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:

Friday, May 07, 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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PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, 6 May 2004

Prosecutor Encouraged by New Call for Charles Taylor to Face Justice

Special Court for Sierra Leone Chief Prosecutor David M. Crane is encouraged by Saturday’s statement of the Presidents of Guinea and Ivory Coast, in which they declared support for the legal proceedings against Charles Taylor at the Court in Freetown.

“The Special Court is an international and West African institution. The support of West African leaders is important to its ability to successfully meet its mandate in seeking justice for all West Africans,” Mr Crane said. “I have consistently heard from the citizens of West Africa about their desire for Charles Taylor to face the charges against him at the Special Court. I am pleased that this sentiment is now gaining political voice.”

Charles Taylor, currently sheltered in Calabar, Nigeria, faces a 17-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone. The charges include terrorising the civilian population, unlawful killings, sexual violence, physical violence, forced conscription of child soldiers, abductions, forced labour, looting and burning, and attacks on peacekeeping personnel.

“Sierra Leone, by working with the United Nations to set up the Special Court, acted on the desire of West Africans to hold individuals accountable for these international crimes,” Mr Crane said. “The people of West Africa understand that peace and prosperity depend on realisation of the principle that no one can be above the law.”

#END

Produced by the
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
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Visit the Special Court’s website at www.sc-sl.org
For Special Court
Taylor's trial gains political sentiment

Guinea and Ivory Coast's renewed support for legal proceedings against former Liberia's president, Charles Taylor to commence has brightened the chances of Special Court's prosecutor, David Crane to one day bring the indicted war crimes suspect to justice.

According to a Press Release issued by the Court yesterday, "Crane is encouraged by Saturday's statement of the presidents of Guinea and Ivory Coast, in which they declared support for the legal proceedings," to commence.

Quoting Crane, the Release states, "the support of West African leaders is important in its ability to successfully meet its mandate in seeking justice for all West Africans."

It continued, "I have consistently heard from the citizens of West Africa about their desire for Charles Taylor to face the charges against him at the Special Court."

Crane maintained that he was now pleased that, "this sentiment is now gaining political voice."

Taylor is presently seeking refuge in Nigeria where the authorities have refused to turn him over to the court and president Obasanjo is on record to have categorically stated that he hoped no organisation would harass him into handing over Taylor. He faces a 17 count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the country's decade long civil strife.
"No one can be above the law"
— says David Crane

By Samuel John
The Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court, David M. Crane has said in Freetown, "the people of West Africa understand that peace and prosperity depend on realisation of the principle that no one can be above the law." The Chief Prosecutor said he is encouraged by last Saturday's statements of both the President of Guinea and Ivory Coast endorsing legal proceedings against Charles Taylor in Contd. Page 2

No one can be above the law

From Front Page
Freetown. According to a Press Release from the Special Court, the Chief Prosecutor said that the Special Court is an International and West African institution. He said that the support of West African leaders is important to its ability to successfully meet its mandate in seeking justice for all West Africans. He went on, "I have consistently heard from the citizens of West Africa about their desire for Charles Taylor to face the charges against him at the Special Court. I am pleased that this sentiment is now gaining political voice." The Chief Prosecutor further maintained, "Sierra Leone by working with the United Nations to set up the Special Court acted on the desire of West Africans to hold individuals accountable for those international crimes." The ex-President of Liberia who is currently sheltered in Calaba, Nigeria is facing a 17-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone. The charges include terrorising the civilian population, unlawful killings, sexual violence, physical violence, forced conscription of child soldiers, abductions, forced labour, looting, burning and attack on peacekeeping personnel.
Taylor to face Justice

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“Sierra Leone, by working with the United Nations to set up the Special Court, acted on the desire of West Africans to hold individuals accountable for these international crimes,” Mr. Crane said. “The people of West Africa understand that peace and prosperity depend on realisation of the principle that no one can be above the law.”
EU politics: Union to freeze finances of Liberian despot

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COUNTRY BRIEFING

FROM EUROPEAN VOICE

By David Cronin

EU GOVERNMENTS are set to order the freezing of all funds belonging to Charles Taylor, the brutal former Liberian president now in exile in Nigeria.

Last month the UN Security Council sought a global freeze on Taylor’s assets, as well as those of his henchmen and close family. Ireland’s EU presidency has asked the Council of Ministers to endorse the call in Luxembourg today (29 April).

Taylor is believed to have amassed a vast personal fortune - possibly amounting to several billions of euro - through the illegal smuggling of arms and diamonds. His wealth is scattered throughout the world. In a letter to European Parliament President Pat Cox, Ireland’s EU ambassador Anne Anderson said a swift EU decision is necessary, particularly "in the case of assets freezes where funds can be moved quickly".

Despite going into exile in Nigeria last year, a probe undertaken at the UN’s behest concluded in November last that he was continuing to divert Liberian government revenues. He was accused too of trying to undermine the transition to democracy in Monrovia as an interim government there desperately needs finances.

Taylor was the dominant political figure in Liberia during a 15-year period, which saw more than 100,000 people lose their lives in a violent conflict. He has also been indicted for war crimes by a UN-sponsored tribunal investigating the 1991-2002 civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone. His forces were allies of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, whose guerrillas developed a fearsome reputation for such atrocities as hacking off civilians’ limbs. Since the indictment, Washington has been pressurizing Lagos into handing him over for trial. The US Congress has approved a bounty of 1.7 million for Taylor’s capture and delivery.

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SOURCE: European Voice
EIviaNewsEdge
UNHCR Boss Fears Renewed Violence in Sub-Region

The Inquirer (Monrovia)
NEWS
May 6, 2004
Posted to the web May 6, 2004
Monrovia

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Rudd Lubbers says there is still the risk of renewed violence around the corner in the MRU basin and the sub-region at large; Patrick K. Wrokpoh & I. Solo Kelgebeh report.

