

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:

Tuesday, November 09, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Norman said Pres. Kabbah ordered opening of training base

From Front Page

sky." The helicopter then landed and I heard some people calling that that everyone should come out to the town. When I came back in the town, I saw Chief Hinga Norman holding a meeting with the Kamajors including other people present and he then said that the President had

sent him to open a training base in the Chiefdom to recruit people in helping to fight the war," she narrated, adding that Chief Norman was in the company of a man which he identified as Maxwell Knobe and went on to tell the gathering that the man was a Nigerian working

with him (Norman) through orders given by President Kabbah to help in pursuing the war. The witness when asked by Prosecution Counsel Adwa Wiafe how he knew Chief Norman was the Leader of the Kamajor Militia, she said that the former Internal Affairs

Minister now Special Court indictee, acknowledged the fact during the said meeting. "As Chief Norman stated that he was fighting the war for Pa Kabbah and for the whole country to be at peace. He appealed to all of us women in the town that if we have lodging, food and whatever assistance, we should make it available to the people that would be conducting the training." He went on to recount her experiences while living with Kamajors in Talia, recalling that Francis ormoh, Allieu Kondewa, deceased Journalist Prince

Brima, Joe Timidale, Gobeh-all Kamajors, and Chiefdom elders of Yawbecko were all present during the meeting held by Chief Norman, the witness recalled another incident in the same town when two "Town Commanders" were killed by Pa Kondewa, who is mostly called Allieu Kondewa. "While I was fetching water at the Chief's well in the town, I saw a group of Kamajors come towards me dancing and were lead by Pa Konde and Kamour Gbonie. I saw two men who were identified as Town

Commander carrying stick on their heads. After the passed the well, I saw Pa Konde take the gun from Kamour Gbonie and shot one of the men to death." TF2 096 further explained. The two men she narrated were made town Commanders by the RUF and that when the Kamajors attacked the town where they were, these two are said to have hidden themselves only to be captured later by Kamajors. This she said led to their killing. The trial continues today with the witness being cross-examined by Defence Counsels for the CDF indictees.

at Special Court...

'Norman said Pres. Kabbah ordered opening of training base'- witness

Female witness TF2-096 in her evidence-in-chief at the Special Court's Trials Chamber has disclosed that Chief Hinga Norman stated to them that President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah ordered him to open a

training base in Talia in the Yawbecko Chiefdom of Bonthe district. The 36-year-old witness, who was captured by the Kamajors in 1996 and speaks mende and Krio, informed that Chief Norman made this

disclosure during a meeting he (Norman) held in Talia town in 1997. She went on to explain that she was in the town at a river to fetch water when she heard the sound of a helicopter hovering in the

Contd. Page 2

Awoko

Tuesday Nov. 9, 2004

KABBAH'S ROLE IN TRAINING KAMAJORS

By Mohamed Mansaray

Special Court prosecution witness in the on-going trial of CDF indictees, TF2-096 revealed yesterday that it was President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah who gave orders to open Base Zero at Talia, Yawbecco chiefdom in the Bonthe district sometime in 1997 to train Kamajors.

The witness testified that the President gave the orders following the overthrow of his government by the AFRC junta during that period.

The 36-year-old witness was led in evidence by a prosecution lawyer Adwoa Wiote at Court Room No. 1, New England in

The witness told the court that she came to learn about this development when Mr. Norman visited Talia on board an aircraft during that period. "I was laundering at a nearby stream when the helicopter landed," she said and named Maxwell Khobe and Moinina Fofana as other people who went with Mr. Norman.

The witness told the court that a meeting was immediately summoned at the court barray that was attended by a large crowd.

"The meeting was also attended by Paramount Chiefs and chiefdom elders," she said.



The commander in chief



Hinoa Norman



Moinina Fofana

How Kamajor Base Opened

Born in the Jong chiefdom, Bonthe district the witness quoted Mr. Norman as telling them during the meeting, that President Kaobah had asked them (Kamajors) to fight together with ECOMOG to restore peace to Sierra Leone. "Mr. Norman told us that he was sent by President Kabbah to open a training base in the chiefdom where they would train Kamajors to fight the rebels," the witness further testified and added that the accused also introduced himself as the Kamajor leader.

She further quoted Mr. Norman as pleading with the local people during the meeting to assist Kamajors with food and lodging since Kamajors would be coming to the training base from other districts for initiation.

She named Prince Brima (a journalist), Aliou Kondewa, Joe Temendae, Francis Ngomoh, one Mr. Ngobeh among others as other people who attended the meeting.

The witness further quoted Mr. Norman as telling Kamajors during that visit that he would only give them weapons with the approval of President Kaobah.

"About a few weeks later, a helicopter brought weapons to Talia", she said.

In her examination-in-chief earlier, the witness testified that Kamajors murdered a soldier who had been brought to Talia from Konbondo to surrender. She told the court the Kamajors also slaughtered two men (town commanders) both of whom were brought to Talia from the surrounding villages and were appointed by rebels. "One of the men was shot dead by Aliou Kondewa," she said. The witness further informed the court that Mr. Kondewa collected Le40,000 from a woman in the town whom the Kamajors accused of being a rebel. "The woman was detained in a cage for hours at Nyadenun, near Talia", she told the court.

The witness testified from the witness protective box and she gave her testimony in Krio through an interpreter in English. The witness was cross-examined by defence lawyers.

The trials continue.

Tuesday Nov. 9 2004
Salone Times

Kabbah Tells Norman To Open Training Base

...Witness Spits Fire At Special Court

By Joseph Turay

Witness for the prosecution code name TF1-096 yesterday

told the court that when they were with the Kamajors

in their village, Hinga Norman summoned a meeting where he told the people

that His Excellency President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah had asked him to open a military

training base to train fighters who could fight the war

against the rebel forces. *Contd. page 2*

property was surveyed by from the hands of illegal occupationally.

Kabbah Tells Norman To Open Training Base

From front page

The witness went further to explain that at this meeting, Norman introduced to them a Nigerian called Maxwell Khobe, Moinna Fofana and other men who he said President Kabbah had instructed to fight alongside with against the rebels.

