

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

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

Wednesday, March 09, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
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Africa  
Americas  
Asia  
Europe  
Middle East  
Oceania

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Human Rights  
Refugees  
Prisoners  
Torture  
War Crimes  
Women's Rights

ACTIVISM  
Campaigns  
Petitions  
Alerts  
Signatures  
Letters

CONTACT  
Press  
Media  
Public  
Partners

SEARCH

## News

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

#### Public Statement

AI Index: AFR 44/005/2005 (Public)

News Service No: 054

8 March 2005

#### **Amnesty International welcomes the European Union's Parliament resolution on Charles Taylor; calls for its full implementation**

Amnesty International today welcomes the European Union (EU) Parliament resolution urging the Nigerian government to hand over former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

This resolution represents a significant step in the efforts to bring Charles Taylor to justice for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other crimes under international law that he is alleged to have committed.

The resolution, adopted on 24 February 2005, calls on inter-governmental organizations, including the UN Security Council and the African Union (AU), to co-operate with the EU in order to ensure its full implementation.

Amnesty International calls on the EU and its member states to fully implement the resolution by ensuring that Charles Taylor is handed over to the Special Court for Sierra Leone for prosecution. It is important that the EU work closely with the AU in this regard if the efforts to ensure justice and accountability in Liberia are to be successful.

Amnesty International also calls on the AU to fully cooperate with the EU to achieve the implementation of the resolution. Such cooperation is consistent with the fundamental objective under the organization's Constitutive Act which is to "promote and protect human and peoples' rights" as well as to "condemn and reject impunity". Amnesty International urges the AU to demonstrate greater political will in order to find a lasting solution to the human rights problems in Liberia, including by supporting international community's efforts to bring Charles Taylor to justice.

The Chairman of the AU, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, should ensure a consistent application of the AU principles by using his good offices to initiate action that would ensure Charles Taylor's appearance before the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

#### Background

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News

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**Find Country**



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Mar 8, 2005

**Nigeria:** Fears of human rights violations after troops deployed in Bayelsa State, Niger Delta  
Mar 8, 2005

**Control Arms:** Multi-billion Dollar Arms Trade Puts Women in the Line of Fire, Amnesty International Charges  
Mar 7, 2005

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#### LATEST REPORTS

On 4 June 2003 the Special Court indicted Charles Taylor for bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious crimes under international law. These crimes included killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, conscription of children, abduction and forced labour perpetrated by Sierra Leonean armed opposition forces, which Charles Taylor actively supported.

In August 2003, Charles Taylor left Liberia for Nigeria where he remains. No steps have been taken by the Nigerian authorities to surrender him to the Special Court or to open an investigation into the charges. Charles Taylor was subsequently granted refugee status in violation of international and regional refugee conventions

The EU's Parliament resolution among others calls on the UN Security Council to urgently take up this issue; and urges building international pressure international pressure in order to bring about Charles Taylor's extradition. The resolution also supports the Liberian transitional government's decision to freeze the assets of Charles Taylor and his associates; calling on the EU to continue to support the 2003 Liberian peace agreement. It urges all states in the region to refrain from any action that might contribute to instability in neighbouring countries.

**Uzbekistan:** Appeal cases  
Feb 28, 2005

**Mexico:** Justice fails in Ciudad Juarez and the city of Chihuahua  
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The New Citizen, Wednesday 9th March, 2005.

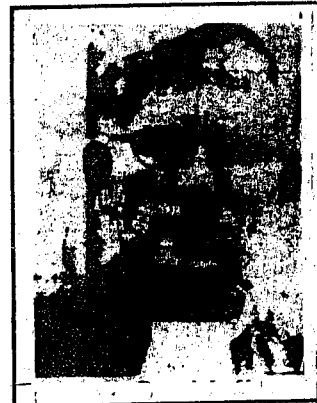
# DE SILVA MAY REPLACE DAVID CRANE

*By James B. Sawyer*

The Office of the Registrar of the Special Court yesterday informed the New Citizen that in the absence of the prosecutor of the Special Court, Desmond de Silva, the Deputy Prosecutor, would act as the Prosecutor when David Crane would have left the office of the Prosecutor of the Special Court on July 15, 2005.