He said peace has not been totally achieved yet in the sub-region, as such there is a need to change what he called "the mind set" by mobilizing people as well as empowering them so that they can change from the path of violence to peace.

Mr. Lubbers made these assertion Tuesday evening when the NTGL Chairman Charles Gyude Bryant held a cocktail reception for him and members of his delegation at the Executive Mansion in Monrovia.

The UNHCR boss who also once served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands, urged Liberians to organize peace in what he termed as "sustainable way", emphasizing that the opportunity afforded the country now by the international community is the last chance.

Mr. Lubbers said the job of achieving total peace in the sub-region is not yet done in full, stressing that there is a need to uphold what he described as the "MRU Concept". He said Liberia is the example of the sub-region. and it is indeed possible to change the mind set and mobilize people and empowering all of them something which he expressed confident can be achieved for them to forget about war.

For his part, NTGL Chairman Bryant commended the UNHCR for the tremendous assistance it has rendered and continues to render to Liberians affected by the crisis.

He said the government is pleased that Mr. Lubbers is in the country to assess the situation for himself.

He frowned on the past government of exiled former president Charles Taylor for the low courtesy shown towards Mr. Lubbers during his first visit to Liberia.
Chairman Bryant said such an attitude would have adversely affected the country's international image, adding that Liberia is a country of good people and they regret that these good characteristics were not shown to Mr. Lubbers when he visited Liberia the first time.

Chairman Bryant appealed to Mr. Lubbers for the UNHCR to increase its assistance to Liberian refugees and assist with their repatriation back home.

Meanwhile, the UNHCR boss has reiterated his agency's uncompromising stance to repatriate Liberian refugees from neighboring countries beginning October 1, 2004.

Mr. Lubbers said while it is true UNHCR needs a balance of US$25m for the repatriation and reintegration of Liberian refugees October 1 is a conducive date.

He said according to reports gathered UNMIL will be deployed throughout the country by June. And from June to October there is a three-month wrap-up. Continuing, Mr. Lubbers UNHCR wants to ensure that returnees are not resettled in displaced camps but rather to their original areas.

Flanked by UNHCR Country Representative, Moses Okello and Zobia Hassim-Ashagarie, Deputy Director, Africa Bureau at a press conference yesterday Mr. Lubbers said all Liberian returnees will be given full attention.
Iraq: A Strategy for Progress

The Strategy

Iraq: Strategy for Progress aims to achieve five principal objectives:

- To position the United States to meet the challenges we face in Iraq;
- To establish a clear path for a political transition until Iraqi elections;
- To secure our significant military and financial investments to date;
- To build a strong international coalition; and
- To enlist sustainable and popular support here at home for ongoing operations in Iraq.

As a first and necessary step, President Bush should immediately convene an emergency International Summit on Iraq to enlist support for a strategic shift and to strike concrete agreements with our partners. The Summit would provide an opportunity for the President to confer with other heads of state and to develop consensus on the international architecture for political, security, and economic arrangements in Iraq. The meeting, held outside of the United States, should include representatives from the Arab League, countries currently serving on the United Nations Security Council, major NATO allies, and core coalition partners. The Summit's goal should be to establish an Iraq Contact Group to which authorities in Iraq will report.

The United States must go in with a plan that provides for new international arrangements to manage the political, security and economic aspects of Iraq's transitions, and includes reorienting American policy to reflect those new international arrangements.

The recommendations below constitute a plan of action for dramatically shifting strategic direction. The primary recommendations provide the foundation for specific actions in the areas of political transition, security, and reconstruction. The secondary recommendations spell out targeted policy changes necessary to restore our credibility with international partners and, in turn, to empower the Iraqi people and advance reconstruction.

Political Transition

Primary recommendation

Authorize the creation of an international High Representative for Iraq. The United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter VII authority of the U.N. Charter, should authorize an international High Representative to take responsibility for enforcing and ensuring the transition from the Iraqi caretaker government proposed by U.N. Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi. A highly respected diplomat credible in the region, the High Representative should work with Iraqi civil society to facilitate the convening of a national conference and establishment of an Iraqi Consultative Assembly. While the Iraqi caretaker government would assume significant authority over the state of affairs in Iraq, the High Representative would possess emergency powers to veto controversial laws, policies, budgetary items, and government appointments. On a day to day basis, a Governing Authority – consisting of the Prime Minister of the Iraqi caretaker government, the High Representative, and the military commander in charge of security operations – would be responsible for strategic decisions. As an independent international official, the High Representative would report to the Contact Group, not the United Nations.

Secondary recommendations

The United States should formally open the American Embassy in Baghdad prior to June 30. Ambassador John Negroponte should be dispatched immediately to Iraq to begin the process of transferring U.S. authority from the Pentagon to the State Department. The complete transition from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the new embassy should be accomplished by the June 30 deadline rather than initiated at that time. This approach would

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07/05/2004
reduce the risk of critical issues falling through the cracks of the inter-agency transition, and ensure that he is fully operational as the lead U.S. representative on July 1.

**The White House should immediately nominate a new U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.** At this critical juncture, the United States needs a new Ambassador to the United Nations to lead efforts to secure a Security Council resolution on Iraq. Replacing Ambassador Negroponte in New York should be addressed with the same urgency as was his Senate confirmation. The appointment of a highly respected and effective diplomat would bolster the Administration's credibility at the United Nations.

**The Pentagon should terminate monthly payments to the Iraqi National Congress and its special relationship with Ahmed Chalabi.** With the formation of a new caretaker government, there is no credible rationale for direct U.S. support to the Iraqi National Congress (currently $340,000 a month). Continued support for Chalabi fuels Iraqi suspicions and lends credence to allegations of an American political agenda within Iraq.