Witness narrated that it was from this point they started training men known as Kamajors who they also initiated. It was also around this time the witness told the court that he heard that the government of SLPP had been overthrown.

TF 2-096 testified that at the meeting Norman arrived in a helicopter and pleaded with the people that they should help in whatever way they

could to help in the training of the Kamajors.

Witness said at the meeting the big men that were present were one Francis Gormoh, Joe Timinde, Gobeh, paramount chiefs and one journalist Prince Brima. After this meeting, the witness said Norman thereafter most times came with food, clothing and other logistical support for the fighters.

The witness in her earlier testimony explained she is 36 years old, married with two children and was in a village called Talia, when the rebels first captured her with other civilians and tied them with ropes and were later put in a camp before later the Kamajor attacked the rebels and took full control of the village.

She went on to state that at the time when the kamajors were in control of the village, they started hearing about other Kamajor commanders such as Alieu Kondewa who he said was in charge of training kamajor fighters.

The witness explained that they witnessed cruel acts done by kamajor fighters. One she said was the killing of a soldier who came to surrender. The other she said were two other fellow villagers whom she said the Kamajors accused of being rebel collaborators. All three persons the witness said were later killed by the Kamajors.

Witness told the court that her friend was also arrested and locked up in a cage by Alieu Kondewa's Kamajors.

The Exclusive
Tuesday NOV. 9 2004

4 weeks ban for Hinga Norman

The Registrar of the Special Court, Robin Vincent yesterday slammed a four-week ban prohibiting visits to Special Court indictee Chief Sam Hinga Norman for breaching the rules of

detention. The decision taken yesterday states: "the Registrar decides pursuant to Rule 47A (ii) (iv) and (v) of the Rules of Detention to prohibit all visits between the detainee and any other person

expect Court Appointed Counsels for a period of four (4) weeks from the date of this decision." The ban order came following Chief Norman's continued breach of the Rules of detention, in which he

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4 weeks ban for Hinga Norman

From Front Page

addressed a letter dated 20th September 2004 to the Special Court. Defender regarding the proceedings against him before the Special Court. Chief Norman is said to have carbon-copied it to a number of individuals including family members and the Press. According to Robin Vincent, after the letter was

published in the local media, he issued a warning to Chief Norman that if he continues breaking the rules of detention, disciplinary sanction may be imposed. The Registrar went on to explain, "considering that on 22 October 2004, the detention facility found two copies of the detainee's letter dated 13

October 2004 during a search of a visitor to the detainee." That letter the Registrar noted was published in whole or in part in four local tabloids. This warranted the Prosecutor to file a "motion for the immediate cessation of violations of the orders on protective measures for witnesses and for contempt," in relation to the detainee's letter dated 13th October 2004.

Bworo

Tuesday Nov. 9 2004

Revealed...

Rebels Burnt Civilians Alive

By Abu White Fofanah

Startling revelations continue to come out at the Special Court for war crimes in Freetown.

A 36-year-old female witness whose name was withheld but dubbed TF2-096, said she was in a refugee camp when the Revolutionary United Front rebels captured her and others and took them to Talia Yawbeku Chiefdom in Bonthe District.

She told the Court that the camp was three-and-a-half miles to the first village. "We were tied with ropes and dragged to Talia it night. In the morning,

we were asked to assemble at the Court 'Barray', where the rebels instructed the civilians to be in the front row, while they rallied at the back claiming to protect us in case of any attack by the Kamajors." The witness stated that the rebels burnt houses, and threw some civilians into the fire. "They also looted houses before they fled the village", she added.

TF-2-096 is the 21st witness presently testifying at the Special Court. The witness said the rebels appointed a man called Samuel Yomah as secretary in 1996 to issue passes to civilians. She said Kamajors took them from the camp for the second time after the rebel attack. "I was told that one of those villages is Monina Fofanah's village." Monina Fofana is one of the Civil Defence Force commanders presently on trial at the Court.

The witness said she knew Monina Fofanah in 1997. TF-2-096 said she first saw Kamajor bosses like Ngobeh, Joe

Contd. page 2

Rebels Burnt Civilians Alive

From page 1

Temeda and the Kamajor High Priest Allieu Kondewai

The witness said she knew Kondewai at Jorpowahum village. She said when Kondewai was at Mokosi village, he initiated Kamajors.

She recalled that one day she went to a nearby stream to launder clothes and she heard a helicopter. When they ran to the scene, they

saw chief Hinga Norman (who is also now on trial), late Maxwell Kobi and the director of war of the Civil Defence Force Monina Fofanah. "The two other strongmen were introduced to us by Chief Hinga Norman," she said. After that she said an incident happened which attracted attention.

The witness stated that she later saw two men carry sticks while Kondewai was with them and later they were killed, accusing them of working for the rebels. "A friend of mine was also taken to a tight cage by the kamajors and we paid Le 40,000 for her to be released. She said it was Allieu Kondewai who ordered for her to be released."

The Independent
Tuesday Nov. 9 2004

LETTER

The Editor
Concord Times
51 Krootown Road

8th November 2004

Dear Editor,

I write to draw attention to an article titled "Kabbah Disappoints United States" which appeared on page two of your Monday, November 8, 2004 publication.

My query is that the writer inaccurately attributes to President Kabbah the following statement: "Nigeria acted properly by Keeping Charles Taylor and that's why I have not been pressing for Charles Taylor to come and face the special court. Taylor would only have fled into the bush and keep fighting if Nigeria had not managed to sideline him."

What President Kabbah said on the said Sunday 31st October 2004, when he was addressing members of LURD who had come to see him for some consultation was clear and straightforward. He said that for those who would want to know why he has so far been silent on the matter of the extradition of Charles Taylor to face the Special Court in Sierra Leone, President Kabbah explained that "while Charles Taylor's back was against the wall and there were calls for him (Taylor) to step down as President of Liberia, Taylor had told President Obasanjo that he had an option of going back to the bush to start fighting as a guerilla leader. President Obasanjo did not take that utterance lightly because of the potential it had not only to plunge Liberia into renewed fighting, but that it would affect neighboring countries such as Sierra Leone, if Taylor were to resort to guerilla warfare.

