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:

Thursday, July 15, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday. If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact Ibrahim Tommy Ext 7248

MOBILE: 232 76 645 914
As tension to grab Taylor heightens...

Special Court Registrar storms Liberia

As Special Court intensifies effort to grab war criminals indicted by the International Criminal Court, former Liberian President Charles Taylor was tried in Freetown for war crimes. Registrar Robin Vincent Tuesday stormed the Liberian capital, Monrovia, by surprise and informed residents that the Court was not targeting Liberians.

Vincent said the Court was set up for Sierra Leone and meant to try war criminals for crimes against humanity committed during the country's decade-long civil war.

Most Liberians, Concord Times gathered, had feared that the Court was also going to target them.

However, Liberia's Transitional Government leader, Gyude Bryant, had said that he was not keen on supporting a Special Court for Liberia.

Special Court Prosecutor, David Crane, had earlier sanctioned a search of Taylor's residences in Monrovia and has shown no sign of letting him trying to escape Taylor.

Robin Vincent...job well done

Concord Times

Thursday July 15, 2004
MORE EMOTIONAL TESTIMONIES AT SPECIAL COURT: WITNESSES TELL OF RUF/AFRC ATROCITIES

There have been more emotional testimonies in the Special Court for Sierra Leone. After two weeks of revelation of atrocities committed by the Kamajors against innocent citizens in Koribondo, now the focus has shifted to the RUF/AFRC.

In yesterday's session, a woman told a tearful story about how she and her husband were captured. She alleged that she was publicly raped, her husband slaughtered before her own eyes and her two hands amputated.

Today, another female witness testified about how she and her six-year-old daughter were captured and their
hands amputated.

Meanwhile, the Kamajor segment of the trial has been temporarily adjourned. Our reporter, Sampson Cole, who is attending the sessions will bring you the details tomorrow.
Africa News July 14, 2004 Wednesday

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Africa News

July 14, 2004 Wednesday

LENGTH: 169 words

HEADLINE: Sierra Leone;
Witness Revealed to Special Court How She Was Amputated

BYLINE: Concord Times

BODY:
Second prosecution witness (TF1-196) Tuesday told the Special Court how her hands were amputated by a Rebel Commando after she refused having sex with one of the rebels at Malama Village, Bombali district.

She made the revelation while testifying at the on going trial of the three RUF indictees, Morris Kallon, Issa Sesay and Augustine Gbao.

"The rebels including child soldiers between the ages of 5-10 were armed with AK 47 riffles, Rocket Propel Grenades, dressed in military and civilian clothes," She noted, adding that the rebels threatened to inflict pain on her.

She recalled the name of a rebel commando called Mosquito who ordered the amputation and killing of several civilians including her husband.

"After our capture, the rebels ordered some of us to pound three dozen of millet whilst the others were sent to fetch water for daily use," the witness narrated.

She admitted that Lewis Taylor and Isatu Jalloh from the Special Court prosecution unit obtained statement from her.

LOAD-DATE: July 14, 2004
The Irish Times, July 14, 2004

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The Irish Times

July 14, 2004

SECTION: CITY EDITION; WORLD NEWS; Pg. 11

LENGTH: 827 words

HEADLINE: Trying to bring justice to the victims of a broken land
Victims are getting to tell their stories as the Sierra Leone war crimes tribunal puts suspects on trial, the chief prosecutor tells Judith Crosbie

BODY:
One of the points David Crane stressed when visiting town hall meetings of local residents in remote parts of Sierra Leone was that "the law will triumph over the gun". It can't have been an easy message for the chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to get across in a country that has seen some of the worst horrors committed against human beings.

Indeed, Mr Crane, in Ireland at the moment to speak at a conference organised by the Irish Centre for Human Rights in Galway and to publicise the efforts of the Irish government in backing the war crimes tribunal, believes the crimes are worse than those committed in Rwanda and Yugoslavia.

The horrors emerged during the town hall meetings he organised two years ago to gather testimony from witnesses after the UN and Sierra Leone government set up the tribunal.

Last month the evidence was used as the trials opened against the leaders of rebel and government militia who fought a civil war for control of the country's rich diamond regions. "The depravity, the manner by which these crime were done were not carried out for - even though it doesn't excuse it - religious or ethic or social reasons. It was done for the criminal gain of warlords and heads of state who in joint criminal enterprise got together to control a commodity to further their own personal, criminal gain. That is in itself horrific but what they did to other human beings was not for any other reason, but because they could," Mr Crane says.

