

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



UNMIL Military Spokesman Cdr. Anders Johansson and Liaison Officer Maj. Alexandre C. Pessoa visited the Special Court on Monday to discuss public affairs issues relating to the possible transfer of Charles Taylor to The Hague

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

Tuesday, 9 May 2006

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

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For di People  
 Tuesday, 9 May 2006

## *People's Letter*

# *Prosecutor Replies JIA Kangbai Story*

Dear Mr Kamara,

**I am writing to request a front-page retraction of the news story your paper published on 5<sup>th</sup> May, "Special Court May Indict Pa Kabbah" by Jia Kangbai.**

This story makes false accusations and is based on complete fabrication and therefore must be retracted. Because the headline was broadcast nationwide by UN Radio, we desire that the retraction be similarly and prominently placed on the front-page so persons living outside Freetown will not assume that you have not addressed the matter. I would like the retraction to include:

"The news story of 5<sup>th</sup> May titled: "Special Court May Indict Pa Kabbah" by Jia Kangbai wrongly claimed that the Special Court intends to indict President Kabbah. The journalist had no credible information to make this claim. In fact, we have since learned from the Special Court that the assertion is false."

"The Prosecutor is departing the Special Court for Sierra Leone after serving four years in Freetown. He is returning to the UK, much to the disappointment of his colleagues at the Special Court, in Sierra Leone, and also the Management Committee of the Court, due to family-medical reasons and professional commitments.

"The Prosecutor departs Freetown having worked tirelessly to fulfil his promise to the people of Sierra Leone to ensure the arrest and transfer of Charles Taylor to the Special Court. He has remained completely objective in his work at the Special Court."

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and also your acceptance of the terms of this letter and when the retraction will be printed.

Yours sincerely,

Harpinder Athwal

**Political Adviser and Special Assistant to the  
 Prosecutor**

## Human Intestines Tied At Checkpoint

DEFENCE WITNESS for CDF, Dixon Kosia who became a Kamajor in 1999 when he was initiated in Tihun in the Sogbimi chiefdom told the court that junta forces based in Koribondo killed Joe Tamidae's uncle and tied his intestines on both ends of the checkpoint at Koribondo.

Kozia said before he became a Kamajor, he worked as a clerk for the CDF from 1997-1998. He became battalion

commander under Joe Tamidae and that his batallion was based in Koribondo at which time the township was occupied by junta forces. I took part in the attack at Koribondo to dislodge the junta forces he said. The witness further said that they made several attacks without success and each of those attacks were led by one Albert Nalo who was the Director of Operations. He said each time they failed an attack the

**Continued Page 7**

## Special Court Trial

From Page 6

Kamajor will retreat to Kpatema in the Lugbu chiefdom. The first and second abortive attacks took place in January 1998 which were later followed by a third unsuccessful attack.

He said the fourth and final attack was launched on all roads leading into Koribondo town which he said took place on Friday 12 February 1999. During that attack, the witness said all the junta forces disappeared into thin air, this made them the Kamajors to go into the bush where they spent the night and that when they returned to the township the following morning, they saw houses that had been set ablaze by the junta forces.

He declared that the evidence given by Albert Nalo for the prosecution alleging that because civilians had given their daughters in marriage to members of the junta forces at Koribondo, Chief Sam Hinga Norman therefore ordered the killing of civilians and burning of houses without exception as untrue. Kosia said Joe Tamidae was promised the position of a batallion commander if Koribondo was captured from the junta forces and that the batallion commander was responsible to the district administrator, Mahei Hindowa.

The Exclusive  
Tuesday, 9 May 2006

# *Fear!!!*

## Sleepless Nights for Taylor

*By Foday Fofana*



*Lawyer Hassan Kamara*

Veteran Sierra Leonean lawyer based in the US, Mr. Hassan Kamara shaked this country last Friday when he told a local tab-  
*Contd. page 2*

# Sleepless Nights for Taylor

From front page

loid that Charles Taylor might be poisoned while in detention at our Special Court or in The Hague.

## WHY DEFEND TAYLOR

Lawyer Hassan Kamara told The Exclusive that "this case is our last opportunity as Sierra Leoneans, Liberians and the international community as a whole to finally learn the truth of this unacceptable and apocalyptic horror in a country, the most peaceful in the world".

