi Kadouh without going through the court was a violation.

Mr. Kadouh is the General Manager of the K and K Trading Corporation.

## BBC Network Africa

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### **Karim Khan Press Conference in Monrovia**

#### BBC AFRICAN NEWS

The chief lawyer representing the former Liberian President Charles Taylor has again called for his war crimes trial in The Hague, scheduled to start in June, to be delayed. Speaking on his first visit to Liberia the lawyer, Karim Khan, who heads the United Nations-appointed defence team, said they needed more time to prepare Mr. Taylor's case. He denies 11 charges arising from his alleged support for rebels in the civil war in Sierra Leone.

#### NETWORK AFRICA

LEAD-IN: Now, if lawyers representing ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor have their way, his war crimes trial scheduled to start on the fourth of June will be delayed. Mr. Taylor, who is in The Hague awaiting trial for his alleged support of the rebels in Sierra Leone's bloody civil war, has pleaded not guilty to eleven charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity and faces a life sentence if found guilty. On his first visit to Liberia, the head of Mr. Taylor's defence team gave a press conference in the capital, Monrovia, and our reporter Jonathan Paye-Layleh was there.

PAYE-LAYLEH: The head counsel, Karim Khan, said it was unrealistic for the defence team to take less than five months to be ready for a case that the prosecution has taken five years to prepare for. The Court has not yet responded to the extension request. Flanked by his colleagues on the team and Taylor's family members, Khan said they were doing everything to challenge the prosecution's evidence against Taylor. He made this appeal to Liberians.

KHAN: I do call upon the people of Liberia and the media to remain engaged in this process, to demand that court proceedings are broadcast to this country so you can follow, and you can decide what is the truth.

PAYE-LAYLEH: The veteran lawyer said he had hoped that the Liberian government would show interest in the Taylor case and the process leading to his trial.

KHAN: When one of your citizens is whisked away, not just to a foreign court, but to a foreign continent, I think it is a legitimate concern of any country to ensure that that citizen's rights are upheld.

PAYE-LAYLEH: After requesting the handover of Taylor by Nigeria last year, the Liberian President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, made it clear that Liberia did not have anything to do with the issue any longer. For the BBC's Network Africa, this is Jonathan Paye-Layleh reporting from Monrovia, Liberia.


**United Nations**   **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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## **UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 8 February 2007**

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

### **International Clips on Liberia**

#### **Liberia reassures China of lasting partnership**

MONROVIA, Feb 7, 2007 (Xinhua via COMTEX) --Five days following Chinese President Hu Jintao's state visit to Liberia on Feb. 1, Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf on Feb. 6 night reassured lasting partnership between the two sides. The Liberian leader spoke at a reception hosted by the Chinese Embassy to mark what the embassy described as a fruitful and successful visit of President Hu.

#### **UN Hands Over School and Vocational Centre to Help Cement Peace**

Feb 07, 2007 (UN News Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --In its latest moves to help the Liberian Government fulfil its pledge of free and compulsory primary education as well as providing young adults with work skills, the United Nations mission has handed over a three-classroom complex built by its Nigerian contingent and a vocational training centre constructed by Bangladeshi peacekeepers.

### **International Clips on West Africa**

*There were no relevant stories on West Africa in the international media today.*

### **Local Media – Newspaper**

#### **Speaker Snowe Due to Attend Session in Virginia Today**

*(The Informer, The News, New Vision, Liberian Express, The Analyst, The Inquirer, Daily Observer, Nation Times)*

- Briefing journalists yesterday following a closed door meeting at the Capitol Building, House Speaker Edwin Snowe said he and other colleagues sitting at the Centennial Memorial Pavilion agreed to join "Majority" Lawmakers at the Unity Conference Center (UCC) in Virginia today, Thursday.
- Speaker Snowe who until now had vowed not to attend session in Virginia said that their decision to join their colleagues was to allow peace to prevail and to do the work of the Liberian people.
- Meanwhile, Speaker Snowe was allegedly prevented by some members of his Constituency from joining the other Lawmakers at the UCC on grounds that he did not consult them before reaching the decision and that by doing so, he would violate the Constitution of Liberia.

#### **In Nimba By-Elections Run-Off Expected**

*(The News, The Inquirer and Daily Observer)*

- Correspondents said that from preliminary results of the Nimba County District #6 By-Election, a run-off was likely as none of the candidates acquired the absolute majority needed to be declared the winner. Speaking at a news conference yesterday, the Chairman of the National Elections Commission, James Fromoyan said that the official results would be released today, Thursday.

### **Former President Taylor Defense Lawyers in Monrovia**

*(The Analyst and The Inquirer)*

- A team of defense counsels of former President Charles Taylor called on Liberians and the media to demand fair trial for their client who is detained in the Hague. Addressing reporters in Monrovia yesterday, the head of the team, Karim Khan said that they were in Liberia to conduct investigations in preparation for the trial which is scheduled for 4 June.

