

**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:

Wednesday, 9 May 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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The News
Wednesday, 9 May 2007

Taylor's trial set for June 4

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From front page
Court for Sierra Leone.
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child soldiers.

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Special Court Press Conference in Monrovia, Liberia

Continuation

So it is my privilege to be with you and to answer whatever questions you may have in this regard.

But finally I would like to say that it is indeed an improvement in the international criminal justice mechanism to have created the Office of the Principal Defender. But again the point remains as to after the end of this process to evaluate how far the Office of the Principal Defender has added to the entire process, particularly in view of whether or not the Court, in trying to achieve its aim in ensuring the rights of the accused has gone further than any other court, and if not, what could be done in the future should we have situations of this kind occur again.

We are hoping that that wouldn't happen, because we have the ICC now being the only mechanism to have a permanent structure. But again, the politics of the ICC, or surrounding the ICC, will make it necessary that we have some kind of tribunals also of the future, but this we'll talk about when things imply the circumstances that I envisage. Thank you very much for your attention, and I will welcome your questions.

BEN MALOR: Okay, I'll be passing this mike to Peter in a second. As we usually do, just step up to the microphone. Keep your question short. Peter will direct the questions accordingly. So get to the mike, mention your name and your organisation and then ask your question.

charged.

VON HEBEL: In relation to the other questions, who from Civil Society and which journalists are going to attend the proceedings in The Hague, as far as the journalists are concerned, this is a programme which is run primarily by the BBC, and it is the BBC who will identify journalists and it's their responsibility to make sure there is a distribution amongst journalists with different backgrounds, with different papers and different media. As far as Civil Society is concerned, we from the Special Court are in consultation with over 30 Civil Society organisations. But there again, we leave it to Civil Society organisations amongst themselves to identify the people that may go to The Hague in order to watch the proceedings for roughly about a week. It is not the intention from the Special Court to identify certain Civil Society groups that may be more or less positive about the Court. Of course what we want is a wide variety of all those organisations who may have a view on the proceedings. And to defend the Principal Defender, I will also answer that question in relation to his role. The Principal Defender is indeed a staff member of the Special Court. He as such is not the counsel who represents the accused. The counsel representing the accused is Mr. Karim Khan. He has his own Defence team. The Principal Defender is there to provide the facilities in order

Defender. Now, once the lawyer has been assigned to the accused person, the lawyer enters into a legal contract with the Court to provide legal services which is independent of the Court, which is independent of the Principal Defender except in relation to the rights of the accused and the obligations of the lawyer who has signed a contract to provide legal defence. Now in such a case, the lawyer is not being sponsored by the Court. The lawyer is under a contract to provide legal service for an indigent accused person, and is therefore under the contract required to perform to the highest level of the standards required, and must meet his ethical obligations under his Rule of Practice and under the Code of Conduct for Counsel that appear before the Special Court.

So it is not as simplistic as saying, "oh, the lawyer is being sponsored by the Court and therefore how transparent is the whole mechanism that is governed by rules and regulations, and that is governed by the highest standard of ethical requirements of the lawyer. And of course the Principal Defender watches over to ensure that those principles are met relative to the rights of the accused and relative to the obligations of the lawyer to the Special Court. And I hope that satisfies your question.

RAPP: There was a fourth question asked, and I think directed to the Prosecution; the statement that perhaps we came on this mission to persuade people to be witnesses. Understand, the Prosecution has listed its witnesses. We've listed 139 witnesses for the Prosecution who will testify to facts and