## BLOOD DIAMONDS, BIGGEST FALLACY

The very communicative Sierra Leonean born lawyer stated categorically that 'blood diamonds' were the biggest fallacy blamed for our civil strife because as diamonds are forever; they say; and we have had diamonds and dealing in them for over twenty (20) to thirty (30).years; and without any smell of war...Why only now?... "I tell you in your paper which I've been perusing in the USA and Europe when I travel, thanks to your having a website, that this is our last opportunity to get the true story, the facts about the Sierra Leone's civil conflict and piece them together".

## WHO WANTS TAYLOR DEAD?

Mr. Kamara stated: "it is more likely than not that former President Charles Gangay Taylor will be poisoned while in detention here or in The Hague. But I will tell you about my intentions and the Charles Taylor case in my next interview with you Foday."

Meanwhile, our Special Court correspondent, Mohamed Kai, reported that Mr. Taylor got gripped by fear

of his life time when a generator near his well-protected cell, made a loud, faulting and banging noise.

Mohamed Kai reported that the engine was instantly repaired while Mr. Taylor was crying for help!

He said Charles Taylor was instantly informed about the technical fault. (our correspondent at the court reported that Mr. Taylor was relocated to another prison cell far away from the Power House of the Special where he was detained." Lawyer Kamara has maintained that the explosion could very well have been part of a continuing assassination attempt on President Taylor and that the Special Court must conduct a thorough investigation of the explosion.

## HASSAN KAMARA'S POLITICAL AMBITION

Pressed on whether he indeed has political ambitions, Mr. Kamara stated. "I'm at the present time not a member of any political party. However, I will be prominently involved in Sierra Leone's politics in the very near future because I have no choice as this country has not moved since the British left us in 1967; and nature allows no vacuum because it is the law of the affairs of men and women."

## SALONE HAD ALWAYS HAD GOOD LEADERS

The erudite international lawyer went on: "Sierra Leone has always had good leaders; meaning good human beings with pleasant personalities...all our Heads of State had been self-effacing and live simple lives from Sir Milton to President Kabbah."

The bearded lawyer who had volunteered in all the Bush presidential campaigns is a great admirer of

U.S President Bush and his father President George H. W. Bush and the brother of the President of the United States, Governor Jeb of Florida. He looks forward to Governor Jeb Bush becoming the third Bush to occupy the White House.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Pressed about his vision for the way forward for Sierra Leone, Mr. Hassan Kamara stated: "we need a leadership with very strong vision...We need a courageous leadership which is willing and capable of going where the interest of Sierra Leoneans lie...We certainly cannot afford a leadership that will shy away from white racism where it is; because I tell you Foday, my brother, white racism is very very powerful and it does exist."

## SOVEREIGNTY IS PARAMOUNT

Mr. Kamara argued that Sierra Leone "had no reason to obtain permission from this or that country before developing new relationships with other countries...Permanent interests and not permanent friends should be our foreign policy at all times."

He maintained that we must be more aggressive and forceful with our relations with countries like China, Japan, Iran, Venezuela, Brazil, India, North Korea etc.."

## SIERRA LEONE - BRITAIN RELIATIONSHIP IS A GIVEN

Mr. Hassan Kamara told The Exclusive the only given in our foreign relations is our relationship with the British because our relations have transcended colonialism and the war. Sierra Leonean and the British are now truly brethren.

Awareness Times  
Tuesday, 9 May 2006

## Eleventh Defence Witness testifies at Special Court

*By Saffia S. Kabba* Dixon Saidu Sesay, testifying in (CDF) trail at the Special Court  
The eleventh defence witness, the ongoing Civil Defence Forces *Contd: page 2*

### Eleventh Defence Witness testifies at Special Court

*From front page*

for Sierra Leone, has disclosed how he was initiated into the Kamajor movement in 1995, in a village called Tayiako, in the Sogbima chiefdom.

The witness said he served as clerk for the Kamajor movement between the period 1997 and 1998, before he became a Deputy Battalion Commander.

Asked whether he was part of the group of Kamajors that attacked Koribondo, the witness responded in the affirmative, explaining that three unsuccessful attempts were made to capture the town.