The American born Special Court Prosecutor, David Crane, last week gave public notice about his imminent departure when he associated his move to return to his native America to the need for him to be closer to his family.

Robin Vincent further informed the New Citizen that he had already put in place modalities for the replace-



*David Crane*

ment of David Crane after discussing with the United

## DE SILVA MAY REPLACE

Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in New York. Special Court Registrar also disclosed that the Deputy Prosecutor of the Special Court, Desmond de Silva, had been appointed by President Kabbah to ensure continuity in the ongoing trials at the Special

Court.

Robin Vincent also stated that the departure of David Crane would have no effect on proceedings of the Court as indictees of the Court are still facing trial.

David Crane, Special Court Prosecutor, would have served

the Special Court for three years, but has decided to step down for personal reasons which speculators believe may not be unconnected with the unwillingness of Nigeria to hand over the first indictee, Charles Taylor, to face trial at the Special Court in Freetown.

## COMMENTARY

### BIDDING DAVID CRANE FAREWELL

It will be most unfair for the American born Prosecutor, David Crane, to come to this country, sensitize the public about human rights, at the same time play a pivotal role in the setting up of the Special Court and depart without bidding him farewell.

In the wake of the arrival of David Crane to Sierra Leone, those people who believed in the concept of the Rule of Law and the need to eradicate impunity saw him as a great hero who would finally teach Foday Sankoh, Johnny Paul Koroma, Sam Bockarie and Charles Taylor about the need to behave like normal human beings and to understand that human rights violations constitute a crime against humanity.

There was no doubt that at the time when David Crane made his very powerful statements, actually suggesting that he had enough authority to arrest any suspect from Nouakchott in Mauritania to Duala in Cameroon, he was applauded, for after all, members of the public, including President Kabbah's government, also knew that the Special Court had the support of the Security Council of the United Nations.

But David Crane started to encounter difficulties through natural and human interventions when Foday Sankoh died and therefore could not be tried, when Johnny Paul Koroma disappeared in thin air and therefore could not stand trial at the Special Court, when Sam Bockarie died thereby depriving the Special Court from trying one of the most notorious murderers and of course, the inability by the Special Court to convince African leaders that Charles Taylor should be brought to face trial at the Special Court.

One of the greatest problems that persistently confronted David Crane was that of Charles Taylor, the first accused, under the protection of one of the most powerful countries in West Africa, Nigeria which decided that it would not release Charles Taylor to stand trial at the Special Court in Freetown.

The irony about Charles Taylor's indictment was that even though Interpol agreed that Charles Taylor had committed heinous offences,

the international police organization has been unable to arrest and bring Charles Taylor to the Special Court in Freetown.

Apart from President Kabbah who could not be seen to make statements contrary to those that led to the founding of the Special Court, no other prominent African leader has added his voice to the need to arrest the ex-Liberian leader, Charles Taylor and make him appear before the Special Court.

If President Obasanjo of Nigeria who still harbours Charles Taylor believes that Charles Taylor should not be released to the Special Court, there is hardly any leader in West Africa who can stand up in the open to challenge the position of the leader of 200 million people. Even Tambo Mbeki of South Africa, the leader of the most developed country on the continent, has neither made a statement on the need for a Special Court in Sierra Leone nor has he made any statement about the need to bring Charles Taylor to justice.

Perhaps, David Crane's final hope was that United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, would use his good offices to convince the Security Council and influential governments of the world to put the Nigerians under pressure in an effort to make Charles Taylor appear before the Special Court in Freetown.

But this has still not happened and as David Crane packs his bags, ready to bid farewell on July 15<sup>th</sup> to a people who received him with open arms three years ago, even if he does not state it, his frustration will continue to be the inability by the Special Court to bring to its jurisdiction the first accused in a trial that is supposed to teach a lesson to humanity.

A Special Court without Charles Taylor has been described by many as an empty arrangement and this would have hit the hard working David Crane very hard.

