PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office as at:
Monday 3 – Friday 7 March 2003

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

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Special Court to catch many

... Special Court prosecutor

The Special Court Prosecutor David Crane says, "international, regional, and international" investigations are ongoing.

"I want our work to be absolutely thorough. These cases are rather complex and I've instructed my staff to follow the evidence wherever it leads," said Crane. He indicated that investigations would likely continue into the rainy season.

David M. Crane has however assured soldiers of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces that only those bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes will be prosecuted.

Crane was speaking at a weekend seminar organized by the U.S. Defence Institute of International Law Studies (DIILS). The audience included over forty members of the RSLAF, as well as civilian leadership from the Ministry of Defence.

"While I believe that accountability is the cornerstone to democracy and a sustainable peace, the mandate given to me by the international community asks me to only prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility," said Crane, adding, "I do encourage citizens to talk to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whether they be victims or perpetrators."

The weekend-long US seminar focused on "The Legal Aspect of the Military in the 21st Century." Participants engaged in discussions on issues such as the role of law, military operations, and international law.
Special Court Delegation of Donors visits Kailahun

Representatives of the Special Court's management committee visited Kailahun on Wednesday as part of their efforts to talk with Sierra Leoneans and hear their views on the Court. Hundreds of people in the area turned out to meet them at the local 'court barry', the town's official meeting place.

Also part of the delegation was Mr. Ralph Zacklin, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs; Ambassador Aliu Kanu from the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations, as well as officials from the Governments of Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The committee oversees the Special Court's non-judicial operations and has been on a three day visit to Sierra Leone evaluating the Court's progress.
Prosecutor courts perpetrators

The Prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone David M. Crane addressed members of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) today at a week-long seminar organised by the US defence Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS). The audience included over forty members of the RSLAF, as well as civilian leadership from the Ministry of Defence. The prosecutor stated that his investigations would focus only on "those bearing the greatest responsibility" for violations of international humanitarian law, not the rank and file of the military.

"While I believe that accountability is the cornerstone to democracy and a sustainable peace, the mandate given to me by the international community asks me to only prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility," said Crane. "I do encourage citizens to talk to Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whether they be victims or perpetrators".

The prosecutor also told participants that "national, regional, and international" investigations are ongoing. "I want our work to be absolutely thorough. These cases are rather complex, and I've instructed my staff to follow the evidence wherever it leads," said Crane. He indicated that investigations would likely continue into the summer.

The weeklong DIILS seminar focuses on "The Legal Aspect of the Military in the 21st Century Society". Participants are engaged in discussions on issues such as the role of law, military organisation, and human rights.

Crane returned from a one-week trip to London and Washington, D.C. He is scheduled to make the third in a series of diplomatic missions later this month, where he will make initial visits to Germany, Norway, and Denmark to brief senior government officials and human rights leaders on the establishment of the court. Trips are also planned for April.
In US: Call for Special Court to try Taylor

Former interim president of Liberia Dr. Amos C. Sawyer is now among those agitating for the trial of President Charles Taylor. Sawyer wrote a letter to The perspective in the US. Sawyer has challenged Liberians to take the initiative in bringing Taylor and his cohorts to judgment.

He added, “It is time for Liberians who have information as to how Mr. Taylor provided, how he was engaged in the diamond business and how he exploited a relationship with Sierra Leoneans to aid and abetted murder to make their testimony available.” Sawyer said he said the use of Liberia as an epicenter of a system of conflict is a stain on Liberia and its citizens urging those with information that they owed it to themselves, to their country and to our largest humanity to testify.

The Liberian people who care about how their presidency has been used as the instrument of criminality and of plunder, how the presidency has been used as a plunder chamber by Mr. Taylor are partially responsible for his prosecution,” Sawyer said.

The Sierra Leone Court act to try those who committed atrocities during the war were created through an agreement between the United Nations and the government of Sierra Leone. David Blecht, spokesman for the court recently said the court will not be looking at each individual but rather at those who bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed during the war.
COMMENTARY

‘THOSE WHO BEAR THE GREATEST RESPONSIBILITY’

The Prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone said in Freetown that those who have committed high crimes will face possible prosecution. He made these words at a seminar organized for both the military personnel of the Sierra Leone armed forces and some civilian personnel from the Ministry of Defence, that his investigations will focus only on those bearing the greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law—not the rank and file of the military.

In the release, the prosecutor said ‘While I believe that accountability is the cornerstone to Democracy and Sustainable Peace, the mandate given to me by the International community asks me to only prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility’.

With reference to a recent scramble between police security personnel and Johnny Paul Koroma who slipped and escaped from police hands on the aftermath of a shoot-out at Wellington, the truth is not too far that Johnny Paul Koroma may be possibly tried for violations of international humanitarian law.