He went on to explain that they did not relent, as during the preparations for the fourth onslaught on the town, all the necessary mechanisms were put in place to ensure that the territory is recaptured. He said the Commander, Albert Nallo, was determined to see the fall of the town to government forces.

To achieve this, he revealed that a war strategy was put in place that sanctioned an all out attack on the town, using four entry points.

He went on to state that the attack was led by Albert Nallo, Borbor Tucker, Sahr

Lamin, and other key Kamajor commanders.

He stated that with the strategic plan, they were able to capture Koribondo from the AFRC/RUF forces that had previously controlled it. He said they entered the town without any resistance.

The following day, he said they were taking aback by the sound of heavy firing, adding that when they eventually went towards the direction of the firing, they came across a group of soldiers alongside their families who voluntarily laid down their arms and surrendered.

He said the soldiers were subsequently taken to Koribondo and handed over to ECOMOG the following morning.

ECOMOG, he said, later conveyed the men to Bo, alongside their families.

Responding to questions posed on him that Chief Hinga Norman actually ordered the Kamajors to kill any civilian found and also went ahead and gave them petrol to burn down the houses in reaction to the connivance that existed between the junta soldiers and the civilians in Koribondo, the witness simply said that he knew nothing about such an order.

Awoko

Tuesday, 9 May 2006

## CDF Battalion Commander explains Koribondo attack

By Betty Milton

**D**ixon Saidu Kossiah, former Deputy Battalion Commander of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), has revealed at the Special Court how the Koribondo attack was planned and executed.

Mr. Kossiah said they attacked the town, which was occupied by the juntas, three times before they finally succeeded during the fourth attack, which was in February 1998.

The witness maintained that during the three attacks, they used the Sumbuya route and that they were led by Albert Nallo who was the Director of Operations but were not successful.

He further stressed that in February they were summoned by Albert Nallo who told the fighters that they should try new strategy in order to succeed.

They decided that the

Sumbuya axis should no longer be used so it was then agreed that the four routes leading to Koribondo should be used.

Borbor Tucker and the other fighters, the witness said, used the Bo road and that one Sacramento and his troops should capture the Pujehun road.

At night, he went on, Joe Temy would cross towards the Blama Road whereas Albert Nallo, the witness (Mr. Kossiah) together with some other fighters, should use the Sumbuya Road.

Nallo's troops were the first to enter Koribondo and during their arrival, they did not meet any of the soldiers and so they passed the night in a bush, the witness stated.

After they had captured the town there were jubilations all over and they established a base there.

Few days later, Mr. Kossiah recalled, while listening to the BBC they heard heavy gunshots and

so they headed for the scene and met some soldiers together with their wives in a van belonging to MSF Belgium.

The witness stated that upon seeing them the soldiers dropped their arms and raised their hands up pleading for mercy. "We then took them and even gave them a house and food. Later two staff working at MSF came and collected their vehicle."

Answering questions by Alusine Sesay, lawyer for the first accused Chief Hinga Norman, the witness denied allegations made by certain prosecution witnesses that they were ordered by Chief Norman to kill the soldiers, as they were all spies and collaborators.

The witness also denied evidence by a witness that Chief Norman gave them (Kamajors) petrol to kill every civilian and that they should not leave even a fowl.



## *At Special Court...* **Witness testifies that Kamajors got weapons from Guinea**

*By Saffia S. Kabba*

As proceedings against former top guns of the defunct Civil Defence Forces (CDF) continues at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Defence Witness, Arthur Koroma, a former high ranking official of the Kamajor movement, has testified that Kamajors did get weapons and other military supplies from Guinea.

Mr. Arthur Koroma said this while being cross examined on Friday May 5, 2006, by Prosecution Lawyer, Joseph Kamara. The witness was responding to questions relating to claims that the weapons used in the 1998 attack on Tongo, were in fact

dispatched from Talia Yubieko, a known Kamajor stronghold.

The witness described the claim as false, insisting that the weapons used in the said attack were supplied from Guinea.

The witness also denied claims that he received instructions on strategic matters from Moinina Fofanah, explaining to the court on the contrary that he only received instructions from one Musa Junisa, who was his immediate boss. The witness also explained to the court how a number of enemy combatants captured by Kamajors were set free courtesy of the Lome Peace Accord.