President Kabbah further explained that it was on that basis that President Obasanjo considered offering Taylor asylum in Nigeria in order to save the sub region from any renewed fighting.

But President Kabbah went on further to say that he "relied on the competence of the Special Court and that it was only a matter of time before Taylor faced the Special Court. He even further stated that Taylor will be brought here to face justice, and that is inevitable.

Yours Sincerely,

Kanji Daramy
Presidential Spokesman

Concord Times

Presiding Nov. 9

2004

The Special Court Trial Chamber: A Reporter's View

Judges who constitute the Trial Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, namely, Judge Benjamin Mutunga Itoe, Judge Rosolu, John Bankole Thompson and Judge Pierre G. Boutet continue to hear war crimes testimonies from prosecution witnesses against indictees of the court. Crimes such as killing, looting, rape, sexual slavery, burning, maiming, extermination among others. The Judges were sworn-in on December 2, 2002 and were given a 3-year mandate to wrap up the trials.

Barely a year and half after the trials kicked-off in earnest, a lot has been learnt about these Judges and each of them, having his own distinct features or characteristics.

BENJAMIN

Beginning with the Presiding judge, Benjamin Itoe (Cameroonian), he coordinates the work of the Chamber and liaises with the Registrar of the court on matters affecting the Chamber. He says very little and appears a little difficult but accommodating during sessions. Occasionally, he would play pranks with key parties, i.e. defence and

prosecution lawyers, witnesses, indictees as well as officials of the Court Management. Whenever Judge Itoe becomes angry during trials, members in the public gallery would know immediately. In most cases, it is normally defence lawyers that drive him to anger, particularly during cross-examination of prosecution witnesses. Defence lawyers would normally conduct cross-examination of certain witnesses in an aggres-

sive manner, this warrants the intervention of the Bench cautioning counsels not to reveal the identities of protected witnesses as provided for in the Court's Statute. He would also caution defence lawyers to conduct cross-examinations in accordance with the rules. Defence lawyers such as Charles Margai, Shekou Turey, Wayne Jordash, Dr. Bu-Bukei Jabbai, Andreas

O'Shea, John Camegh to name but a few. In addition, Judge Itoe performs other specific functions. He announces the opening/resumption and closure of the day's sessions.

Judge Itoe obtained a Bachelor of Law degree with Honours from the University of Lagos in 1967. He was one time Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Cameroon. Judge Itoe is Honorary President

Thompson engages lawyers at times, there would be murmurings from amongst members in the public gallery. He is quick to point out the flaws of lawyers whenever they attempt to breach the rules governing the proceedings and in most cases, the lawyers would end up acknowledging their mistakes and would sometimes apologise. Judge Thompson uses words in court that could best be described as "unambiguous" that create

ing sessions.

A former High Court Judge in Sierra Leone, Bankole Thompson obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal Studies from Fourah Bay College. He later obtained a Masters degree in Law from Cambridge University in England. Judge Thompson was the legal officer for the Mano River Union, comprising Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea between 1977 and 1981.

PIERRE

lawyers.

Judge Boutet enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1973 and has held a number of key positions in the legal branch in the Canadian Force, including Assistant Judge Advocate General in Winnipeg at Air Command Headquarters. He was promoted to Brigadier General and then later to Judge Advocate General of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1993. Judge Boutet obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a law degree from Laval University in Quebec City. His area of speciality include Military law, Humanitarian law and Peacekeeping. Generally speaking however, the three judges can sustain or over rule defence and prosecution applications and objections during sessions. They equally can read out rulings agreed upon by the Chamber. As it is at the moment, the Chamber does not appear to be having much problem with the prosecution, although occasionally, the Judges would frown at them (prosecution lawyers) over unnecessary objections. They would also frown at the lawyers when they attempt to go outside the rules governing re-examination of prosecution witnesses.

MY VIEW/ Mohamed Mansaray

Generally speaking however, the three judges can sustain or over rule defence and prosecution applications and objections during sessions.

of the Cameroonian Chapter of the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association.

BANKOLE

Another judge of the Chamber, Bankole Thompson (Sierra Leonean) also has his own peculiar features, one of which is his "choice of words". He takes his time to choose words during arguments with defence and prosecution lawyers. When Judge

impact immediately. He would say for instance: "That question appears argumentative learned counsel, and it is highly-likely that you might end up inviting the witness and the prosecution into a convoluted engagement" and then there would be a reaction in the gallery. Judge Thompson speaks mildly and with clarity. He is very good at persuading lawyers to accept their faults dur-

Unlike Judge Thompson, Judge Pierre Boutet (Canadian), speaks very fast and with vigour, probably because of his military background. Judge Boutet also engages lawyers during cross-examination of witnesses. He is quick to ask lawyers: "What are you seeking to achieve with that line of cross-examination?", and an explanation would follow, in most cases from defence



Kabbah Disappoints United States

Concord Times (Freetown)

OPINION

November 8, 2004

Posted to the web November 8, 2004

By Chernoh Alpha M. Bah
Freetown

President Kabbah may have taken the world aback last Sunday when he endorsed the asylum granted, a year ago, to former Liberian President Charles Taylor - currently wanted by the UN-backed Special Court for supporting rebels who destabilized Sierra Leone in a decade old vicious insurgency.

Kabbah says, "Nigeria acted properly by keeping Charles Taylor, and that's why I have not been pressing for Charles Taylor to come and face the special court. Taylor would only have fled into the bush and keep fighting if Nigeria had not managed to sideline him." His Excellency went further to say categorically that, "For me to press President Obasanjo to go back on his word would have been very unfair." Very unfair! This is Kabbah's summary of the whole issue of Taylor and the controversial asylum he was granted by Uncle Shege in August last year. Indeed, His Excellency's statements have brought the whole debate to the apex.