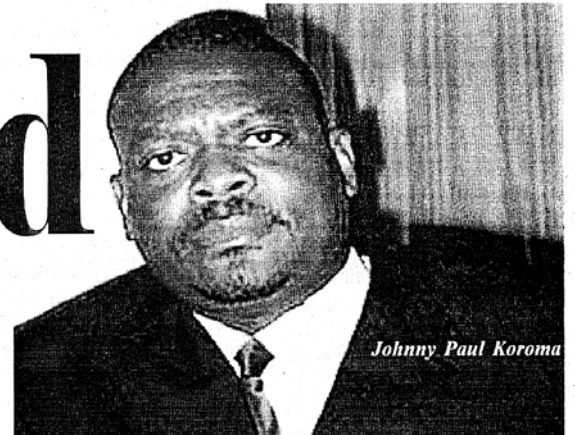
witnesses issue. It has been alleged that in the past and recently you came to Liberia to secretly collect witnesses to testify against Charles Taylor. And how confirmed is that story? And in the meantime, if you are investigating Taylor for crimes committed in Sierra Leone, why did you come to Liberia to collect witnesses? RAPP: Well, first of all the crimes committed by Charles Taylor, the actual crime in the sense of the victim being hurt, occurred in Sierra Leone, but it's our allegation that the orders from Charles Taylor came from this country, both when he was a rebel leader and when he was president, and that a variety of things happened in this country, to train people who were Sierra Leone fighters, to arm them and provide them with arms that came from elsewhere, and also to receive diamonds here to buy those arms and to provide benefits to Taylor. That's part of the allegation in the case. So we have to have evidence from people who were in Liberia. Certainly our witnesses include Liberians. They include Sierra Leoneans. They include people from other countries in the region. And the crucial evidence in this case at the end of the day will not be over whether crimes were committed in Sierra Leone. I think we all know the horrendous crimes that were committed there. But the crucial fighting issue will be the connection between Taylor and those crimes. And that requires witnesses from this country, and it requires people who were former friends and supporters and insiders of Taylor to come forth, because when you're talking about the person that's at the very top of an organisation, they're

[Note: The Spectator is serialising the entire transcript of the Special Court's press conference in Monrovia. The complete text is available in the 'Special Court Supplement' of the press clippings for April 30.]

The Spark
Tuesday, 8 May 2007

40 Massacre In Cool Blood

May 8th marks another sad moment in the history of Salone as 40 people including students who marched unto late Foday Sankoh's residence at Spur Loop as a result of a peace rally called by Parliamentarians and Civil Society Movements were brutally killed when they were caught up in an orchestrated cross fire between the West Side Boys, Revolutionary United Front Rebels on the one hand and Operational Security Division and Civil Defence Force on the other.



Johnny Paul Koroma

CONTINUED PAGE 2

As the senseless war engulfed the whole country disrupting developmental programme and creating a state of insecurity even in the Capital city, various organisation devised strategies of calling the International Community's attention to the plight of Sierra Leoneans and the need to put pressure on both the government and the warring factions to see reason and opt for peaceful diplomatic options to end the carnage in the country. Having witness serious of ceasefire violation and the insincerity of the Revolutionary United Front leader late Corporal Foday Sankoh who had been offered the position of Chairman for the Commission of Minerals and another position

equivalent to Vice President, the Civil Society Organisations called on all Sierra Leoneans to march on to State House on the 8th May 2000 to seek solution on the need for peace in the country. To most people, the 40 people were among the huge crowd that did not know was the last day they were going to see the sunrise. Prior to this march, the then Chairman of the Peace Council, Rtd. Major Johnny Paul Koroma organised a peace rally at the National Stadium. Among those present were the Okra Hill West Side Boys, the Civil Defence Forces and the Special Security Division (SSD) of the police force where plans were made to actually storm the residence of Foday Sankoh during the peace rally.

As the 'Peace Task Force' joined the crowd with an intent of arresting RUF rebels and their collaborators on the eve of this great day. This witnessed a new set of militia under the commander of Johnny Paul Koroma hence contradicting the rule of law. From the 6th to the 8th May 2000, this group listened solely to the command and operations strategy of J.P Koroma. There were massive looting of those that were raided or fell victims. Unfortunately, a lot of the arrested suspects were kept at the State Maximum Prison without credibility to the arrest.