## African News Dimension

Monday, 8 May 2006

### **Liberia's blood timber trader faces 20 years in Dutch jail**

By Peter Moyo

As the days of former Liberian President, Charles Taylor are numbered, Dutch prosecutors are pleading for a 20 year sentence for a man who allegedly sold him guns and ammunition.

Guus Kouwenhoven also known as the "blood timber" trader is accused of war crimes over an alleged guns-for-timber scheme with Taylor. The 63 year old Kouwenhoven is also on trial in a Netherlands court for busting a UN arms embargo for Liberia. The trade is said to have helped fuel conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s in which thousands of people were killed.

The prosecutors also want the court impose a fine of almost US\$600 000. The accused has however maintained that he did not know about the crimes committed by Taylor's government despite the fact that this was widely reported in international media. Witnesses have testified that Kouwenhoven and Taylor were always seen together quite frequently.

The former Liberian president is currently in UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone custody awaiting trial for atrocities committed during the country's civil war in both Sierra Leone and Liberia.

## Legalbrief Africa

Monday, 8 May 2006

### **Legal wrangles stalling Taylor trial**

Legal and political wrangling over which European country will take on Liberian president Charles Taylor should he be convicted by the International Criminal Court is holding up his war crimes trial.

IRIN reports officials for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, citing regional concerns that Taylor is a potential security threat and that the trial could take many months and even years, have requested that the proceedings be transferred to the ICC in The Hague. The Netherlands agreed to allow the Sierra Leonean Special Court to use ICC courtrooms, cells, and facilities in The Hague. But it said the UN Security Council had to authorise the trial; that the ICC and the Sierra Leoneans must agree on cost sharing; and that arrangements be made for the transfer of Taylor to another state once the trial was over. But 'there is still no news on which country will take him after the trial', said Tessa Martens, a spokesperson for the Netherlands Foreign Ministry.

A former close associate of Taylor is on trial in the Netherlands. Dutch national Guus Kouwenhoven (63) is on trial for war crimes and providing weapons to Taylor in violation of a UN ban on arms exports to Liberia. IRIN reports this is the first time western prosecutors are trying a national for breaking a UN embargo. Last week the former brother-in-law of Taylor, Cindor Reeves, testified that Kouwenhoven was involved in arms deals and in devising war strategies to fend off rebels besieging Taylor's men. Reeves said he was a middleman for arms shipments from Kouwenhoven's timber company to Taylor's residence in Monrovia. But Kouwenhoven denies ever having seen Reeves before.

There have been calls for the establishment of a war crimes court in Liberia. An estimated 10 000 Liberians are expected to march through Monrovia this week demanding the setting up of a UN sponsored War Crimes Court in Liberia, says an ANDNetwork (African News Dimension Network ) report. The Forum for the Establishment of a War Crime Court in Liberia has also called on the government to enact a Bill for the setting up of such a court.  
Full ANDNetwork report not available online

<http://towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/812/>

Monday, 8 May 2006

### **Taylor's Liberia: Shattered, Fragmented, Ruined**

Written by Rene Wadlow

Charles Taylor has left Liberia with a society shattered, the population fragmented and the economy ruined. However, he is unlikely to be tried for his actions in coming to power through civil war nor for his use of violence to stay in power once president.

He has too many followers left in Liberia and too many shares in local business for the new Liberian government to risk holding a trial there. Moreover, Taylor is widely believed to have powers of witchcraft, and few would want to testify, fearing revenge through the spirit world.

Taylor began in Liberia's administration in 1979 just as the "Old Liberia" was ending. The West African Republic of Liberia's population of some three million is made up of a vast majority of indigenous people and a community of Afro-American settlers who came originally from the USA between 1822 and the 1840s. Most from the USA were freed slaves from the northeast states. They had been household slaves or craftsmen who could often read and write. They took control of the coastal area largely ignoring the tribes of the interior. In 1847, the Americo-Liberians who were some 3,000 declared the nation independent – the only African state not to have been a European colony —with the possible exception of Ethiopia if one considers Italy's occupation as 'conquest' and not 'colonization.'

In the century which followed independence, there was considerable tension between the coastal Americo-Liberians and the indigenous peoples but relatively little violence. Liberia was an oligarchy with positions, money and power distributed among the Americo-Liberians so that regardless of who was president some people from each leading family had a piece of the power-wealth pie.