Since the UN-backed Special Court unsealed Taylor's indictment in July last year, his asylum has been a subject of debate amongst many. The United States in particular is leading the platform - continuously shouting and crying loudly - for his extradition and they (the US) even attempted hijacking Taylor from his residence in Calabar to have him arraigned in front of the Special Court. US officials have argued that Taylor's presence in Nigeria is a complete threat to peace and stability in the sub-region.

What a parody? The United States seems disinterested over the ramifications of having Taylor extradited to Sierra Leone. Yes they don't care what the aftermath would be. Their attention is solely pinned on having the former Liberian warlord extradited regardless of the consequences.

But Kabbah may have thought it extremely perilous to support Taylor's extradition to Freetown knowing fully well how dangerous Taylor is. His Excellency might have

calculated the precariousness of supporting the US stance on Taylor. And those of us who know how chicken-hearted His Excellency is can understand why he chose to back down from the controversial debate surrounding Taylor's asylum in Nigeria.

Indeed, Kabbah may have learnt his lesson's long ago while dealing with late Foday Sankoh and would not want the same variable mistakes he made in the past to recur in this country. Of course, a monkey would never leave its black palm behind.

Taylor, a man who miraculously escaped from a well-fortified US prison in Massachusetts some 16 years ago and exploded his way to the Executive Mansion in Monrovia, would not hesitate an inch to replicate the same in an ill-fortified and uncompleted Special Court prison yard in Freetown.

Besides, if Sankoh has the impudence to hold Kabbah and the International Community to ransom and force them to Lome in 1999 while he was perpetually chained at Pademba Road, I see no impossibility in Taylor holding America's David Crane hostage if he is arraigned in front of Special Court judges here.

Where would the United States be in the event of such a disaster? Certainly, they would leave, bag and baggage, with their citizens and allow us to die at the hands of merciless bloodthirsty Taylor boys. Yes it happened in the past.

The British and Americans abandoned us in the slaughter and played the audience whilst murderous rebels alighted vengeance on our innocent people. Uncle Shege is aware of this and knows fully the dangers associated with the decision to turn Taylor over to handicapped Special Court officials here. After all, he is mindful of the sacrifices his country (Nigeria) made for peace and sanity to be restored in Sierra Leone and is certainly unprepared to allow such extremely strenuous accomplishments to wallow in murkiness. And Kabbah is equally heedful of how supportive Obasanjo and Nigeria have been to him during his trial times in power.

So to say, Kabbah would have backed the United States against Uncle Shege over Taylor was a complete daydream. His Excellency is ready to unfasten all aid from Washington but there was no probability that he would join the US to advocate for Taylor's extradition. This was clearly manifest when Kabbah says for him to pressure Uncle Shege to go back on his word is very unfair.

Kabbah believes in Obasanjo's decision and he would always go by it for good. Perhaps this is why His Excellency concludes that Obasanjo's resolve to keep Taylor in Calabar is proper without which he would have fled to West Africa's thick jungles once again to fight.

Therefore, America can go to hell with its dollars; Kabbah does not care as long as he maintains Uncle Shege's readiness to send troops to defend him when the need arises. Yes, that is true! Certainly plenty US soldiers have died in Afghanistan and Iraq (and many more are dieing) since 9/11 but Washington never dreamt of sending a soldier to

help during "Operation Octopus" in Monrovia and "Operation Spear No Soul" in Freetown. Then why the noise about Taylor? It was Nigeria that helped restore peace in Sierra Leone and not the US.

The naked truth is: His Excellency was just been bold and frank in telling White House officials that the time is ripe for Africans to solve their own problems. The US should know this. And African leaders must learn to support each other and act in concurrence no matter how strong external intruders appear to be. Self-preservation and protection supersedes everything else. This has been demonstrated by the US in its so-called war against terrorism.

So if re-elected US president George Bush and States Department officials are looking for a correlate to speed up efforts to have Taylor extradited to Sierra Leone, they've not found one in Kabbah. Surely, they would not! Kabbah has already disappointed the United States.

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Help stop the crisis in

Thanks; But Its Just The Beginning

The Analyst (Monrovia)

EDITORIAL

November 8, 2004

Posted to the web November 8, 2004

SIX WARRING FACTION heads in the Liberian civil war finally gathered at a ceremony at the seat of the Liberian Presidency, the Executive Mansion, in Monrovia, to affix their signatures to a formal declaration of the dissolution and disbandment of their various armed groups.

By that single act of the stroke of the pen, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), the remnants of Taylor's loyalists known as "Former Government of Liberia (GOL)" Militias, and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) dismantled their command structures and ceased to exist as military groups fighting for the governance of Liberia. This was in fulfillment of Article VII (1a) of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on July 18 last year.

AGAIN, LAST THURSDAY, some generals of these disbanded factions said to number forty-eight formally handed over their weapons in a ceremonial act of relinquishing the instruments of death and destruction, of seeking state power by force of arms, and of subjecting the population to fear, mayhem, and psychological torture. In a sense they said goodbye to violence and therefore should be opening their arms, minds, and soul to dialogue based on precepts and law, and political persuasion for state power build not on the strength of thugs, but on the promises of democracy and freedom rooted in good governance and global solidarity.

ALL OF THESE feats were achieved under the diligence of the international community epitomized by UNMIL and the Government of the United States of America that have been working since last year to ensure that this nation returns to peace and democracy. We say hats off to them much as we congratulate the heads of the former warring factions and their frontline commanders for a coup well achieved. On behalf of millions of Liberians in IDP and refugee camps across the sub-region and hundreds more in the Diaspora, we bid the peacekeepers from Namibia, Ghana, Nigeria, The Ukraine, China, Pakistan, Mali, USA, Ireland, Senegal, and The Netherlands, amongst others, continue the good work and be even more vigilant in their dedication to save humanity. We call also on the heads of the various former warring factions to rededicate themselves to the

fight for peace, justice, and democracy through the precepts of law and collective citizens' efforts. We bid them transform their zeal for war into the symphony of peace and tolerance.