On the eve of this march, 24 RUF Top Guns were in the net of the 'Peace Task Force.' On the part of Parliamentarians and Civil Society Members who organised this march it was to send a signal that Sierra Leoneans needed peace and the International Committee was to put pressure on Foday Sankoh to abide by the agreement signed in Lome and Conakry. Unfortunately during the rally, it was infiltrated by other warring factions who were also armed with automatic rifles bent on attacking

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Sankoh on that very day.

Some analysts who foresaw the pending danger behind a huge crowd moving on to a warlord's lodge gave warning signals of acrimonies. As the crowd approached Sankoh's lodge, the innocent civilians from the east who were joined by those from the west realised the dangers and hidden motives of armed men within the group.

Shots and rocket propelled grenades were fired

from the crowd into Sankoh residence hence exposing the armless civilians to be caught in cross fire. At this point, shots were exchanged around the environs of Sankoh and the fleeing civilians ran helter skelter which resulted in the death of many people. Others sustained injuries and had to be rushed to the various hospitals. After this incident, RUF members and their families in the city become targets of arrest and up to 180 members were arrested and detained for no just reasons.

To worsen the situation operation 'catch all' men at rounding all RUF suspect and families help to create insecurity situation in the country. Among those arrested, 21 RUF members at the Pademba Road maximum security prison have died while in custody. During this period some top officers of the movement were placed under protected custody. As others who were fortunate to escape the warrant of arrest in the city went to the provinces and the state of terror continued.

The highways leading to the north and east became death traps while those who avoided ambushes travelled by sea and unlucky ones had to encounter sea pirates. Until the timely arrival of the British trained troops the security situation had deteriorated considerably. The rebels under the leadership of Issa Sesay finally listened to the cries of many Sierra Leoneans to drop their arms and join in the peace building process.

This resulted in the government exercising control over the rest of the country with the holding of democratic elections and the RUF converting into a political party to contest the 2002 elections. Despite all these, most of those families that lost their loved ones during the march for peace organised by the Civil Society movement of Salone have not been adequately compensated as those who carry out the act were accorded a lot of fringe benefits. Today marks the seventh anniversary since Sierra Leone heeded the call to march for peace.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 8 May 2007

Charles Taylor Trial Set to Begin Amid Complaints from Defense

By Kari Barber
Dakar

Prosecutors at the Special Court for Sierra Leone say everything is set for the Charles Taylor case to begin June 4 in The Hague. But the former warlord's lawyers have complained that they need more help. Kari Barber reports from VOA's West Africa bureau in Dakar.



Former Liberian President Charles Taylor (L) is escorted by UN officials (file photo)

In pre-trial conferences this week, defense lawyers for former Liberian president Charles Taylor told the court they need more experienced counselors on their team to handle the complicated case. Taylor is to be represented by two lawyers who will face a 10-attorney prosecution team.

Taylor is charged with numerous counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights violations, including mass murder, rape, physical mutilation and the use of child soldiers, based on his role in neighboring Sierra Leone's civil war in the 1990s.

The defense also argued that it is difficult to get witnesses to testify because U.N. restrictions still bar many close associates of Taylor from traveling.



Stephen Rapp (r) and Herman Hebel (center) of The Special Court of Sierra Leone (TSSL) give a press conference in Monrovia, Liberia, 25 April 2007

Stephen Rapp, the head prosecutor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, is calling the approaching trial a victory over impunity. He says efforts should be made to ensure that Africans can monitor the proceedings closely, even though the trial is taking place in Europe.

"Our judges from here are going up there, but still supported from here by substantial resources and with us constantly working to make sure the information about that trial reaches the people of Sierra Leone and the region so that they have got as close as possible the same access to those proceedings that they would have had if the proceedings would have remained in Freetown," he said.

Carolyn Norris with the International Crisis Group says that because the trial is to take place in The Hague, there are some in Sierra Leone who would like to go, but will not be able to.