**The new Iraqi caretaker government should repeal the decree on Iraqi press censorship.** A vibrant free press is critical for a democratic Iraq and the United States should support open public dialogue, transparency in operations, and accountability at all levels. Any decision to address what might be considered illegal press activity should be undertaken by the Iraqi caretaker government in consultation with the High Representative.

**The new Iraqi caretaker government should amend the statute for the current Iraqi Special Tribunal to allow greater U.N. involvement and funding.** Following the models of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Extraordinary Chambers in Cambodia, through an agreement with the U.N. Secretariat, a reconstituted Tribunal would carve out an explicit role for U.N.-endorsed judicial and administrative appointees, generate the necessary funding, and ensure adherence to international standards. Rather than having the U.S. bear the costs alone (estimated at over $75 million) the funding for the tribunal should come from assessments from U.N. member-states, as was the case with the ad hoc tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

**The Pentagon should take immediate steps to reassure Iraqi citizens and the world that U.S.-controlled prisons in Iraq are in compliance with international standards and treaty obligations.** Reports of abuse and humiliation of Iraqi detainees have done great damage in Iraq and throughout the region. Opening up the U.S.-administered prison system in Iraq to international inspection is the only way to restore lost credibility. The Pentagon's internal report on Abu Ghraib should be made public, to the extent possible, to demonstrate that immediate steps were taken to sanction criminal activity. A Permanent Committee for Monitoring Prison Conditions should be established with representatives from the international security force, the Iraqi caretaker government, Iraqi civil society, the International Committee of the Red Crescent and the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. The new Iraqi Ministry of Interior should establish a citizen's liaison to compile and keep a centralized database of all detainees in Iraqi prisons.

Security

*Primary recommendation*

**Give NATO command of security operations in Iraq.** The Administration should request that NATO assume command of security and stabilization operations in Iraq. The core of an adequate NATO force in Iraq already exists. Establishing a formal mission would make larger and more sustainable contributions by both NATO and non-NATO countries possible. Over time, better training of Iraqi forces and broader international participation would allow the United States to reduce its troop presence as the security situation improves.

To meet security needs, the total number of military forces, including American and international troops, should be increased to *at least* 200,000. This will not only provide greater security in Iraq, but will also allow the borders to be more effectively guarded. Non-member states, particularly from Muslim countries, should be actively encouraged to participate in the operation, as they did in the Balkans. The mission's security mandate should include the following components: countering the insurgency; improving security and controlling borders; and protecting humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. Expanded security forces will also ensure an atmosphere in which U.N. and
Iraqi officials can safely administer the upcoming electoral process, and candidates, party activists and voters can freely participate.

General Abizaid should be given provisional NATO command authority as Supreme Allied Commander Middle East with overall responsibility for NATO operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Political guidance should be provided through the North Atlantic Council (NAC). NATO should also consider using this opportunity to develop better political and military relationships in the Middle East. Iraq, for example, could ultimately be offered partnership status through NATO's Mediterranean Initiative.

**Secondary recommendations**

**The United States should increase troop levels to 150,000.** The recent U.S. increase to 135,000 was made possible by temporarily delaying the return of selected units for up to three months. For improved security, in the short-term, as Iraq prepares for elections and insurgents can be expected to challenge such progress, the United States must assume greater responsibility. To meet the troop level required, the redeployment of the Third Infantry Division should be moved up from its planned November date, and elements of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force based in Okinawa and the First Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division should be sent ahead of schedule. Force levels can be adjusted downwards only as overall security improves, transition milestones are achieved, greater international troop contributions are realized and Iraqi forces demonstrate an ability to assume greater responsibility.

**The United States should work to double international troop participation to at least 50,000.** Non-American forces, primarily the British, add roughly 24,000 troops to the current coalition, but this component has shrunk with the recent departure of Spanish and Honduran forces. The United States must work with NATO allies and regional partners to increase long-term international involvement in the multinational force, with particular emphasis on contributions from Muslim countries. In addition to ensuring a troop presence capable of providing security, increased international troop contributions would reduce the need for private security forces, reduce the security and legal complications created by the presence of a large number of private contractors, and free up additional funds for reconstruction.

**The NATO mission should establish a dedicated force to protect and operate in and around sacred cities and sites.** Comprised of troops from moderate Muslim countries and working under the NATO mission, this small force would advise and participate in security operations in the most culturally sensitive sites. Morocco, Pakistan, and Tunisia are three possible candidates.

**The NATO mission should devise a long-term strategy for developing and sustaining professional Iraqi security forces.** The existing timetable for training the police and military should be extended to between two and three years to ensure that new Iraqi forces are adequately trained, vetted and able to assume responsibility for Iraq's security. Iraqi forces currently on duty should be re-vetted to avoid potential security problems.

**The NATO mission should conditionally allow individual members of militias to participate in new Iraqi security forces.** The CPA's decision to bar selected militia from serving in the new Iraqi security forces ostracized them and thus provided them with an incentive to support the insurgency. Instead of polarizing a volatile and hostile segment of Iraqi society, transitional authorities should weaken and co-opt militias by disbanding units and absorbing vetted and separated individuals into programs closely monitored by U.S. authorities. There should be no wholesale incorporation of fixed units.

**The United States should conclude the Iraqi Survey Group review and transfer those responsibilities to U.N. weapons inspectors by June 30.** Further accounting for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs should be transitioned back to the U.N. mission (UNMOVIC), consistent with existing U.N. Security Council resolutions. This would send a strong signal to the international community that the United States is ready to share responsibility in Iraq. The U.S. government's work should be completed prior to June 30.

Reconstruction

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07/05/2004
Primary Recommendation

Create the Iraqi Transition and Reconstruction Fund. The activities of the Transition and Reconstruction Fund should have a triple mandate: first, to build and sustain Iraqi capacity in preparation for the ascendance of an elected government; second, to develop, for consideration by the elected Iraqi government, a detailed proposal for an Oil Trust Fund; and third, to ensure that there is no gap in payment of civil service salaries, through the Iraqi national budget, during the transition period. The activities of the Transition and Reconstruction Fund would be closely coordinated with the International Reconstruction Fund Facility established and led by the United Nations and World Bank.