The former US Defence Department lawyer and his staff, based in the capital Freetown, have had to listen to stories of mutilations, rapes, murders and have spoken to children with the letters of rebel groups RUF (Revolutionary United Front) and AFRC (African Forces Revolutionary Council) carved into their chests. An estimated 50,000 people were murdered and 500,000 affected by the violence in the decade-long war. Mr Crane tells of one man and his children being forced to watch while his wife was raped eight times. "Then having his hand cut off and the gentleman trying to retrieve his own hand, they then bayoneted him in the back".

An important aspect of the prosecution case is the fact that it was women and girls who often bore the brunt of the war. The new crime of "forced marriage" has been created to prosecute

http://www.lexis.com/research/retrieve?_m=25a8d0dba08a3e613fc16bed947253b6&docn... 7/15/2004
those who drove women and girls - some as young as 10 years old - from villages into the bush, repeatedly raping and enslaving them for years. One woman who will give evidence had been raped so many times she has difficulty walking. Another woman must take breaks every 10 minutes because of incontinence caused by years in sexual slavery.

Another ground-breaking aspect of the tribunal is that it the first time the recruitment of child soldiers, who were forced from their homes and ordered to kill others, is being treated as a war crime.

The tribunal has a restricted remit which allows it only to prosecute those who bear the "greatest responsibility" for crimes committed in the period after November 1996, despite the fact that the war started in 1991. Mr Crane says he has enough evidence during this time period to prosecute those leaders (less than 20 in total) who masterminded the deaths and destruction.

He also says it is important that the court should not drag on for several years, for financial reasons but also for the sake of the Sierra Leone population. "You can't have an international war crimes tribunal in a place that has suffered as much as west Africa for more than five years. . . they have to get the tragedy behind them. It is incredibly important that they move on."

There is one glaring omission in the list of detainees accused of carrying out the war and that is the former leader of Liberia, Charles Taylor, who, it is alleged, armed the rebels that began the war and who was charged by the court last year on 17 counts.

Following his resignation last August during a rebellion in Liberia, neighbouring Nigeria has given him sanctuary but Mr Crane is confident the authorities there will hand him over and he will face justice in Sierra Leone. "If we do not prosecute Charles Taylor we are saying 'if you're an African leader you have an exception in that you can kill people', and that sets back international criminal justice terribly.

"Until Charles Taylor is turned over to the Special Court a true peace will not settle into west Africa . . . people are looking over their shoulders."

Mr Crane stresses the importance of the support, both financially and politically, given to the court by countries such as Ireland (which contributed nearly £1 million between 2001 and 2003). "If the Special Court in some way can let the world know that these crimes need to be faced down then mankind is better for it.

"These things can be expensive, they can be time-consuming, but if mankind does not take the time and the expense and is not concerned, it will happen again and again."

LOAD-DATE: July 14, 2004

Source: News & Business > News > News, Most Recent 90 Days (English, Full Text)  
Terms: the ties of former liberian president charles taylor to al-qaida have been corroborated by the fbi and the un-backed special court for sierra leone,... (Edit Search)  
Mandatory Terms: date from 07/09/2004  
View: Full  
Date/Time: Thursday, July 15, 2004 - 6:24 AM EDT

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http://www.lexis.com/research/retrieve?_m=25a8d0dba08a3e613fc16bed947253b6&docn... 7/15/2004
Amputee Mother Testifies

She was led in evidence by Prosecution Counsel, Alain Werner. The witness who spoke in Krio through an interpreter recalled that their limbs were cut off as punishment for their support for the restoration of the Kabba-led civilian government. “They referred us to President Kabba to give us new limbs”, she told the court adding that her son fainted after the amputation of his hand for loss of blood and water.

Earlier in her testimony, the witness recalled an RUF attack on the town whilst she was cooking in the kitchen during that period. She told the court that during the shooting that characterised the attack, a fragment hit her child on his chest whilst she was hit in her back. The witness told the court that the town was attacked by people dressed in full military uniforms and wore red band around their heads. “The attackers described themselves as members of the ‘peoples army’ and spent three days in the town before they went towards the direction of Kono. According to the witness the rebels were saying that they would return back to the bush if President Kabba was restored to power.