As we bid David Crane farewell, we can only ask him to take heart for we in Africa believe in a custom that a man who commits a crime will always be caught up with time.



## War Crimes Trial Starts in Sierra Leone

By Gabi Menezes

Abidjan

08 March 2005

*Menezes report (Real Player) - Download 391k*

*Listen to Menezes report (Real Player)*

Three members of Sierra Leone's former military government have gone on trial for crimes which include murder, rape, sexual slavery, and use of child soldiers.

Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara, and Santigie Borbor are alleged to have been part of the group of 17 men who carried out a coup in 1997, and later were members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, which is accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The lead prosecutor for the Special Court, David Crane addressed his opening statement to a packed courtroom, filled with many people who had been raped and brutalized during Sierra Leone's civil war.

Mr. Crane said that in a decade of painful and horrific warfare, the three defendants' intense criminal actions over a relatively short period of time took suffering to a new dimension, and traumatized the entire nation.

A journalist who attended the opening day of the trial, Lansana Fofana, said the atmosphere in the courtroom was very tense and emotional as it brought back memories of the 11-year civil war that killed 50,000 people.

"People's hands were chopped off, there were lots of amputations, people were gruesomely murdered," he said. "So the anger is still boiling over in many people, especially victims. But on the other extreme there are people who think that because peace has been won - [a] very, very difficult peace process - they do not want to see the perpetrators to be punished. They do not want to see the special court because they believe it could easily become a flash point for another conflict."

Testimony from people during the trial will include a man who had his hands chopped off by AFRC forces, and a woman who was gang raped along with her daughter. AFRC and the rebel Revolutionary United Front formed a coalition government shortly after the coup. Their armed forces are accused of carrying out a campaign of terror against civilians.

Thirteen people were originally indicted by the court, but only nine will stand trial. The former leader of the AFRC Johnny Paul Koroma is missing. RUF leader Foday Sankoh is dead, while ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is accused of supporting Sierra Leone's RUF rebels, is in exile in Nigeria.

Corrinne Dufka, a researcher for the New York-based group Human Rights Watch, believes that the U.N. backed Special Court is already a success, by simply holding the trials of the nine people in the court's custody.

"On a wider scale, I think it is also been important because it has rejuvenated Sierra Leoneans believe in the whole concept of justice, which of course, justice was in large parts politicized in Sierra Leone," she said. "The judicial system, even the police as an institution have over the years, in a large part failed the people."

Unlike the war crimes tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the Special Court for Sierra Leone is based where the alleged crimes occurred, so many Sierra Leoneans can go to the trials. The court draws on both national and international law.



It's not just a place on the map.

## Gacaca/Genocide Trials Begin March 10th

**Hirondelle News Agency** (Lausanne)

NEWS

March 8, 2005

Posted to the web March 8, 2005

Kigali

The first proper trials in the semi-traditional genocide courts known as Gacaca will, after a long wait, begin on March 10th, the head of the Gacaca department, Domitilla Mukantaganzwa told Hirondelle News Agency on Tuesday.

Since the start of the courts over three years ago, only pre-trial investigative hearings have taken place. The date for the start of the trials has in the past been constantly postponed.

"We can now confirm to you that you will see the first trials in Gacaca the day after tomorrow", Executive Secretary of the National Jurisdiction for Gacaca, Mukantaganzwa said. "Everything is in place for the trials to begin. We will formally announce that shortly", she added.

Gacaca courts were set up after Rwanda realized that regular courts would not handle thousands of suspects accused of participating in the 1994 genocide. At the time of setting up the courts, over 100,000 suspects were in custody for genocide. Regular courts, it is estimated, would have taken over 100 years to complete the cases.

Gacaca, on the other hand, is expected to complete the trials in about 7 years. The number of genocide suspects is expected to grow to half a million over the coming year.

Gacaca courts, presided over by elected volunteers, can handle crimes ranging from looting to murder. However, 'Category One' suspects--the alleged masterminds of the genocide and suspected rapists, can only be tried by regular courts. But these make up only about 10% of all suspects.

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