The only exception to this rule took place prior to the 1950s shows how the system worked. Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1939) was the first and only indigenous Liberian traditional leader, a chief of the Vai people, to enter government service. He became a cabinet member, a diplomat and eventually challenged the Americo-Liberian ruling elite by contesting the 1931 presidential election. However he resembled the Americo-Liberians by being college educated in the USA and had married into a leading settler family that of Liberia's founding President Roberts. His unique position serves as a good indicator of the monopoly of power in the hands of the Americo-Liberian social class.

Following World War II, the "winds of change" were being felt throughout Africa and the Americo-Liberians made some genuine attempts at accommodation of the interior peoples, but the pace of change was slow, particularly in the eyes of the young, educated in Liberia only some of whom were co-opted into the ruling system. President William Tubman's administration lasted from 1944 until his death in 1971. It was time enough to

bring in a few indigenous without upsetting the system. Tubman's successor was his vice-president William Tolbert who was less crafty at handling the growing opposition, and by 1980 the system was ready to fall apart.

There was always a small migration to Liberia of African Americans from the USA and the West Indies attracted by the idea of an African-led state. They usually married into the Americo-Liberian society. One such person was Charles Taylor's father who came from the USA and who had married into a relatively prominent Americo-Liberian family. Charles Taylor was born in January 1948. As is traditional for Americo-Liberian families, Charles Taylor went to college in the USA —Bentley College in Massachusetts – and when he returned to Liberia in 1979 he was given a job in the administration. He was a good orator and became a lay preacher in the Baptist church – the church of the majority of Americo-Liberians.

Then in April 1980, with little advance warning that the system was about to end, President Tolbert and members of his Cabinet were killed in a coup d'Etat, led by Sergeant

Samuel Doe and a group of non-commissioned officers who had no ideology other than getting some of the wealth for themselves. Doe, however, put an end to the Americo-Liberian social structure. Many of the leading families left for Europe and the USA where they often had homes and friends.

Samuel Doe was a member of the Krahn tribe who were considered by others near the bottom of the indigenous tribes — one cigarette-at-a-time-merchants, prostitutes, and soldiers. None of the coup members had any administrative experience outside the low ranks of the army and so had to turn to others to fill administrative posts. Since Taylor had just returned from the USA and had not had time to get into the network of Americo-Liberian power relations and corruption but was educated and articulate, Doe named Taylor to head the General Services Agency, a position controlling much of Liberia's budget.

Taylor has a gift for making money but not sharing it widely with others. By 1983, Taylor fell out with Doe who accused Taylor of embezzling nearly \$1 million (and not sharing it with Doe and Doe's inner circle). Taylor left for Massachusetts where he had friends from his college days. However, he was arrested on a Liberian demand and placed in the Plymouth County House of Correction. Just who helped Taylor escape from the Massachusetts jail has always been a mystery. Some say it was his college friends, others think that the US intelligence services gave a hand as by 1983 it was obvious that Doe was incompetent and fast taking Liberia to ruin. A new leader was needed.

Taylor having no visible ideology other than self-advancement, seemed to many like a 'natural leader'. Taylor accepted help from any direction that it came. He spent probably a couple of years after leaving Massachusetts in Libya where Col. Gaddafi had set up training camps for potential revolutionaries. The period from 1984 when Taylor was in

Massachusetts until 1989 when he led a guerrilla force into Liberia is not well documented. Taylor also spent time in the Ivory Coast where he was befriended by the conservative President Felix Houphouet-Boigny who was having problems with Doe and would have been glad to see Doe replaced. Taylor was also befriended by the younger Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, who was Houphouet's son-in-law as well as a military coup plotter who became President after killing his 'best friend' – the then president of Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara.