WE SAY THIS because we regard what happened on the 3rd and 4th of November as the beginning - not an end in itself, for, any attempt to make it an end is to invite future trouble. There is still more to be done now that the center commands of factional control are formally deemed disbanded. There are caches of arms to be sought throughout the town, villages, cities, jungles, and forests of Liberia and confiscated; there are fears of reprisal and promises of better days made to foot militiamen by their commanders to be addressed, and there is, on top of all that, a horde of disbanded militias and former soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia to be restructured into an army that sells to the citizens security protection and not intimidation and human rights violation.

WHILE ALL STAKEHOLDERS - Liberians, the UN System, and friendly governments and organizations - will need to work together and harness their resources in order to achieve this last and crucial feat, we want it to be clear from the beginning whose responsibility it is to make sure that all goes according to plan. What is the responsibility of everybody is the responsibility of nobody. We say this because ECOWAS was to perform the same mandate in 1996 - all was signed and sealed by disbanded warring faction leaders and witnessed by the international community including OAU, ECOWAS, the UN, and US. But when some Liberians, who were actually former faction leaders, began to argue about sovereignty, ECOWAS withdrew in its shell without recourse to the agreement and all we got was another insurgency after barely a year of respite.

WE WANT TO state categorically that a repeat of the 1996 scenario where the international community abandoned the Liberian people on flimsy arguments will not only be disastrous but will undermine, for a long time to come, the effectuality of international and regional interventions in conflicts that have regional security dimensions.

IT IS THEREFORE our hope that from the initial stage, all stakeholders will agree that this is the crucial stage of the resolution of the Liberian conflict that invites the vigilance, tactfulness, poise, diplomacy, and persistence of the international community. Nothing less.

11/08/2004 13:21:58

Ivory Coast Loyalists Confront French

By PARFAIT KOUASSI

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP) French armored vehicles took up positions near the home of Ivory Coast's president Monday, and thousands of his supporters marched on the site, fearing an attempt to oust him as France clamped down on violence in its former West African colony.

The commanders of Ivory Coast and French forces appeared jointly on state television to appeal for calm. Earlier, French troops fired warning shots to ward off the surging, chanting throngs filling the streets around the home of President Laurent Gbagbo.

A weekend of unrest by machete-waving mobs confronting French troops has left more than 500 people wounded, a Red Cross official said. Two Abidjan hospitals told The Associated Press they handled a total of five dead and 250 wounded in Monday's violence alone, with at least three killed by gunshots.

Fifty armored vehicles moved in around Gbagbo's home in Ivory Coast's commercial capital, Abidjan, presidential spokesman Desire Tagro said.

``Their presence here is scaring people. They're crying and they think that President Gbagbo is going to be overthrown," Tagro told the AP by telephone.

The French denied surrounding the house or intending to oust Gbagbo, saying forces only were securing a temporary base at a hotel a couple hundred yards away for foreign evacuations.

``Everything should go back to normal," Gen. Henri Poncet said on state TV. ``It is absolutely not a matter of ousting President Laurent Gbagbo."

Gen. Matthias Doue, Ivorian chief of army staff, urged rioters to go home, adding: ``I call on people to remain calm."

Despite the appeal, the protest swelled by several thousand people by late afternoon.

Protesters chanted against the French, yelling, ``The whites don't like the blacks, but we don't care!" Some signs declared, ``Ivory Coast is a sovereign state."

A standoff arose outside Abidjan as well, as several hundred loyalist youths stood on a main road, blocking a 70-vehicle, heavily armed convoy of French reinforcements trying to enter the city.

Tensions crossed Ivory Coast's borders, with U.N. officials telling AP that more than 1,000 refugees have fled into neighboring **Liberia**. Guinea, to the north, said it was sending military reinforcements to its own border.

French forces have moved to take control of Abidjan after chaos erupted in this West African nation Saturday. Ivorian warplanes launched a surprise airstrike that killed nine French peacekeepers and an American civilian aid worker in the north, held by rebels since a 2002 civil war divided the country. The government later called the bombing a mistake, which France rejected.

France hit back within hours, wiping out Ivory Coast's newly built-up air force two Russian-made Sukhoi jet fighters and at least three helicopter gunships on the ground.

Street-level violence erupted, with mobs seeking to exact revenge on French citizens. With armored vehicles and helicopter gunships deployed, France used tear gas and concussion grenades to quell the mobs.

After 150 people were reported wounded Saturday, Red Cross official Kim Gordon-Bates said the toll had climbed to ``over 500 wounded much more than that." Loyalist mobs were blocking efforts to set up an emergency clinic for the injured, he said.

France said it was not intervening to destabilize the country or take sides in the country's civil war, while Gbagbo appealed for calm.

Over the weekend, hard-liners called for loyalists to form a ``human shield" around Gbagbo's home, and on Monday state media called on young and old to take to the streets nearby and at the broadcast headquarters.

Near the president's house, mobs swarmed one foreigner by appearance an immigrant from a neighboring northern country caught up in their midst, kicking and beating him. ``Kill him," young men shouted, before he was dragged into the crowd.

Six men, faces painted black, forced an AP reporter from his taxi at gunpoint and commandeered the vehicle.

French Embassy spokesman Francois Guenon denied the French troops were targeting Gbagbo, saying, ``It is not a question of ousting him, that is very clear."

French armored vehicles rolled through the city after taking control of the international airport and strategic points, including bridges, over the weekend.

After angry government loyalists looted and burned businesses and roamed house-to-house in search of French citizens, residents Monday assessed the damage to a skyscraper-lined city that once was West Africa's most prosperous thanks to Ivory Coast's position as the world's top cocoa producer.

``Everything is burned," said one woman, a teacher at a French school that was looted and torched in the anti-French riots. ``They have stolen everything they could."

``They even tore out the toilet seat," she said on condition her name not be used. ``The only thing I'm waiting for is for the airport to open, so I can get out of here."

France has about 4,000 peacekeepers in Ivory Coast. The United Nations has about 6,000, manning a buffer zone between rebel north and government south.

On Monday, French military planes returned home the bodies of the nine French soldiers killed in the bombing, along with 34 wounded soldiers.