### **Supreme Court Cautions NGOs against Training "Paralegals"**

*(The Inquirer)*

- A Supreme Court release issued in Monrovia yesterday warned international and local non-governmental organizations against training "Paralegals" without the consent of the court. The release said it was only the court in consultation with the National Bar Association and the Lewis Arthur Grimes School of Law that had the authority to do so.

### **Over 600,000 Children Vaccinated Against Measles**

*(The Inquirer)*

- During a news conference yesterday, Health Minister, Dr. Walter Gwenigale declared that the just-ended nationwide integrated measles campaign in which 629,000 children were vaccinated, was successful.

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

### **Ruling Party Leads in Nimba County District #6 By-Election**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Charles Taylor's Defence Team Arrives in Liberia**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Health Minister Says Measles Campaign was Successful**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **House Speaker and Co Join Majority Bloc of Lawmakers**

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Port Managing-Director Uncovers Syndicate to Cheat Government**

- Addressing a news conference yesterday, National Port Authority (NPA) Managing-Director, Mr. Togba Nangana announced that he uncovered a major syndicate intended to defraud the Government of thousands of dollars by trying to smuggle 6 containers out of the Freeport Port of Monrovia, adding that the smugglers succeeded in getting three of the containers out of the Port. Mr. Nangana revealed that several personnel of the NPA, National Security Agency, Customs, Commerce and BIVAC were allegedly involved in the scam even though no arrests have been made.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

### **Ex-Combatant Complete Skills Training in Grand Bassa County**

- More than 120 ex-combatants yesterday graduated from an emergency training and resettlement program in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County organized by the Liberia Opportunity and Industrialization Center and the United Nations Development



Programme. The ex-combatants acquired training in tailoring, arts and crafts, masonry, metal works and carpentry.

- Speaking at the graduation ceremony, Grand Bassa County Education Officer, Mr. Chapman Adams challenged Liberian youths to be discipline and respectful to constituted authority and added that the youths would be successful in life if they are discipline while utilizing the skills acquired from the programme to enable them contribute to the development of the Country.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

#### **Police Abhors Increasing Rate of Rape in Southeastern County**

- Grand Kru County Police Commander, Patrolman Thomas Kwein abhorred the prevalent rate of cases of rape, domestic violence and simple assaults in the County but lamented the inability of police to combat the crimes due to the absence of Police Stations in the County, adding that the only 5 Policemen in the County were operating from a makeshift building.
- Patrolman Kwein appealed to the Government and UNMIL to extend their quick impact project activities to the area.

*(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)*

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

## Asia Times Online

Friday, 9 February 2007

[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast\\_Asia/IB09Ae02.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IB09Ae02.html)

### **Khmer Rouge trial bogs down in politics**

By Bertil Lintner

PHNOM PENH - Everything appears set for Cambodia's trial of the century. A huge building attached to the country's army headquarters on the outskirts of the capital has been turned into a courthouse. Behind it, a temporary detention facility is being built to house the suspects once they have been apprehended and brought to trial.

Cambodian as well as United Nations-appointed international prosecutors, defenders and judges are at the ready to take their positions on the court's benches. The day of reckoning is finally here for the leadership of the Khmer Rouge, which ruled Cambodia from April 1975 to January 1979, during which an estimated 2 million to 3 million people died from government-ordered executions, starvation and disease.

Or is it? Last November, legal experts from the UN submitted an 81-page document titled "Draft Internal Rules" for "the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia". It has yet to be approved by the Cambodian side and, if an agreement has not been reached by the end of April, the international judges will consider asking the UN to withdraw from the tribunal, the French investigating judge, Marcel Lemonde, told Asia Times Online in an exclusive interview.

While people on the international side are emphasizing "the extraordinary chambers" part of the tribunal's charge and insisting on international standards, their Cambodian counterparts view the trial more through the sovereign lens of the "Courts of Cambodia". "We are not speaking the same language in many different ways," said Lemonde. The result may be that the accused leaders of the Khmer Rouge go unpunished for their crimes against humanity.

That would no doubt please China, the Khmer Rouge's main international supporter during the Indochina war as well as during its four years in power. After the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in December 1978 and January 1979, Chinese support helped the Khmer Rouge hold the line against Vietnamese troops from bases along the Thai border.

The latest problems for the trial began last November, when the Cambodian Bar Association (CBA) forbade local lawyers to attend a training program planned by the London-based International Bar Association (IBA), and threatened to cancel the program unless it solely selected the program's participants and speakers. "The prohibition by the Cambodian bar is part of a wider scheme of opposition designed to obstruct the operation of the tribunal," the IBA said in a statement dated November 24. The IBA subsequently canceled the program.