"I think certainly in Sierra Leone there is a feeling of disappointment in a way that he [Charles Taylor] is not going to be tried in the country where those alleged crimes were committed," she said. "But also I think there is also a general feeling of relief among Liberians and Sierra Leoneans that this man is further away from where he caused them problems."

Norris says the Taylor trial will likely have a regional impact, influencing how Liberia handles those accused of war crimes in the country.

"I think once this case, the Charles Taylor case, is under way and it reaches a verdict, I think that will re-open the debate within Liberia as to who should be brought to trial there," she said.

London-based human rights activist Ibrahim Kane says he hopes the trial will lead to more convictions of those responsible for escalating Sierra Leone's brutal civil war.

"They have committed the same atrocities; it was done in the same country, which is Sierra Leone," he said. "It was done by people who had different positions in militia groups. I think if they have been arrested for those atrocities they have to face the same situation, the same rules."

Taylor's trial is being held at the International Criminal Court in The Hague for security reasons. The trial was supposed to begin in April, but was postponed until June to allow the defense more time to prepare.

The Analyst (Liberia)

Tuesday, 8 May 2007

Taylor Braces for June 4

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"Great efforts have been made to bring this case to trial since Mr. Taylor was indicted in March 2003", said Stephen Rapp, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"His arrest and transfer in 2006 were the result of three years of intense diplomacy by many in the sub-region and abroad. Up to now, attention has been on the process. On June 4, all eyes can focus on the trial itself".

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United Nations

Tuesday, 8 May 2007

Highlights of the Noon Briefing, By Michele Montas, Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, U.N. Headquarters, New York

Trial Date Set for Charles Taylor, Ex-Liberian President

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has set the start of the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor for June 4th. This was decided yesterday at a pre-trial conference in The Hague.

Taylor is charged with 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Court's Prosecutor, Stephen Rapp, has said that he plans to present some 139 key witnesses, including individuals with inside knowledge of Taylor's alleged activities, in an effort to prove Taylor's suspected role in the atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war.

United Nations News Centre

Tuesday, 8 May 2007

UN-backed court in Sierra Leone unveils start date for trial of former Liberian leader

8 May 2007 – The war crimes trial of Charles Taylor, the notorious former Liberian president, will begin on 4 June with opening arguments, the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone announced today following a pre-trial conference in The Hague.

“That Charles Taylor will now face justice is the very embodiment of the maxim that no one is above the law,” Special Court Prosecutor Stephen Rapp said, calling the staging of the trial “a victory over impunity,” according to a press statement released by the Court.

“Taylor’s indictment, apprehension and arrest are a credit to the persistence of the world community, the governments of the region and, above all, the courageous people of Sierra Leone.”

Mr. Taylor faces 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers, for his role in the decade-long civil war that engulfed Sierra Leone. He was indicted on those charges in March 2003.

Last June the Security Council authorized the staging of Mr. Taylor’s trial at The Hague in the Netherlands, citing reasons of security and expediency. Prosecutors have indicated they plan to call up to 139 core witnesses and have said previously that the trial could take about 12 to 18 months.

The Special Court was established on 16 January 2002 by an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UN and is mandated to try “those who bear greatest responsibility” for war crimes and crimes against community committed in the country after 30 November 1996. So far 11 people have been indicted.


United Nations **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 08 May 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Liberian leader gives final approval to deal with steelmaker giant

MONROVIA, May 7, 2007 (AFP) - Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf gave a final seal of approval on Monday to an iron ore mining contract between the government and the world's largest steelmaker, Arcelor Mittal.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast PM in peace call as rebels, army mix

ABIDJAN, May 7, 2007 (AFP) - Ivorian Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, a former rebel leader, sent out a strong message for peace Monday as the divided west African nation looks to heal its wounds after almost years of unrest.