The new Fund, authorized by the U.N. Security Council, would take over responsibility and assets from the Coalition Provisional Authority for the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI). A full accounting of DFI funds expended to date should be completed by the CPA by June 30 at the latest. The existing International Advisory Monitoring Board should be retained and amended to include no fewer than two representatives designated by the Iraqi caretaker government.

The Fund would be managed by an Executive Director named by the international High Representative and approved by the Contact Group. On a day-to-day basis, the Executive Director would report to the High Representative. The High Representative would appoint two Iraqi deputies chosen by the new caretaker government and approved by the Contact Group.

Secondary Recommendations

U.S.-funded reconstruction programs should make job creation and the provision of basic social services top priorities, with specific emphasis on programs for demobilized soldiers. Significant funds should be allocated to create special opportunities for demobilized soldiers. Working with the High Representative, World Bank and other donors, the U.S. should support a demobilization program providing job training and start-up capital. Credits should be provided to companies that hire demobilized soldiers for reconstruction contracts. To reintegrate soldiers from rural backgrounds, the transitional authority should work with local authorities to identify productive opportunities.

All U.S.-funded contracts should be awarded on the basis of open, competitive bidding. The proceedings of contract bidding, award and evaluation should be made available in full detail to the public. Regional and Iraqi firms and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to compete and, where necessary, Iraqi entities provided with the assistance required to meet U.S. procurement, financial and other legal requirements.

Responsibility for U.S.-funded reconstruction programs should be shifted from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the U.S. Agency for International Development. Congress should give USAID the necessary flexibility to fund critical reconstruction programs with special attention to streamlined approval for funding to Iraqi civil society organizations. The United States should ensure that the Commander's Emergency Response Fund (CERF) remains replenished until civilian management of the reconstruction is fully operational.

The High Representative should work closely with the caretaker Iraqi government to draw up plans for an Iraqi Oil Trust Fund. The fund should be financed by a reasonable percentage of oil profits and governed transparently by a board of representatives comprised of Iraqi governmental and non-governmental representatives. The Trust Fund would use most of its funds for training and seed capital to increase Iraqi capacity to manage and serve the oil industry, as well as to support environmental, social and job-creation programs in oil-producing areas.

U.S.-funded reconstruction efforts should be re-oriented to expand Iraqi involvement and extend the benefits of democratization beyond key urban centers. In particular, efforts should be made to incorporate Iraqi expertise and participation in program design and implementation, including through the more than 200 local councils currently operating around the country. As security improves, concerted efforts should be made to increase the flow of development assistance to rural areas and to expand U.S. engagement with Iraqi institutions and local and international non-governmental organizations.

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The United States should actively work to mobilize additional financial support. Former Secretary of State James Baker's current mandate should be broadened to seek greater financial support for the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, particularly from Middle East and Gulf states that will significantly benefit from a more stable Iraq. To support Baker's efforts, the Administration should launch a new initiative on eliminating odious debt at the upcoming G-8 Summit, with the recommendation that Iraq be among the first countries considered for inclusion. The initiative should provide limited debt relief based on an assessment of the legitimacy of the debt incurred during Saddam Hussein's reign. Other countries undergoing major political or security transitions should also be considered in the first round of the initiative.
Secretary-General Visits the Gambia, Sierra Leone And Ghana

Commonwealth News and Information Service (London)
NEWS
May 6, 2004
Posted to the web May 6, 2004
London

Commonwealth Secretary-General Don McKinnon is paying official visits to The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Ghana. He is following up on mandates from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in Abuja, Nigeria, in December 2003, and discussing preparations for the next CHOGM due to take place in Malta in 2005. His discussions will also focus on Commonwealth programmes of cooperation and technical assistance and issues relating to international trade, economic development and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development.

In The Gambia, where he arrived on 2 May 2004, the Secretary-General today (5 May) met with the President, Alhaji Yahya Jammeh. Earlier he had meetings with the Attorney-General and Secretary of State for Justice, Sheikh Tijan Ayidara, and the Acting Chief Justice, Jibou Semaga-Janneh. He also met with two experts, Shanaka Manoj Wijesinghe of Sri Lanka and Justice Nkemdilim Amelia Izuako of Nigeria, who are serving in The Gambia as Prosecuting State Counsel and Judge of the High Court respectively, on assignments funded by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) in collaboration with the UK’s Department for International Development (DfID).

Mr McKinnon also addressed a cross-party meeting of Parliamentarians chaired by the Speaker, Sheriff Mustapha Adiba, and visited a school near the country’s capital Banjul where he met with more than 100 pupils from various schools in the area.

The Secretary-General today arrived in Sierra Leone, where he is expected to hold consultations with the President, Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the Vice-President, Solomon Berewa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Momodou Koroma, and other senior Ministers. He will also meet with members of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.
Mr McKinnon is expected to travel to Kambia, north of the capital, Freetown, to commission the Kamcashew agro-processing project, which is jointly funded by the CFTC and DfID.

On 8 May, the Secretary-General will travel to Ghana, where he will meet with the President, John A Kufuor, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nana Akuffo-Addo. He will also attend the 'Adaakese' Festival, celebrating the 5th anniversary of the King of Ashanti's accession to the Golden Stool in Kumasi on 9 May, following an invitation from the King, HRH Otumfu Osei Tutu II.
Africa: An Overview For the Press, the struggle continues

JULIA CRAWFORD

ALTHOUGH the number of journalists in prison in Africa at the end of 2003 was lower than the previous year, African journalists still faced a multitude of difficulties, including government harassment and physical assaults.

Many countries in Africa retain harsh press laws.