In Paris, French Defense Minister Michele Alliot-Marie rejected accounts by some Ivory Coast officials that the bombing was a mistake and urged the reopening of peace talks.

In Ethiopia, the African Union upheld the U.N. and French intervention in Ivory Coast.

``We do not condemn the action of the French forces," said Republic of Congo Foreign Minister Rodolphe Adada, who chaired an emergency session Monday on Ivory Coast. ``In fact, the action of the French forces have contributed to the restoration of peace and security."

At the United Nations, a draft Security Council resolution circulated Monday called for an arms embargo on Ivory Coast and a travel ban and asset freeze against those blocking peace, violating human rights, and preventing the disarmament of combatants.

A 1999 coup, amid increasing instability following the 1993 death of Ivory Coast's three-decade post-independence leader, ended Ivory Coast's reputation for stability. Gbagbo was installed amid an uprising by his supporters the next year during an aborted vote count for the first post-coup presidential elections.

South African President Thabo Mbeki was consulting with African leaders ahead of an emergency trip to Ivory Coast, a foreign affairs spokesman said Monday. The African Union said Sunday it would send Mbeki to press Ivory Coast to find a political solution.

Associated Press reporter Nafi Diouf in Dakar, Senegal, contributed to this report.

www.ghanaweb.com: Business News of Monday, 08 November 2004

ECOWAS-EU Ministerial Troika meeting opens

Accra, Nov. 8, GNA - The Sixth Economic Community of West African States - European Union (ECOWAS-EU) Ministerial Troika meeting started in Accra on Monday to review and chart new frontiers toward the peace and security in the West Africa Sub-Region.

The meeting, which is co-chaired by Mrs Agnes Van Ardenne, Leader of the EU Delegation and Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, Ghana's Foreign Minister, would look at ways the EU could assist to improve security and economic integration.

Nana Akufo-Addo opened the meeting with an overview of the peace and security developments in the Sub-Region zeroing on developments in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

He said the significant developments achieved so far sounded a note of hope and encouragement but also concern in the pursuit of lasting peace and sustainable economic progress.

He noted that the renewed tension in Cote d'Ivoire resulting from the stalemate in the peace process, the outbreak of violence in Guinea Bissau and the Muslim-Christian violence in Liberia were negative developments.

Giving an update on Cote d'Ivoire, the Foreign Minister announced that last Saturday President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the African Union (AU), convened a meeting in Nigeria and nominated President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa to lead a delegation to Abidjan for a mediation process.

He said the Accra III Agreement for implementation of pertinent provisions of the Marcoussis Accord still remained the way forward for lasting peace in Cote d'Ivoire.

The peace process reached a stalemate because of the failure by the Ivorian parties to abide by the September 30 timeframe set by the Accra III Accord for the Ivorian Government to submit to Parliament for adoption of bills on citizenship, land ownership and eligibility of the Presidency.

On Guinea Bissau, Nana Akufo-Addo said despite the gradual restoration of the constitutional order, the October 6 incident in which a group of mutinous soldiers killed the Chief of Defence Staff along with the head of human resources had interrupted the smooth process. He said, however, the Bissau Government and the mutineers had struck an accord to end the dispute under efforts spearheaded by the AU, ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries.

"Guinea Bissau's worsening security situation is closely linked to its dire economic and financial situation resulting from its neglect by the international community," Nana Akufo-Addo said.

Nana Akufo-Addo expressed satisfaction about Liberia saying: "In spite of the constraints encountered in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the process has chalked tremendous progress."

He said over 80,000 ex-combatants had been disarmed, but there was a number of ex-rebels still present in parts of the countryside that were inaccessible by vehicles. As a result they used their guns to extort items and harass innocent civilians.

He said the major concern for the National Transitional Government of Liberia was the reluctance of donors to fund the costly restructuring exercise in the country. Preparations for the country's 2005 elections had begun, he added.

Nana Akufo-Addo noted that, notwithstanding, the progress made in Sierra Leone, the maintenance of the peacekeeping force was still necessary in order to consolidate the peace, improve the security situation and strengthen the authority of the government. Mrs Ardenne said ECOWAS remained a crucial institution as far as improving peace and security in the Sub-Region were concerned and the EU was committed to lend its support.

She lauded the efforts and success chalked so far by ECOWAS in the peace process in some of the troubled countries.

Mrs Ardenne condemned the attack on the French Peacekeeping Forces in Cote d'Ivoire and a radio and television announcement, which, she said, called for violence against foreigners in the country. She called on parties to the conflict to respect the ceasefire agreement saying: "Immediate disarmament is required".

"The EU is ready to assist ECOWAS towards that effort and we also welcome the stance taken in Nigeria by President Obasanjo to intervene in the Cote d'Ivoire crisis."

Mrs Ardenne said the EU was concerned about the quality of the peace process and disarmament in Liberia because events during the past week had shown that all was not well.

"There is no reconciliation process in place and possible steps need to be taken to improve the situation on arms flow between Liberia and Guinea Bissau," she said. 08 Nov. 04

Source: GNA

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Situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains tense as foreigners seek refuge in UN buildings

8 November 2004 – The situation in Côte d'Ivoire continues to cause great concern, foreign nationals have sought refuge in United Nations buildings and the atmosphere in the commercial capital of Abidjan remains very tense and volatile despite the restoration of relative calm following several days of violence in the West African country.

The UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) reported today that the mission was monitoring the ceasefire agreement between Government and rebel forces, while unruly mobs were roaming some streets in Abidjan and hate media broadcasts aimed at foreigners continued. It said some 800 foreign nationals had sought refuge within UN compounds and sites and were being protected by UN peacekeepers.

Fighting flared last Thursday when the Government violated the ceasefire by launching an attack in the Zone of Confidence (ZOC) in the north of the country separating the combatants. On Saturday Government aircraft bombed French peacekeeping forces in the area, killing nine people and leading the French to destroy the country's air force. Supporters of President Laurent Gbagbo then took to the streets of Abidjan in retaliation, harassing and intimidating foreigners.

The Security Council condemned the Government attacks and demanded the immediate cessation of all military operations by all Ivorian parties and full compliance with the ceasefire agreements.