The Cambodian bar, for its part, accused the international group of "encroaching on its sovereignty", arguing that under Cambodian law the local bar is the only body mandated to regulate the country's legal proceedings. The UN-sponsored international contingent argues that the CBA appears to have overlooked Article 2.2 in an agreement that senior minister Sok An and Hans Corell, UN undersecretary general for legal affairs, signed on June 6, 2003, which says: "The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, and in particular its Articles 26 and 27, applies to the agreement."

Article 27 states, "A party may not invoke the provisions of its internal law as justification for its failure to perform a treaty." And besides, international law would have to apply. According to Robert Petit, the Canadian co-prosecutor, Cambodia's criminal law is "not complete and comprehensive, and sometimes contradictory".

Petit has relevant international experience, having previously served as a legal officer in the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, as regional legal adviser for the UN's mission to Kosovo, and as senior trial lawyer in the Office of the Prosecutor for the Special Court in Sierra Leone. His Cambodian counterpart, Chea Leang, comes from a totally different legal tradition: she and most of the Cambodian judges on the tribunal were educated in the former Eastern Bloc, including in East Germany, the Soviet Union and Vietnam.

### **Political complications**

But it is not only a question of different backgrounds and widely diverging interpretations of the law. The situation in Cambodia has also changed quite dramatically since June 21, 1997, when Cambodia's then co-prime ministers, Prince Norodom Ranariddh and his bitter rival Hun Sen, agreed to send a joint letter to the UN asking for assistance "in bringing to justice those persons responsible for the genocide and crimes against humanity during the rule of the Khmer Rouge from 1975 to 1979".

The request was made after repeated demands from the international - mainly Western - donor community and the United Nations, which was then represented in Cambodia by Thomas Hammarberg, a former director of the London-based human-rights advocacy group Amnesty International. Only a few weeks later, Hun Sen ousted Ranariddh in a bloody coup d'etat and forced him into temporary exile. The Western donor community was not amused, and the United States and Germany suspended all non-humanitarian aid until a free and fair election was held. Japan, Cambodia's largest donor, said it would halt new projects.

China, which Hun Sen referred to as "the root of everything that was evil in Cambodia" in an essay he penned in 1988, nonetheless came to his government's rescue. Longtime Cambodia watcher Julio Jeldres notes that China was the first country to recognize the change of regime after the July 1997 coup, and in December of that year, Beijing delivered 116 military cargo trucks and 70 jeeps valued at US\$2.8 million. In February 1999, Hun Sen paid an official visit to China and obtained \$200 million in interest-free loans and \$18.3 million in foreign-assistance guarantees.

Since then, China has emerged as a major donor to Cambodia and - unlike aid from the West - Chinese assistance comes with no strings attached for promoting democracy or good governance. China is also a major investor in Cambodia, mainly in the garment industry, but also in agriculture, mining, hotels and tourism. Cambodia's dependence on the West will most likely further diminish when newly found oil and gas reserves come onstream.

According to the World Bank, Cambodia's total energy reserves may be as high as 2 billion barrels of oil and 10 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, which could generate as much as \$2 billion in income, or several times the current combined amount that the country generates in domestic revenues and receives in foreign aid. [1]

So why would Cambodia risk upsetting its budding and lucrative relations with China - and Beijing's support for the Khmer Rouge would almost certainly be highlighted if the tribunal were to proceed - at a time when the country's dependence on Western aid and goodwill are set to diminish?

There are also reasons closer to home for Cambodia to scupper the trial. Jesper Huor, a Swedish journalist whose Cambodian father was interned and most likely executed in Khmer Rouge's infamous Tuol Sleng prison in Phnom Penh in 1977, points out that many in the present government actually belonged to the Khmer Rouge before they broke with their leaders and defected to Vietnam in the late 1970s.

That includes Prime Minister Hun Sen, though according to most sources, he was a low-ranking Khmer Rouge military commander and in a capacity not responsible for atrocities. But there are others in positions of prominence in Cambodia's currently ruling establishment who could be vulnerable and exposed during the trial, particularly if those accused began to talk or call in witnesses. Therefore, Huor argued, "Cambodia's government won't agree to a tribunal which they can't control." And, as *Lemond* says, "The international judges are not prepared to participate in a show trial."

In other words, time is running out for the Khmer Rouge tribunal, and death rather than the law may ultimately catch up with the aging survivors of the genocidal regime. The top leaders of the Khmer Rouge who are still alive and who would be eligible to stand trial are all now in their 70s and 80s.

But as Trudy Jacobsen, an Australian academic, wrote in a recent issue of the *Nordic Institute of Asian Studies'* bulletin that a local Cambodian driver told her: "He didn't really care what happened at the tribunal, as he knew that the perpetrators would be reincarnated as beetles." In the end, as the trial bogs down in politics, that may be the best the survivors of the Khmer Rouge terror can hope for.