In the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, some countries have also moved to introduce tough anti-terrorist legislation, which journalists fear could be used to stifle civil liberties, including press freedom.

For example, Uganda, which faces a rebellion in the north, used its anti-terrorism law in 2003 to shutter a radio station for more than a month.

Two journalists were killed in Ivory Coast, and another was shot to death while reporting in Somalia.

Nineteen journalists were in prison for their work at year's end, down from 26 in 2002.

Seventeen of them were imprisoned in Eritrea, which has silenced its entire independent press corps.

The regime in Zimbabwe continued its efforts to do the same, closing the country's only independent daily newspaper, the Daily News, and banning much of the foreign press.

When Radio France Internationale's Jean Helene was killed by a police officer in Ivory Coast on October 21, it came as a shocking reminder of the risks that journalists face.

The Ivoirian government launched an inquiry, and on January 22 2004, the officer was convicted of killing the journalist.

Swift action to bring Helene's murderer to justice was a welcome contrast to the usual pattern in Africa, where all too frequently journalists have been killed with impunity.

For example, an investigation into the 1998 murder of independent journalist Norbert Zongo in Burkina Faso was still ongoing at the end of 2003, having produced few results.

In a rare case of a journalist's murderers being brought to justice, a Mozambican court sentenced six men to lengthy prison sentences for the November 2000 murder of journalist Carlos Cardoso.
However, many local journalists believe that the masterminds of Cardoso's killing remain at large.

During the trial, several of the defendants said that the president's eldest son, Nymphine Chissano, had ordered the journalist's murder.

Chissano has denied any connection to the killing.

On May 3, World Press Freedom Day, CPJ included Eritrea and Togo on its list of the "World's Worst Places to Be a Journalist."

Eritrea, which has been Africa's leading jailer of journalists since 2001, was featured on the list for the second year in a row.

During the last three years, Togolese authorities have ruthlessly harassed and jailed journalists and censored publications that criticised President Gnassingbé Eyadema, who was re-elected in 2003.

Unfortunately, Togo was not the only country where the prospect of elections caused repressive regimes to tighten the screws on the independent press.

It was also an election year for Rwanda, where the editor of the only independent newspaper was jailed for a month after reporting that former Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu would run against the incumbent, Paul Kagame.

The paper had also printed a satirical cartoon implying that Kagame would decide the election's outcome.

In Cameroon, where President Paul Biya faces elections in 2004, authorities have moved against broadcast media that criticise the government.

In Guinea, where incumbent President Lansana Conte was declared the overwhelming winner of polls that the opposition boycotted, officials banned foreign magazines that ran articles questioning the status quo.

Elections also occurred in Nigeria, where the press, which is relatively free, exercised self-censorship during the polling out of apparent concern for political stability.

Thus, the widespread fraud, irregularities, and voter intimidation alleged by the opposition and election observers were not highlighted in the Nigerian media.

Many African countries retain legislation that allows them to bring criminal charges against journalists, and some have used this to crush dissent.

For example, a journalist was jailed in Niger after reporting on government malpractice.

And in Sierra Leone, the critical daily For Di People was closed by a series of lawsuits, while its editor faces a criminal trial that could result in a prison sentence.

Local and international press freedom groups continued to lobby for the decriminalisation of press offences.

But countries such as Togo, Zimbabwe, the Gambia, and Ethiopia have moved to introduce harsh new press laws that boost, rather than reduce, authorities' powers to clamp down on the press.

This is also the case in Somaliland, which claims independence from Somalia, although it is not internationally recognised.

Ethiopia's government has responded to journalists' criticism of draft press legislation by consulting with them, but at year's end there was little evidence of transparency in the process, and authorities had suspended the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association, which was one of the most vocal local opponents of the draft law.

Even countries such as Senegal and Kenya, hailed as examples of democracy, have exhibited worrying trends.

In October, Senegal's government expelled a Radio France Internationale correspondent, accusing her of "tendentious" reporting on the rebellion in the southern Casamance Region.

Kenyan authorities brought criminal charges against a journalist from the country's oldest newspaper, the East African Standard, after it printed excerpts of leaked confessions in a sensitive police inquiry.

Some of these attacks on the press have captured the headlines, but many other stories of daily harassment and intimidation have not.

Local journalists in war-torn countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Central African Republic, Burundi, and Somalia face constant danger while trying to cover the news.

The governments of Rwanda and Gabon have been conducting campaigns of censorship and harassment against the independent press, as have authorities on Tanzania's semiautonomous island of Zanzibar.

Although the press in mainland Tanzania is relatively free, the government of Zanzibar in November shuttered the island's only independent newspaper, which had been running articles critical of the government.

Oil-rich Equatorial Guinea drew only minimal international attention when it jailed one of the few independent journalists in the country.

African governments frequently mention ethnic tensions and "irresponsibility" of the press as reasons to retain draconian laws against press offences.

They often cite the example of Rwanda, where media such as Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines helped to fuel the 1994 genocide.

In December, the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda convicted three Rwandan former media executives of genocide, conspiracy and incitement to genocide, and crimes against humanity, confirming the criminal role that the media played in the 1994 genocide, which left some 800 000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus dead in just over three months.

The three accused were given prison sentences ranging from 35 years to life.
In 2003, there was also growing international concern about partisan and provocative reporting in Ivory Coast, where both pro-government and pro-rebel media have inflamed tensions, undermining the fragile peace process and possibly increasing the level of violence.

While the motive for the murder of journalist Hélène is unknown, it occurred in an atmosphere of xenophobia and anti-French feeling that had been fuelled by the local media.

Media professionalism remains a legitimate cause for concern.

The first complaint of many journalists’ organisations in Africa is low pay and lack of training, both of which may increase the temptation for journalists to accept bribes.

But the governments that complain most about lack of professionalism in the media are often those that attack press freedoms.