UNOCI reported today that Government forces had now withdrawn south from the ZOC. UN forces are protecting many Government officials as well as UN personnel and property and some UN troops have been redeployed from the north to reinforce UNOCI positions in Abidjan.

"We welcome President Gbagbo's appeal for calm but note with concern the continuing 'messages of hate' being broadcast over public radio and television as well as other local FM stations encouraging Ivoirians to take to the streets," UNOCI spokesman Jean-Victor Nkolo said.

Mr. Nkolo told UN Radio that the mission had now raised to level four the security level throughout the country, meaning that where conditions permit, non-essential staff will be evacuated. There have so far been no evacuations.

He called for a full and immediate cessation of all hostilities in order to put the peace process back on track since the ceasefire agreements that ended the civil war "remain the only solution out of this crisis."

IRINNEWS.ORG

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
Tuesday 9 November 2004

COTE D IVOIRE: France denies trying to topple President, diplomatic efforts continue



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At least 2,050 foreign residents were sheltering in French and UN military bases in Abidjan on Monday, many having been plucked by helicopter from their homes

ABIDJAN, 8 Nov 2004 (IRIN) - France sought on Monday to reassure thousands of angry Ivorian demonstrators that it was not trying to topple President Laurent Gbagbo, after a weekend of mob violence forced more than 2,000 foreigners to flee their homes.

As French troops tried to restore calm to the streets of the West African nation, French diplomats scurried to push a resolution through the UN Security Council that would impose penalties on Cote d'Ivoire, while South African President Thabo Mbeki prepared to fly into Abidjan to kick-start the battered peace process.

Ivorian youths began setting fire to French schools and businesses, looting homes and threatening foreigners on Saturday after the French army destroyed almost the entire Ivorian air force in retaliation for the killing of nine of its peacekeepers in an aerial bombardment in the northern town of Bouake.

At least 2,050 foreign residents were sheltering in French and UN military bases in Abidjan on Monday, many having been plucked by

helicopter from their homes as they came under attack from angry mobs, some armed with sticks, stones and machetes.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said well over 400 people had been treated on Sunday, some for wounds from live ammunition and it appealed to be allowed to continue its activities unharmed.

Gbagbo made his first television appearance late Sunday, appealing to protesters to head home and not let themselves be provoked, but on Monday around 5,000 demonstrators lined up opposite French tanks stationed outside the Hotel Ivoire in the upmarket suburb of Cocody.

Screaming anti-French slogans and carrying banners branding the French assassins, the protesters rallied at the hotel following a morning appeal on state radio to form a human shield to protect Gbagbo, whose residence is nearby.

A diplomat at the hotel said French troops had fired shots in the air to disperse the protesters. Ivorian state television broadcast images of injured people getting to hospital. Over the weekend, it also showed the bodies of protesters who, it said, had been killed by French forces.

However it was unclear how many casualties there were.

"The situation is worrying, it could explode at any moment," another Western diplomat told IRIN. "Any negotiations about Ivorian politics is impossible at the moment. It's about lowering the tensions and calming the crisis."

Joint patrols

Inside the hotel, French, UN and military officials met the Ivorian army's chief of staff Mathias Doue, and government representatives and agreed to organise joint patrols to help restore calm to the city, which was once the economic toast of West Africa.

In a televised press conference, all were keen to dismiss rumours inflaming passions in Abidjan that Paris was aiming to depose Gbagbo from power.

"He represents a legal government, elected by the people. Our only goal is to ensure the safety of the French and expatriate community and also that of all Abidjan residents; we are here to stop Abidjan falling

into the hands of looters," General Henri Poncet of the French forces said.

Mamadou Koulibaly, the speaker of parliament and one of the most hardline members of Gbagbo's party, spoke in a similar vein on Monday despite having called people onto the streets just a day earlier.

"The French troops do not intend to stage a coup d'etat nor destabilise Cote d'Ivoire," he said. "The craziest rumours are those which make republics fall the fastest," he warned, urging people to calm down and get on with their normal lives.

Speaking in northern France, President Jacques Chirac added his voice to the chorus trying to reassure the Ivorian population.

"France is the friend of Cote d'Ivoire. We want the country to find the path to national reconciliation," he said.

But not all Gbagbo supporters were convinced, chief among them Charles Ble Goude, the leader of the Young Patriots militant group, who has proved to be a mobilising force in the past.

"I have no confidence in the French army. They should return to their barracks, leave the bridges and give us back our airport," he told French radio.

Diplomatic channels

Meanwhile in New York, French diplomats called for penalties, including an arms embargo to be imposed on France's former colony, which has been split into a rebel-held north and a government-controlled south since September 2002.

The Ivorian army violated an 18-month ceasefire last Thursday by bombing rebel strongholds, with the attacks continuing on Friday before the French troops, 4,000 of whom patrol the ceasefire zone alongside 6,000 UN peacekeepers, fell victim on Saturday.

"The Security Council... decides that all states shall, for an initial period of 12 months... take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to Cote d'Ivoire... of arms or any other material, in particular military aircraft," a draft of the resolution obtained by IRIN read.

The draft resolution, which French diplomats at the UN hoped would pass on Monday, also provides for travel bans and the freezing of funds for individuals who block the implementation of a 2003 French-brokered peace deal, known as the Linas-Marcoussis agreement.

Before last week's government military offensive Cote d'Ivoire had been locked in political deadlock for months. The government was supposed to pass a series of political reforms, including a controversial amendment to the constitution to widen the pool of those eligible to become president and the rebels were supposed to start disarming in mid-October. But each side dug in their heels, each blaming the other for the failure of the peace plan.

It is this impasse, now further complicated by the popular violence and high tempers in Cote d'Ivoire, that South African President Thabo Mbeki must try to bridge.

"He will be there tomorrow," presidential spokesman Bheki Khumalo told IRIN by phone on Monday. "He should be there for one day only and his first port of call is President Gbagbo."

Mbeki, who has brokered peace deals in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, was given his mandate by the African Union.