The witness told the court that the rebels asked them to come out of the bushes as ECOMOG had plans to drop bombs in the bushes. She said that civilians were afraid and decided to return to town. “We were born and bred here and so ECOMOG cannot overpower us,” the witness quoted the rebels as saying.

She said several other civilians were amputated including Pa Issa, Yonku Sesay, Issa Bangura, Abass Karago, Mamie Sillah among others whilst others were either killed or abducted. “Several houses were also burnt in neighbouring towns including Madina,” the witness said.

Presiding Judge of the Trial Chamber, Justice Benjamin Iloe said that the witness was under much stress during her testimony and ordered that she be cross-examined today by the defence team.

“It would be inhumane to subject this witness to further questioning,” Justice Iloe said.

The three RUF accused, Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao are currently on joint trial for individual criminal responsibility for war crimes committed by RUF rebels in Sierra Leone between 1996 and 2000. Sitings resume this morning.
Witness tells: How me and my 6-year-old son were amputated

By Kelvin Lewis

Another witness in the ongoing trial of the three commanders of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) at the Special Court has revealed how she and her 6-year-old child were amputated and how she witnessed the killing and amputation of a couple of other villagers. Led in evidence by prosecuting counsel Alain Werner, the witness recounted how they were attacked by rebels who came in trucks and asked them to place the tape recorders on the ground and step on them. When she did so carefully, the rebels stepped on the tapes, showing that this was the way they had wanted her to carry out his instructions. Another rebel, she said, came with two deep sole shoes and made them to snap her on her face. This was unacceptable to her because in her village using a shoe to beat someone is only fit for a dog. A little later she said another rebel boy came by and saw a girl standing next to her. She said the rebel boy said the girl to lie down on the ground and that he wanted to have sex with her. She said the girl then dropped down to the ground and started pulling off her pants. She said the girl was in a menstruation period at the time and when the rebel boy saw that he said there were the people who give them bad luck. According to the witness, the rebel boy then said because of the fair complexion of the girl they were going to take her with them wherever they go. At this point Judge Jure observed: "The lady is spinning and is under a lot of stress though she continues to resist." She then recounted how they were taken to a field where the rebel boss man was seen sitting on a rock under a cotton tree. She said two men: one Lamin Kamara and another Abass Kangbo had been tied and were lying on the ground. The rebel boss man or commander was at this point saying: "Since you say you love a civil government, we are going to snap off your hands or we will kill you." The witness said she was terrified because she could see corpses on the ground. One of these she said was naked. Another man was brought in who said he claimed was an SSD officer though the man protested that he was not and that he had been taken prisoner by the ECOMOG forces and had succeeded in convincing them of his innocence. The witness said the commander stood up and took out his pistol and then shot the man in his chest. Then the commander shot Abass Kangbo who was her sister's husband and then shot her head and she died. She said the boss asked one of the boys rebels to go and look for a machine. When this was brought he called the witness' little boy who was 12 years old and amputated his hand. After this she said her hand was also amputated. One of the rebels, she said then told her that "you are beautiful." She said she told him in return that which human being would look at her and say she was beautiful? At this point the rebel boy who had shot off her hand told her that if she continued to look at him he would cut off the other hand. She said the rebels then told her to "get up and go to Kabala when you reach there tell the ECOMOG that they will not overcome us, we were born here and they are strangers - we are on our way." She then told of how she struggled to the village and how she walked several miles in pain until she went to a hospital from where she was flown to Freetown for medical treatment. Cross-examination by the defense counsel starts today.

Aluko

Thursday July 15, 2004
By Joseph Turay

An amputee witness yesterday testified at the Special Court that rebels amputated her six-year-old child when they attacked her village. Witness TFI 214 explained that she was residing with her family in a village called Kodaymaya in 1998 when they saw men in military uniforms with red bands on their heads. The witness said the rebels identified themselves as People’s Army and after a few days they headed for Kono.

TFI 214 further explained that after the rebels had left the village, they saw civilians carrying loads on their heads from Kono, who told the villagers that rebels had killed and burnt houses.

The witness said they subsequently went into the bush to hide though they later returned to the village after they were told by the fleeing civilians that the jet would bomb the bush.

TFI 214 explained that she was preparing her evening meal after their return from the bush when they realized that rebels had besieged the village. The witness said they started hearing gun shots with heavy fire power and one of the fragments hit her six-year-old child on the chest. TFI 214 also explained that later the rebels invaded the village and one of them threatened her for money and eventually stripped her naked before he could loot her husband’s two tape recorders.