Though the prosecutor further said—Not the rank and file of the military, yet Johnny Paul Koroma may not be seen here to be pardoned. Aside from his present status as a civilian and Member of Parliament, Mr. Koroma is in the good books of history as one of those responsible to lead regimes which may have violated international humanitarian law.

Although the statements contained in the release did not decree or condemned anybody as a war criminal to be prosecuted; yet they are not immune to people like Johnny Paul. Logically, he seems to be a possible indicted. Possibly, likely affects other key players in the conflicts like Foday Sankoh and Hinga. ‘Some of these men share a common target,’ and key members of the military.
Wisdom
Thursday, 6 March 2003

SPECIAL COURT CHIEF PROSECUTOR ENCOURAGES PERPETRATORS TO TALK TO THE TRC

The Prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, David M. Crane, has addressed members of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSALF) at a weekend seminar organized by the U.S. Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS).

The audience included over forty members of the RSALF, as well as civilian leadership from the Ministry of Defense.

The Prosecutor stated that his investigations will focus only on those bearing the greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law—no one below the rank and file of the military.

Mr. Crane believes in accountability as the cornerstone of democracy and sustainable peace. He said the mandate given by the international community asks him to only prosecute those who bear the "Greatest Responsibility." He encourages citizens to talk to Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

whether they are victims or perpetrators.

The Prosecutor also told participants that national, regional, and international investigations are ongoing. "I want our work to be absolutely thorough. These cases are complex and I have instructed my staff to follow the evidence wherever it leads," said Crane. He indicated that investigations will continue into the Rajiv Jha.

The DIILS Seminar focuses on "The Legal Aspects of the Military in the 21st Century." Participants were engaged in discussions on issues such as the rule of law, military organization, and human rights.

Crane returned recently from a one-week trip to London and Washington D.C. and is scheduled to make the third trip in a series of diplomatic missions later this month, where he will make initial visits to Germany, Norway, and Denmark to brief senior government officials and human rights leaders on the establishment of the Court.
Special Court to indict politicians

Chief prosecutor David Crane said it is not only military commanders that the Sierra Leone war will affect; political leaders also bear responsibility for the war will continue.

According to Sierra Leone's Special Court and Human Rights Watch, the war was initiated by political leaders in 1991. The Special Court is expected to focus on the political leaders' role in the conflict. The political leaders are accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Special Court is expected to start trials in September and will include political leaders from both the government and the opposition. The court is under the UN and will be headed by Sir Jon Benjamin, a former British judge.

The court will try politicians for crimes committed during the war, including murder, rape, and other atrocities. The war lasted from 1991 to 2002 and caused more than 100,000 deaths.

The court is expected to try former President Charles Taylor, who is on trial in The Hague for war crimes.

The court is expected to try former President Sessay Bio, who is on trial in The Hague for war crimes.

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Special Court.

Police to effect arrest of suspects

"We are not just going after military commanders. We’re going after the politicians, those who financed and supported this conflict."

— David Crane, Prosecutor

We’re going after the politicians, those who financed and supported this conflict through putting money into the pockets of those who will go to war, those who will be the ultimate victims.

— Prosecutor, at a press conference yesterday.

We are not just going after military commanders, we are going after the politicians, those who financed and supported this conflict through putting money into the pockets of those who will go to war, those who will be the ultimate victims.

— Prosecutor, at a press conference yesterday.

Independent Observer
Friday, 7 March 2003
I Have The Legal Power To Indict Taylor

David Crane

SPEC AL COURT Prosecutor David Crane has said that his mandate gives him the appropriate legal power to indict those he believes bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes by their local or leaders of neighbouring countries.

Prosecutor Crane was responding to questions by the Netwerk Maatschappij on whether he had the authority to indict war crimes in other countries in a related doctrine at the UN's Special Court.

Crane said he was prepared to act on allegations of war crimes as he sees them.

"This is the most black-and-white, good-versus-evil situation that I have ever seen in 30 years of public service."

"This was a cynical attempt to take over a country to control diamonds to make money to buy guns and weaponry to keep them in power so they could influence others in the region."

"The bottom line is, it boils down to the diamonds in Sierra Leone," Crane maintained.

Prosecutor Crane said indictment by the court may be sooner rather than later and will include

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TAYLOR is the sure candidate for the Special Court international indicies.

He said when the indictments are handed, he will be executed by the Sierra Leone Police and others and that the court is already making arrangements for arrests to be effected simultaneously.

"As prosecutor, my client are the people of Sierra Leone, the victims both gone and current everybody in this country right, even in the villages, the perpetrator or a combination cannot.

There isn't one human being who isn't in Sierra Leone that was not affected by the conflict," he said.

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