Governments often abuse legislation against hate speech and ethnic discrimination to suppress legitimate criticism in the press.

Radio remains the only effective way to bring information to the majority of people in most African countries, where high rates of illiteracy and the costs of print media often confine newspapers’ influence to elite circles.

Rwanda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Guinea, and Equatorial Guinea have no independent radio stations.

Nevertheless, some positive developments have occurred.

For example, the new transition government in Liberia has invited Star Radio to return.

The popular, independent station, an initiative of the Switzerland-based Hirondelle Foundation, was closed by former President Charles Taylor in 2000.

Private radio stations in Burundi faced down a government ban on interviewing rebels and exposed weaknesses in a sensitive murder inquiry.

Meanwhile, globalisation and the spread of mobile phones and the Internet have given journalists in Africa, as elsewhere, a new medium to exchange information and build solidarity.

- Committee to Protect Journalists * Julia Crawford, CPJ’s Africa program co-ordinator, along with Adam Posluns, Africa research associate, and Alexis Arief, research and special projects associate, researched and wrote this section.

Kate Davenport, former BBC correspondent in Abidjan, contributed the summary on Ivory Coast.

The summary on the Democratic Republic of Congo was written by Stephanie Wolters, former chief news editor for Radio Okapi in Kinshasa.

PEACE-BUILDING IN AFRICA

Building sustainable peace requires democratic governance

Building sustainable peace is one of the most crucial challenges facing Africa's multilateral institutions. Chris Landsberg argues that this is a multidimensional process which touches on key issues of governance.

Given the high levels of conflict in Africa, issues surrounding peace-building are among the most crucial challenges facing new multilateral institutions on the continent, including the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In the conventional view, peace-building has largely been accomplished once the formal peace agreements have been signed. However, building sustainable peace is in fact a long-term and multidimensional process which ultimately requires accountable and democratic governance. Before this aspect can be explored in greater detail, some conceptual issues surrounding peace-building need to be addressed.

Peace is not simply the absence of war. A formal cessation of hostilities is a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Before post-conflict peace-building can start, a credible and formal state of peace must exist. A successful process of demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration are key components of an effective transition from civil war to sustained peace. Implementing these elements of peace-building is difficult.

However, formal peace is essential but insufficient to establish sustainable peace. Issues of tolerance, understanding, and reconciliation must be accommodated. Even ‘reconciliation’ is insufficient if it merely operates at the level of political elites. It must not merely involve the incarceration of perpetrators of past violations, but also distributive justice. It must address questions of social injustice by dealing with the legacies of the past. The framework must include substantive peace – going beyond the formal aspects of peace. Root causes of conflict must be addressed.

Root causes

Peace is an ongoing process that needs constant nurturing. Conflict is an inevitable part of life, and addressing the root causes of conflict suggests dealing with the legacies of the past. Sacrifices, especially by past oppressors and abusers of peoples’ fundamental rights, may be needed. These could be innovative, such as affirmative action, or educational and social upliftment programmes to help rebuild communities. Affluent sectors may use important avenues such as conflict resolution struc-
tures, peace-building efforts, and community development ventures to contribute towards social upliftment and justice. Peace promotion requires strengthening the capacity of individuals and communities, who can contribute enormously towards reconciliation. These issues need to be addressed in multifaceted ways and in the socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres.

**Redistributive justice**

Peace-building and peace-keeping can be successful if they prevent or end conflict. But peace must be durable and sustainable. The current crisis in Zimbabwe indicates that unless we address the root causes of conflict (such as the skewed ownership of land), and rebuild the state's ability to sustain itself politically, socially, and economically, peace will be short-lived, and prospects for genuine democracy will erode over time. Democracy and effective governance in Africa will depend on addressing questions of redistributive justice. A comprehensive peace-building process is essential for this.

We need to interrogate the nature and substance of reconciliation. While we should not underestimate formal reconciliation between and among belligerents, an approach is needed that stresses the material dimensions of reconciliation, especially inequalities between individuals and groups.

Sustainable peace-building entails individuals, organisations, institutions and societies, individually and collectively, developing their ability to overcome conflict, achieve reconciliation, and improve the quality of life. Sustainable post-conflict peace-building needs local focus, and the participation of people and communities. It requires consensus around national goals and priorities. Post-conflict countries and their governments need adequate institutional capacity to plan, implement, and oversee peace-building efforts, including reconstruction and development.

The gap between formal and substantive peace must be bridged. Formal peace refers to formal political settlements among conflicting parties, which might result in a formal peace treaty and a new constitution. Formal peace is accompanied by peace pacts or democratic settlements. Peace pacts typically involve a number of important elements such as demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration: Demobilisation entails turning both regular and irregular soldiers into civilians. Disarmament entails removing weapons, ammunition, and other items of military equipment and using them for other purposes in accordance with the peace settlement. Reintegration entails the assimilation of former combatants and their families into the social, economic, and political life of civilian communities. This is a delicate task, enabling them to become productive, self-sustaining members of society.

Substantive peace refers to activities and processes among groups in society, and involves issues of restorative justice, social justice, and reconciliation and counselling, including dealing with the root causes of conflict in order to help consolidate peace. Unlike formal peace, characterised by belligerent parties engaging in negotiations leading to elites signing peace agreements, substantive peace reaches down to the grass roots, and depends on issues of social justice being addressed. This is essential for formal peace to be sustainable.

**The African challenge**

Having argued the need to establish sustainable and substantive peace, how do African societies and governments ensure the consolidation of peace after the formal signing ceremonies? The answer relates to our understanding of the distinction between peacemaking and the actual implementation of a formal peace settlement. This is followed by the meaningful consolidation of peace – ie, substantive peace.