## BBC Online

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### Appeal for Mengistu death penalty

By Amber Henshaw

BBC News, Addis Ababa

The Ethiopian government is lodging an appeal to demand the death sentence for the country's former ruler Mengistu Haile Mariam and his closest aides.

Mengistu and his associates were found guilty of killing thousands of people by the country's high court during the regime's 17-year rule.

State prosecutor Yosef Kiros said he wants the life sentence handed out last month to be overturned.



Thousand's of Mengistu's opponents were killed

Mengistu is in exile in Zimbabwe, which says he will not be extradited.

The three judges who handed out the life sentences were divided over the verdict.

The presiding wanted the death penalty but the other two thought life sentences were more appropriate because of the men's health and ages.

#### Mass graves

Mr Yosef said the defendants did not deserve the court's sympathy and that some of them should get capital punishment.

A lawyer defending two of the men said he was not surprised by the prosecution's decision.

In total, 73 people were charged with genocide and crimes against humanity - 33 appeared in court, 25 including Mengistu were tried in absentia, another 14 died during the 12-year case and one man was acquitted.

Mengistu's military committee, known as the Derg, came to power in 1974 after they toppled Ethiopia's last emperor Haile Selassie.

The most brutal period of the regime was known as the Red Terror when suspected opponents and intellectuals were rounded up and killed.

Many of their bodies ended up in mass graves or were just tossed into the street for families to collect.

## Financial Times (London)

Thursday, 8 February 2007

### **Guinea chaos sparks regional fallout concerns**

By DINO MAHTANI

When an African president has to make increasingly frequent and personal raids on his own country's central bank so he can pay the army, serious trouble is usually afoot.

As the political crisis in Guinea deepens, Lansana Conte, the country's ailing head of state, who is said to sometimes rely on the advice of witchdoctors, appears to be doing just that.

Unions have given Mr Conte until early next week to name a suitable prime minister with wide-ranging powers or they will resume a general strike that shut the country down for much of last month.

The ramifications of a fin de regime in Guinea, almost forsaken by the rest of the world, could have serious consequences for neighbouring states in west Africa.

Billions of dollars have been spent on peacekeeping efforts in Guinea's neighbours following a series of wars in the 1990s. Yet Guinea has remained relatively isolated diplomatically and there is no safety net in evidence for the succession crisis that many in the region have seen looming for a decade.

Guinea has been intricately tied up in the wars that have swept the region in the past 20 years. As such any instability there is likely to have wider fallout beyond its borders in a region blighted by poverty and awash with small arms.

The former French colony actively supported rebels invading Charles Taylor's Liberia a few years back. It gave refuge to hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries, sheltered Sierra Leone's temporarily exiled president from his own rebels, and provided military assistance for west African peacekeeping missions.

Mr Conte's regime is finally turning in on itself after 23 years while the military, decaying and divided along generational and ethnic lines, watches on.

Last month, unions calling a strike to protest against sliding living conditions were backed by ordinary Guineans in what turned out to be something of a popular uprising across the country. Scores of protesters were shot dead in the capital Conakry, mainly by the president's own elite guard.

The strike was the third in a year, and lasted 18 days. The world's biggest bauxite exporter saw operations shut down.

The fall in living standards has accelerated, starting a few years back when Mr Conte had to send troops to quell disturbances around Guinea's border area with Liberia and Sierra Leone. Moussa Solano, Guinea's government spokesman, says Guinea should have received more international assistance than it did at this point. But diplomats and opposition politicians say that Mr Conte,

who came to power through a military coup, has ruled Guinea, now ranked by Transparency International as the most corrupt country in Africa, like a personal fiefdom.

Compounding erratic decision-making, the president is influenced by the competing clans of his many wives and political hardliners.

While Mr Conte has already weathered an army mutiny in 1996 and an alleged assassination attempt in 2005, the latest events represent the most serious challenge to his authority from the people.

At this stage, however, it is unlikely that the president, who reserves the right to sack any prime minister nominated, will make -genuine concessions that could threaten his personal interests or those of his cabal.

At the same time measures brought in under pressure from unions, such as price caps on fuel and rice subsidies, will further eat into the government's revenues.

"The measures are unsustainable," says Madikaba Camara, Guinea's finance minister.

With bilateral donors and the International Monetary Fund reluctant to clear Guinea for debt relief until it sees political progress, the country is left saddled with Dollars 240m in debt payments a year, representing half its budget, according to Mr Camara. The Euros 118m (Dollars 154m, Pounds 78m) unblocked by the European Union after Guinea began implementing some basic political reforms, could also be held back, diplomats say.

For the president, who would want to make sure he has the loyalty of the military, the lack of funds, notwithstanding mining revenues, would be a concern.

A big question surrounds what the army rank and file, many of whom are poor, would do in a more serious uprising.