It was in the Ivory Coast that Taylor brought together some 200 fighters. Some he had met in Libya; others were dissatisfied Liberians as Doe had filled the ranks of the Army and the administration with members of his own tribal group, the Krahn, and some of their traditionally-allied tribes. Taylor crossed the frontier from the Ivory Coast with his small group with the aim of recruiting as he went along. At first, his effort was not taken seriously. A couple of months later in 1990, in a discussion with the Liberian Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, I was told "not to worry. Taylor was an ordinary bandit and had no political significance." However, from 1990 until 1997 when Taylor won the civil war and was "elected" president, Liberia was the scene of marauding actions. Coercion, pillage, and rape by an armed rabble seemed to be the order of the day. Each armed group took on an impressive-sounding name. Taylor's was the National Patriotic Front of Liberia; another, the United Front of Liberia for Democracy, yet another was the Liberian Peace Council. Most of the armed groups had the tribal base of its leader. As Taylor was a member of the dispersed Americo-Liberians, he could not turn for support to tribes. Thus he turned to child soldiers whom he "socialized" into a new tribe with himself as chief. With a mixture of coercion and drugs he built his Patriotic Front into a violent force of 10,000. The fighting and deliberate destruction of villages and towns pushed some 700,000 Liberians outside Liberia as refugees to Sierra Leone, Guinea, the Ivory Coast and some to Ghana and Nigeria. Many people, some 300,000 were internally displaced.

Since Taylor had little taste for fighting, he turned his talents to making money, selling timber, diamonds and iron ore through the port of Buchanan which he controlled. Liberia attracted a floating population of gun-runners, diamond merchants and others who would show up again in Sierra Leone as the Liberian disintegration spread into Sierra Leone.

By 1997, Taylor had "won" the civil war and was elected president. His years as president 1997-2003 were marked by the heritage of violence, hatred and vengeance of the civil war period. As there was little stability, skilled administrators from the Americo-Liberian community did not return. Most of the refugees from neighboring African countries did return but without possibilities for real development. Taylor who wanted no competition surrounded himself with weak administrators. He put nearly all his talents into making money, buying parts of what remained as businesses, often through front men. He backed Foday Sankoh whom he had met in Libya in the violent struggle in Sierra Leone and was no doubt compensated with diamonds. The role of Taylor in the Sierra Leone conflict will be the third in this three-part series.

There are estimates that Taylor and his close partners took \$100 million from 1997 to 2003, a hundred times what Doe had accused him of taking in his earlier days. Taylor had a single-minded aim: to make money and he surrounded himself with people who aided this policy. In 2001, I was in the same hotel as Taylor in his state visit to Taiwan. I wanted to discuss with his staff the problem of refugees from Liberia in Guinea. As these people were originally from Guinea who had gone to work in Liberia, they were considered by the UN as "returnees" not as refugees and so could not be aided by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Taylor's staff was interested in what money they might make through Taiwanese connections, and my discussion of the need to help people in Guinea received little interest.

As Taylor never learned to hand out money to people who might cause trouble, there were leaders of other armed factions who felt that Taylor was not doing enough for them. Insurgencies, based on tribal loyalties, broke out. Pressure from the USA and the European Union, especially Taylor's role in Sierra Leone led to Taylor's negotiated resignation in 2003.

He had already placed much of his money outside Liberia. As there was little new wealth being produced, he left for what was to have been a comfortable stay in a Nigerian coastal city.

What is troublesome about Taylor's Liberian adventure is not that he was corrupt. He is neither the first nor the last Liberian leader to have confused public and private welfare. The newly elected Speaker of the House, Edwin Snowe, the third most prominent person in government after the president and the vice-president – grew rich as Taylor's son-in-law. What is troublesome is that so many went along with Taylor in order to grow rich themselves – a pattern repeated in Sierra Leone.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 8 May 2006**

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

**International Clips on Liberia**

**BBC** 7 May 2006, 23:13 GMT 00:13 UK

**Aid scandal hits Liberia's weakest**

By David Lyon  
BBC correspondent

Sexual exploitation of girls in Liberia is still widespread according to research by Save the Children. Soldiers from the UN peacekeeping force, aid workers, and teachers are among those who demand sex from girls some as young as eight. "We're talking about some of the most vulnerable children being abused and exploited by those people who have money and power," Tirana Hassan from Save the Children said. All of the groups spoken to in the research mentioned aid workers as being involved, trading the distribution of food and other supplies in return for sex. The UN's Humanitarian Co-ordinator in Liberia, Jordan Ryan, said that specific allegations would be investigated.