Democratisation and good governance are key end states of any post-conflict reconstruction process. They also provide the basis for managing conflict in African countries. Democracy and democratic governance determine how we manage our resources, particularly in Africa, where many conflicts derive from scarce resources. Peace-building should therefore integrate subnational, national, regional, and international structures of governance in a complementary
and integrated manner. The governments at the national and subnational levels often neglect the role of communities and local people, who should be the starting point of sustainable peace-building efforts.

Subregional and continental organisations such as the SADC, ECOWAS, IGAD, and the African Union (AU) should play a crucial role in conflict resolution. Their capacity needs to strengthened. Now that liberation has been achieved, continental debate has shifted from who should govern Africa to the more crucial question of how Africa and Africans should be governed.

The present transformation of the AU into the AU is a positive development. Unlike the old AU’s doctrine of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign member countries, the AU intends to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign member countries in cases of serious violations of human rights and potential genocide, and if instability in one country could spill over to neighbouring states. Intervention is also permissible where there has been an unconstitutional change of government. We cannot underestimate the importance of this new paradigm in Africa.

Key challenge

The question now is: how do we ensure that these norms and values permeate all aspects of governance on the continent? Last year, for example, SADC countries adopted a protocol on politics, defence, and security co-operation. ECOWAS also has a protocol on democracy and good governance. The challenge is to effectively implement these instruments.

It has been argued that causes of conflict in Africa are multidimensional, external as well as indigenous, and include political, economic, and social factors such as social exclusion, poor governance, the abuse of human rights, manipulation of ethnicity, and cultures of impunity. Post-conflict reconstruction processes should also be multidimensional if peace is to be built in a meaningful manner.

Because of the weakness of states and institutions, African societies rely heavily on individuals to respond to problems; this constitutes a serious structural weakness. One means of dealing with these structural weaknesses is by empowering civil society. How do we empower such structures and people? First, the involvement of civil society should not be restricted to NGOs which interact with governing elites, to the exclusion of grass roots organisations and ordinary people. Central to empowering civil society organisations is the idea that people themselves should be empowered to articulate the needs of society, and to hold government accountable. This is a key principle of effective governance.

Africa is characterised by divided societies, and hence the ‘rules of the game’ as a basis of political, social, and economic activities need to be clearly articulated. Governments must respect the rule of law if the social and political institutions that mediate relations between citizens and the state are to be strengthened. Civil society actors should become even more important agents for determining the rules of the game through campaigning for constitutionalism.

But this raises important questions: How do we guarantee social justice? How do different parties compete for power by democratic means? The periodic renewal of leadership is important to levelling the political playing field. It is also important to combating corruption, which negatively affects the distribution of scarce resources, and entrenches the power of elites over society and its scarce resources. Furthermore, it is one thing to have a constitution protecting human rights, but another to implement it. Although Africa has legal instruments, the challenge is to ensure their efficacy.

During elections, it is important to emphasise impartiality, credibility, transparency, and fairness. There is a need for constant surveillance, checks and balances, transparency, and accountability at all levels of government. In practice, however, such principles tend to remain ideals. Peace-building and sustainable peace requires the creation of institutions with clear rules and procedures, but also the strengthening of the capacities of such institutions.

Dr Chris Landsberg is the director of CFS.
Over benefits

Retired soldiers barricade Cockerill

By Regina Pratt

Over one hundred retired soldiers yesterday morning barricaded the road leading to Cockerill military headquarters on Wilkinson Road with stones during a protest over pay.

Scars of the blockade were still visible from the entrance of the Chinese Restaurant unto the walls adjacent the School for the Deaf and Dumb when Concord Times visited the scene.

Speaking on anonymity, one of the protesters disclosed that they have not received their benefits for the past three months.

He said though they had received their letters of retirement, "but up till now, we have not received a cent from the army."

He asked, "how do they expect us to leave with our families when we have children going to school," adding, "do they want us to become armed robbers?"

He further said when they enquired when they would receive their benefits, "all what they told us was that Government has not made any budget to pay us," noting they were told that all their benefits would be worked out and given to them.

An onlooker however condemned the act of the protesters saying, "they should not have taken the law into their own hands."

However, he said government should have first secured the money before retiring the officers.
Sierra Leone's culture of corruption under the spotlight in new report

Source: Agence France-Press English Wire Date: May 06, 2004

by Rod MacJohnson

FREETOWN, May 6 (AFP) - A government survey in Sierra Leone has revealed that the west African country’s public sector is still riddled with corruption, despite warnings from international donors that they would slash much needed aid if the scourge was not tackled.

The report released last week by the office of Vice President Solomon Berewa said "corrupt practices in Sierra Leone are widespread... and service delivery by the public sector is generally marked by irregularities and bribery."

According to the survey, two-thirds of users of public services, from telephones to banks to schools or hospitals, reported having to pay bribes to use the service.

Forty-two percent of public officials have admitted to mismanaging their institutions, including misappropriating budgets, usually by drawing on international aid earmarked for rebuilding the west African country after its decade-long civil war, which ended in January 2002.

Some suggest that corrupt practices by a string of military governments fueled the 1991 uprising by the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) against President Joseph Momoh. That rebellion plunged the country into a civil war marked by widespread amputations, rape, murder and the forcible conscription of children as fighters.

Five months after the war ended, a civilian government was installed after elections generally described as fair. Hopes were high that the new administration of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah would finally bring an end to the bribery and graft that characterised previous governments.

But despite repeated warnings from donors and oversight by a UN peacekeeping mission, there has been little progress in ridding the country of the corruption scourge.

"The government has an uphill task to fight corruption in the country, which is now regarded as the second war to be fought after the end of the 10-year rebel war," a western diplomat told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"If it does not distance itself from corrupt officials or put them on trial, it faces the risk of losing the lucrative economic and financial support of the international community."

In November last year, a delegation of British lawmakers visited Sierra Leone to drive home the urgency of ridding the country of corruption.
"The government of Sierra Leone must do everything within its power to stop corruption," said British MP Win Griffiths, who led the parliamentary delegation.