Some diplomats said letting African leaders try to mediate the path to peace might be a good move and prevent charges of former colonial powers interfering.

But others pointed out that the recommendations from a meeting of African leaders in July in Accra, Ghana, had been ignored and many cast doubt on just what political headway could be made with the situation still

volatile on the ground.

"We have two crises on our hands now. One between the government and the rebels and another between the government and France," a senior West African diplomat told IRIN. "I doubt that Mbeki will manage to achieve anything. I doubt even that he'll end up coming."

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U.N. Team in Sudan to Investigate Genocide Reports

Reuters

Nov. 8, 2004 - A U.N. team has arrived in Sudan to investigate whether genocide has occurred in the country's Darfur region where more than 1.5 million people have been made homeless by conflict, a U.N. spokesman said on Monday.

The United States has accused the Sudanese government and Arab Janjaweed militias, which Washington says Khartoum backs, of genocide in the arid area where conflict broke out in 2003 after years of clashes between African farmers and Arab nomads.

Khartoum dismisses the charge of genocide and describes the Janjaweed as outlaws.

George Somerwill, a U.N. spokesman in Sudan, told Reuters the international commission of inquiry arrived late on Sunday and would travel to Darfur in the west of Sudan on Wednesday. He said they were due to return to the capital Khartoum on Nov. 20.

"It is to begin its investigation of reports of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in Darfur by all parties, including to determine whether or not acts of genocide have occurred and to identify the perpetrators of such violations," he said of the team's mandate.

Somerwill did not give details of the make-up of the team. In October U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan named a five-member panel led by Italian judge Antonio Cassese to investigate whether genocide has taken place in Darfur. The panel was created at the request of the U.N. Security Council.

Cassese was the first president of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, a court based in The Hague that is looking into suspected war crimes in the Balkans including during Bosnia's 1992-1995 war.

Darfur rebels launched their revolt against the government in February 2003, accusing Khartoum of neglecting their region. They also accuse Khartoum of arming the Janjaweed to loot and burn African villages and kill the inhabitants.

Two U.N. human rights watchdogs told the U.N. Security Council in September that war crimes had probably occurred on a "large and systematic scale" in Darfur.

There are no reliable figures for how many people have died as a direct result of the fighting, but the United Nations said last month that 70,000 people have died from disease and malnutrition since March.

The United Nations has said the conflict has created the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

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War crimes on broad scale in Darfur: Annan

Associated Press

Thursday, Nov 4, 2004

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United Nations — Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Wednesday there are strong indications of war crimes "on a large and systematic scale" in Sudan's Darfur region, where the violence has now affected two million people.

In a report to the UN Security Council, he said the Sudanese government has failed to bring the perpetrators of widespread killings, rapes, looting and village burnings to justice.

Jan Pronk, the top UN envoy to Sudan who wrote the report, will present it to the council on Thursday. He will recommend that members take "prompt action" to get the government and rebels to comply with UN resolutions demanding an end to the violence, disarmament of combatants, and punishment of those responsible.

Until the government starts taking more than "pinprick" action against the perpetrators, the report warned, no displaced person will dare return home and no group will agree to disarm.

"Without an end to impunity . . . banditry goes from strength to strength, menacing the population and obstructing the delivery of aid to desperate people in isolated areas," it said.

The violence in Darfur began in January 2003 when two black African rebel groups took up arms over alleged unjust treatment by the Sudanese government and ethnic Arab countrymen. Pro-government militias called *Janjaweed* reacted by unleashing attacks on villages.

The conflict, which has killed at least 70,000 people, has created what UN officials say is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today.

Meanwhile, African Union mediators in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, appealed to Sudanese rebel and government delegations to sign a draft accord aimed at stopping ground and air attacks in Darfur.

The head mediator, Chadian diplomat Allan-Mi Ahmed, said the current draft was the best the two sides could hope for at present. The two sides "are so far apart that we couldn't make any fresh proposals," he said, adding that mediators were afraid to tinker with the draft any more, in case "the whole edifice crumbles."

Mr. Ahmed said he hoped the accord would be signed by week's end.

Also Wednesday, the Sudan Liberation Army accused the *Janjaweed* of having torched at least five villages in southern Darfur, killing at least 150 people. Sudanese government officials denied any knowledge of the alleged attacks.

Despite the charges, Justice and Equality Movement spokesman Ahmed Hussain Adam said he was confident an accord would be signed. "It will be good news for our people, even if it won't be perfect," he said.

An international commission appointed by Mr. Annan began work on Oct. 25 and has three months to study human rights violations and determine whether or not a genocide occurred in Darfur.

"There are strong indications that war crimes and crimes against humanity have occurred in Darfur on a large and systematic scale," the report said. "This has been confirmed by a number of senior UN human rights experts who have visited the region."

There have been reports that armed men dug up a grave containing 40 bodies in Souba, North Darfur and have been seen working on another site in an apparent attempt to hide evidence of mass killings, it said.

During October, security conditions in Darfur deteriorated, ceasefire violations increased on both sides, violence escalated and towards the end of the month, the threat of large scale attacks increased considerably, it said.

The estimate of those affected by the conflict rose from 1.8 million on Sept. one to two million on Oct. 1, an upward trend expected to continue until year's end, he said.

The increase stems mainly from the growing number of internally displaced people, now 1.6 million, reflecting "the severity of the protection and security situation in Darfur," Mr. Pronk said, adding that 400,000 more need humanitarian aid.

Mr. Pronk said the two million figure is a 100 per cent increase in the number of people needing humanitarian assistance since April. Donors have funded 75 per cent of the money needed for Darfur this year — \$397-million (U.S.) of \$534-million. He appealed for the rest.

The Security Council will be holding a rare meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, where talks to end the civil war are taking place, on Nov. 18-19.

U.S. Ambassador John Danforth, the Security Council president, said Wednesday the council trip's aim is to show the Sudanese what the country would look like if there were peace — including international guarantees of a peace agreement, international monitoring to development assistance.

But he warned that this "carrot" — the offer of international help — won't "be there forever" and "if we are pushed away by either side" then the international community will turn to other pressing global issues.

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