Local Media – Newspaper

Presidency Launches New Website

(Daily Observer)

- The Presidency has launched a new website for the public to access activities of the Government including those of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Vice President Joseph Boakai and the cabinet, the Liberian leader's Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Affairs and Information Technology Amara Kanneh said. He said that the website can be accessed through www.emansion.gov.lr.

Commander-In-Chief Promotes Newly Trained Officers

(The News and Heritage)

- The Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will today, Tuesday, commission 11 officers of the newly trained AFL soldiers and dedicate the newly constructed 23rd Infantry Brigade Headquarters at the Beyan Kesselly Military Barracks, a Defense Ministry Public Affairs statement said in Monrovia.

Liberian Leader Finds Corruption in all Sectors

(The Informer, Heritage and New Vision)

- Correspondents said that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has alluded to deeply-rooted corruption in government and urged the public to provide evidence of corruption against any of her officials who she vowed to prosecute.
- She noted that the practice was entrenched in the Liberian society and that it would take some time to eliminate.

President Johnson Sirleaf Endorses Ministry's Decision to Cancel Exams

(The News, Daily Observer, National Chronicle, Heritage and New Vision)

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said that she supported the Education Ministry's decision to annul this year's exams for 12th Graders due to alleged fraud which she said demonstrated how deeply rooted corruption is in the Liberian society.
- Speaking at a news conference yesterday, the Liberian leader warned some of the 12th Graders who said that they would not re-write the exams, that they will not progress in their academic pursuit if they failed to re-write the tests.

President Calls on Phone Company to Pay Waived Storage Fees

(The News)

- Addressing a news conference yesterday, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf ordered Comium Communications, a mobile phone company to pay over US\$100,000 which was waived to it by the Roberts International Airport management, adding that the waiver was inappropriate.

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

President Says Corruption is Endemic in Government

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Presidency Backs Cancellation of Exams for Fraud

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

President Orders Phone Company to Pay Waived Storage Fees

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Police Apprehend Suspected Armed Robber

- Correspondents said that the Liberia National Police arrested suspected armed robber, Lansana Kamara in Voinjama, Lofa County for his alleged involvement in a US\$39,000 armed robbery in September 2006.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

American Medical Delegation Visits Harper, Maryland County

- A 6-man medical delegation from the United States arrived in the Harper, Maryland County to start an assistance programme at the County's leading Hospital, J.J. Dossen, rendering dental and pediatric services for 5 days.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Court Drops Justice of Peace from Judiciary

- The Supreme Court of Liberia has dropped Justice of the Peace, B.S. Tamba from the Judicial Branch of Government on instruction from President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. According to a statement issued by the Court, the President ordered Mr. Tamba to turn over all properties of the Government to the Chief Justice.

(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.

United Nations News Centre

Tuesday, 8 May 2007

French judge resigns from International Criminal Court because of poor health

8 May 2007 – The head of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has paid tribute to Judge Claude Jorda of France, whose permanent ill-health has forced him to resign from the body set up under an international treaty to hear trials of individuals charged with acts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed since 2002.

Judge Jorda, whose resignation will take effect on 12 August, was assigned to the Court's pre-trial division and has been serving as the presiding judge in the case against Thomas Lubango Dyilo, a former militia leader from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who is charged with war crimes for enlisting child soldiers, in the first such trial for the court.

In a statement issued by the Court in The Hague, ICC President Judge Philippe Kirsch voiced regret at Judge Jorda's departure and thanked him "for his service and for his commitment to fulfilling his obligations before leaving the Court."

Established by the Rome Statute of 1998, the ICC can try cases involving individuals charged with war crimes committed since July 2002. The UN Security Council, the ICC Prosecutor or a State Party to the court can initiate any proceedings, and the ICC only acts when countries themselves are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute.

The Assembly of States Parties to the ICC, which currently has 104 members, will now elect a judge to fill the vacancy created by Judge Jorda's resignation.

Before joining the ICC, the Frenchman had served previously as a judge and as the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).