"There is in existence a 10-year agreement between Britain and Sierra Leone under which London gives development assistance to Sierra Leone," said Griffiths.

"We are watching how the Sierra Leone government is putting such assistance into practice... We give you some help, but you have got to show us how it is being spent."

But Sierra Leone has continued to fall short on promises to curb corruption, and that has begun to have an impact on the money flowing into the country of 5.4 million people, many of whom live on less than a dollar a day.

The European Union has withheld two million euros that were to be used to fund local elections set for May 22, citing among its reasons the fact that the electoral commission has not accounted for how it disbursed funds for the 2002 presidential and general elections.

The EU is also sending an audit team this month to the capital Freetown to see just how the millions it has contributed to help rebuild the country have been spent.

The World Bank last month announced a 25,000-dollar grant for the local elections, roughly half of which, it stipulated, was to go to ensuring good governance in the run-up to the vote.

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SLeone-corruption

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Do you Yahoo?
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"US$100 MILLION OF ILLEGAL EXPORTS FROM SIERRA LEONE FUELING CORRUPTION"

May 04, 2004

During testimony before the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Thomas N. Hull III, the U.S. ambassador-designate to that Sierra Leone, described the difficulties the country faces and how the U.S. was helping and would continue to help the country find its political and economic feet.

Having asserted that democracy was taking root in the country, and that the greatest threat to democracy in the country was corruption, Hull pledged to “direct U.S. assistance to support the [Sierra Leone] government's efforts to exploit its diamond resources in a more transparent fashion and in accordance with the Kimberley Process and in a manner that will generate revenues in diamond-producing areas to stimulate economic growth.”

Hull described corruption in Sierra Leone as posing a threat “to undermine everything else that we want to achieve in Sierra Leone”, labeling it a “cancer on democracy” that must be attacked at the root. “You have to go where the resources are, and the resources that are fueling corruption in Sierra Leone are the diamonds.”

For that reason, Hull pledged to pay a lot of attention to the U.S. initiatives that try to control and regulate the export of diamonds from Sierra Leone. adding that there is still more than US$100 million a year in diamonds being exported illegally, even though progress is being made in that area. “That money is clearly fueling corruption in the country,” says Hull.
Power, Money and Justice in Contemporary S/L

By Victor Massaquol

A British psychologist once said, "Your best friend is someone who honestly criticizes your verbal and physical behavior." Since independence some 40 years ago, the socio-economic/political culture in Sierra Leone (a country I love so dearly) has been gravely manipulated by a selected few (Mende, Temne, Limba, Creole), even as power, money, privilege and judicial influence rest in the hands of a small but dominant group of people who for the best part live in the capital city-Freetown.

This is a blatant reality. Sadly, large portion of this country, specifically the rural areas are in gloom as they agonizingly wait to benefit from the riches, power and influence being lavishly displayed in the city.

The intent of this piece is not to bash or point finger at any particular person or a group of people, but as a professional communicator/social policy reform advocate, history will have very little sympathy for me if I renege my duties and fail to execute my social responsibilities fairly and prudently for the benefit of society by way of writing-the pen (today, the computer)

hands of those who directly or indirectly associated with the ruling party. The same holds true when the All People's Congress was in power. The same scenario is replicated in almost every part of the world, even in the West where democracy thrives. In the United States, the Democrats were in power for eight years, political and non-political groups affiliated with the Democrats derived the benefits either by policy formulation or economic empowerment or social change.

However, it is the judicious and rational use of political power that this writer is concerned about. When Sierra Leoneans, especially those in the interior with little or no knowledge of what transpires in the city, it behooves the political leadership to empower the poor, the uneducated, and the less fortunate with honest, effective and unbiased information flow, thereby helping the people to make informed choices. It was the Greek philosopher Aristotle who once said, "man is by nature a political animal." Every voting age Sierra Leone is a political animal, therefore, they should be privileged to constant flow of political genuine information.

Constitutionally, the legislature, parliament, has the responsibility to pass laws that will bring socio-economic and political benefit to the people. In like manner, the executive branch, which includes the president/the security apparatus, has the onus to fairly and aggressively execute laws made by parliament and formulate workable socio-economic and political policies that will improve the lives of the average Sierra Leonean. The Judiciary, in its wisdom, interprets the laws and policies crafted by the legislature and the executive branches in an impartial and effective manner. We can localize the concept of the balance of power, which is the distribution of power among the branches of government in such a way that no one has dominance over the others, but should work in concert to advance the interests of the people.

As the adage goes, "money is the root of all evil." Money speaks many languages in current Sierra Leone. The business community on a regular basis increases prices of basic commodities that will thereby engaging in unfair price gauging and flagrantly violating the economic laws of my land. I'll be naïve at best or disingenuous at worst if I fail to thank the broadcast and print media for giving extensive news coverage to the government set up Anti-Corruption team headed by Val Collier. Despite the frustrations laced by inadequate working tools and undermining tendencies from many quarters, this group has been able to do a good job by bringing to justice some of those responsible for swindling the people's money and other resources.

On the judicial front, the justice system as admitted by the minister himself in a newspaper report recently, is fraught with difficulties. Resources including transportation for judges and office materials are hard to come by, thereby frustrating the efforts of judicial staff. With limited resources to execute justice, is like asking a fireman to go out a fire without a fire truck loaded with water. However, this does not warrant judicial staff to engage in behaviors unconforming of the judiciary.

As I conclude, one of my comparative politics/international relation's professors during my graduate studies once quoted Harold Macmillan (1894-1986), British prime minister in a speech to the South African Parliament in 1960. "The wind of change is blowing through the continent. Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact." The same applies to Sierra Leone. Classical history reminds us not to fiddle while Rome burns! Let us avoid past mistakes - the people first before self! Unity, Freedom and Justice.