The witness said she was later dragged to the rebel base where she saw other civilians tied with ropes and others slaughtered.

She went on to explain that the commander in charge instructed the rebels to amputate their hands on the ground that the captives wanted a civilian government.

The witness said the commander sent for a machete which the rebels used to amputate her hands and the child’s.

She explained that after the horrible ordeal she was released together with her child with blood all over their bodies.

The Exclusive

Thursday July 15, 2004
Special Court
Trial Special

THE FIRST prosecution witness in the trial of three Ruf indictees, Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao yesterday gave evidence at the UN Special Court. Led in evidence by the prosecution, TFI-1974 said he is 26 years-old, born in Yormundu Sandor chieftdom Kono district and that he can neither read nor write English.

by SI THORONKA

The witness said he could still remember what happened in 1998 in his home town Yormandu. He said during this period, he saw many people in his hometown who came from Freetown as a result of the intervention. The witness said he and his younger brother left for a town called Dandada and on their way, they saw soldiers in a Toyota van heading for Yormandu. He said the soldiers asked them whether there were youths in the town, in reply the witness told them that there were no youths in the town.

The witness said that about 3pm after they had returned to Yormandu, they saw three vehicles one by one. He said two Toyota and all the men in the vehicles were in military uniform with weapons. He said the appearance of those men in the town created a total panic. In the process, Osman was caught and taken away, but later appeared with some rice in a pan.

The witness said Osman told them that the soldiers were running away with Johnny Paul Koroma and they even asked him to show them the way to Kailahun. Osman advised them that they should not stay in the town and that they both moved to Dandada where their father was. Unfortunately, he could not find him there so they went to Dumbadu. The rebels attacked the town and took looted property along, they went into hiding in a village called Bayawadu where the rebels finally captured one and my brother, the witness said. The witness identified those who held him in captivity as the AFRC led by one Francis Niaia Kil Man No Blood and one Gbassay.

The witness said they were taken into a farm house near a village called Wordu, and 18 of them were in captivity. Not too long, the witness said rebels came with a paper purporting to have been written by Komba Gbundema asking all the elders to report to Koyeima to Colonel 'Open Terrain Ofungbay' was his name.

At Koyeima, the witness said a captured friend of his called Alhaji told him that each and every one of them is going to be asked whether they would like to be with the rebels or would like to go home. An AFRC junta dressed in combat called Bangail told us to form a queue after which he told us that those that would like to join their families were free to do so while those who would like to stay with them were also free to do so. The witness said 15 of them decided to go home and join their families, his younger brother and one old man were among the number.

Praising the adverse consequences of his decision, the witness said he was prevailed upon by his friend Alhaji through body language to make a change of mind.

At this juncture, the witness said a woman by the name of 'Waten' spoke in a loud tone that if those that have decided to go back to their homes were killed they will blame it all to the rebels. The witness said as an alternative, Bangail decided to carve AFRC-RUF both acronyms on his chest while AFRC or RUF was marked on the others using a sharp surgical blade. 18 of them underwent the cruel exercise. Three days later, the witness said they were taken to Yegeama.

He said Komba Gbundema a rebel was in charge of the command structure at Koyeima. The inscription on his body took two months to heal the witness said. He said he worked as a servant for the company commander, one Barri a rebel captain doing all the domestic chores.

Before the attack on Yella in the Kpata district, the witness said they went to Koyeima mobilized some youths before they made the attack on Yella. He said after the attack, seven people were captured including looted items. He said the arms of the seven captives were chopped off.

He was later taken by SK who sometimes instruct them to go on the rampage in search of rice. As a result of a sweep, he was later under the command of another rebel called Ibrahim and

Continued Back Page
From Page 7

he was with him up to the time of disarmament. Under cross-examination by the defence counsel, the witness said he could remember going to Koidu about one and half year ago for the purpose of making statement. The witness agreed with defence counsel that on the 10 December 2003, he came to Freetown to see the prosecution but he however, denied coming to Freetown on the 4 January as alleged by the defence.

He said in November 2002, he heard that the prosecution were in the village to obtain statement from him. He came twice to Freetown, the first was for medication for the inscription on his chest, the second was to see the prosecution in May 2004. They asked him whether he was willing to give evidence in court and he said yes.