**Liberia's Sirleaf on visit to US, 'Oprah' TV stint on agenda**

MONROVIA, May 8, 2006 (AFP) - Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has left for the United States on a four-day visit during which she will make a stint on a popular television show and seek post-war recovery aid, local media said Monday. Sirleaf, who become Africa's first elected female president in January, will be a guest on the hugely successful television talk show hosted by Oprah Winfrey. In a statement to **Liberia's** national radio ELBC before her departure late Sunday, Sirleaf said she would use the forum to reach out to average citizens to ask for help for her war-shattered West African state.

**International Clips on West Africa**

**United Nations News Service** 06 May 2006

**Côte d'Ivoire: UN mission condemns attack against one of its buses**

The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) has strongly condemned an attack carried out against one of its buses and its civilian occupants in Yopougon, a suburb of Abidjan. In a statement released today on the 28 April incident, UNOCI also condemned "the threats against its personnel and the obstruction of their



freedom of movement." The mission "urgently calls on Ivorian authorities to do everything possible to prevent and punish such acts, which are in contravention of Ivorian laws and international commitments of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire

## **Local Media – Newspapers**

### **Firestone Workers Displeased with President**

*(Daily Observer, The Inquirer, New Democrat and The Informer)*

- Workers of the Firestone Rubber Plantation over the weekend expressed disappointment in President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf when she defended the company's controversial 37.5 percent deduction from the workers' wages.
- Addressing hundreds of Firestone workers in Harbel in an attempt to resolve the standoff between them and the Firestone management, President Johnson-Sirleaf said that the salary deduction was not the making of the company but was the result of bad governance on the part of her predecessor Charles Taylor.

### **UNMIL Wants Government to Negotiate with Ex-combatants on Rubber Plantation**

*(Daily Observer)*

- In its latest human rights report on Liberia, UNMIL called on the government to engage ex-combatants occupying the Guthrie and Sinoe rubber plantations and make an offer to rehabilitate and reintegrate them in society. UNMIL also called on the ex-combatants to withdraw from the plantations.

### **Dutchman Denies Supplying Weapons to Taylor**

*(National Chronicle)*

- The Dutchman on trial in The Hague for war crimes in Liberia, Gus van Kouwenhoven, told the court recently that he had never in his life seen Cindor Reeves, the witness who testified against him. Reeves is a brother-in-law to Kouwenhoven associate former President Charles Taylor. Reeves had told the court that he participated in the transportation of weapons which Kouwenhoven had imported for Mr. Taylor

## **Local Media – Radio Veritas** *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

### **President Johnson-Sirleaf Visits the U.S.**

- An Executive Mansion press statement said that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf yesterday departed for the United States to appear as special guest with Jordan's Queen Noor on one of America's most popular television shows, the Oprah Winfrey Show.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

### **President Wants Rubber Plantation Workers to Drop Demand**

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

### **International Child Welfare Group Condemns Workers and Peacekeepers for Sexual Exploitation Today**

- According to its report released in Monrovia, the aid agency Save The Children said that aid workers and peacekeepers in Liberia were sexually exploiting young girls by giving them food in return for sex. The former National Transitional Government had compelled the group to retract similar report in 2004.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

### **African Development Bank to Visit Liberia Today**

- A press statement issued in Monrovia yesterday said that a delegation from the African Development Bank (ADB) will arrive in the country today as part of efforts to begin working with the government of Liberia.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

### **Circuit Court Opens for May Term Tomorrow**

- According to a press statement issued over the weekend, the First Judicial Circuit Court of Montserrado County will tomorrow open for its May term.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

### **UNMIL Senior Civil Affairs Officer Calls for Peace Program in West Africa**

- Representing for Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss at a ceremony to launch the National Peace Council on Saturday, United Nations Mission in Liberia Civil Affairs Section Head Zainab Bangura admonished West African peace ambassadors to develop programs to strengthen peace in the sub-region.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio and Star Radio)*

**STAR RADIO** *(News culled form website today at 09:00 am)*

### **Lawmaker Says Unknown Individuals Carry Arms in Nimba County**

- In an interview with journalists over the weekend, Nimba County Representative Nohn Kidau said that some individuals were roaming the county with arms to commit crime. The warning follows repeated reports of armed robbery of rubber at the Cocopa Rubber Plantation in the county. Ms. Kidau also advised rubber dealers to desist from buying rubber from unknown rubber dealers.

*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. Jeddi Armah at [armahj@un.org](mailto:armahj@un.org)*