The witness said what was on the statement is exactly what he had told the court. He said the statement was read to him. He said he could not receive medical treatment because the doctor who should have done the operation to get rid of the mark was not readily available.

The trial continues.
APOLOGIES

We wish to express our qualified apology for the picture and the caption titled "The RUF guys treating the trial as a joke" in our July 13th edition.

We inadvertently printed a picture from a preliminary session weeks back. The picture in question was not taken while the RUF joint trial is in progress. Consequently we withdraw the caption of that picture which suggests that the three accused persons of the former RUF have treated the trial as a joke.

We are aware of the consequences of this as regards the detainees. We are sorry.

We also extend our unreserved apology to our colleague Clarence Roy-Macaulay of Associated Press (AP) for unintentionally giving him the byline for our lead story in the same edition. We are truly sorry for the embarrassment it may have caused our colleague.
Taylor's Lawyers Happy Over NTLA's Resolution

The Inquirer (Monrovia)
NEWS
July 14, 2004
Posted to the web July 14, 2004

Lawyers representing the interest of former president Charles G. Taylor in Liberia, have expressed their profound satisfaction over a recent resolution by the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA) relative to their client's indictment by the UN-backed special court sitting in neighboring Sierra Leone.

In a press release signed by Counselors-at-law Richard K. Flomo Sr., Lavela Koboi-Johnson and M. Wilkins Wright, issued yesterday, the lawyers said, the resolution by the NTLA, not having authority to authorize the head of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, Chairman Charles Gyude Bryant, to request the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to surrender Mr. Taylor to the Sierra Leone UN-backed court which indicted the said former president for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

According to the lawyers, "the NTLA has remained focused on its mandate as enshrined in the Comprehensive Accra Peace Agreement signed by all parties to the Liberian conflict on 18th August A.D. 2003, which is, to bring total peace and reconciliation amongst Liberians and to effect national and presidential elections with the view of bringing lasting stability in Liberia and the sub-region at large.

"While this effort is commendable, we wish to urge the Liberian public not to lose sight of the reasons why this government was put into place by all stakeholders in the Liberian conflict, because to do that, is an attempt to return the nation to further hardship, disunity and chaos.

"Therefore, the bold step taken by the NTLA operates in favor of the nation, because such action is intended to bring lasting peace to the country. We are optimistic that our assembly certainly appreciates and realize that fact that president Taylor stepping down from office and taken to exile in Nigeria, was a major contribution towards brokering the Accra Comprehensive Agreement on Liberia."
"We however wish to caution the Liberian public and the international community who are moral guarantors of the Liberian peace process to be mindful of detractors, both at home and abroad who are bent at doing all within their powers to derail and prevent the successful implementation of the Liberian peace process”, yesterday’s press statement by former president Taylor’s lawyers concluded.
Charles Taylor bribes Parliament

Charlie boy is a schemer of the deepest dye. He can do anything to achieve his ambition. His latest pre-occupation is to use all the blood money he amassed during his tenure of office to remain in Nigeria and not face the Special Court here.

While he has been marooned in Nigeria his wife has been travelling in and out of Liberia to bribe cash-strapped members of the Liberian National Assembly to vote against the extradition of her husband. During the voting process a majority of the Parliamentarians who were bribed walked out in order not to compromise their consciences.

In any case there is still hope that Charles Taylor will face trial in another international court after our Special Court would have folded up. It is most likely that if the next elected government is not bribed they would vote for his trial and it will be done.
World justice grinds on and on

Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service

(KRT) - The following editorial appeared in the Chicago Tribune on Tuesday, July 13:

X X X

The trial of former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic may never reach a conclusion, but it is certain to be remembered - as an illustration of how excruciatingly slowly the wheels of international justice can turn.

Milosevic's trial before a three-judge panel of the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague began in February 2002. Since then, one of the judges has died, Yugoslavia officially has dissolved, and Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic has been assassinated. Milosevic and a fellow alleged war criminal even were elected to seats in Serbia's parliament in December.

Milosevic was scheduled to launch his defense on Monday. But the tribunal, concerned about his health, postponed it until later this summer. A court-appointed cardiologist said Milosevic has high blood pressure, a damaged left ventricle and is at risk of a heart attack or a stroke. "It is therefore necessary to navigate constantly between sufficient rest, optimum medication and the stress of the trial," the doctor counseled.

That may be legitimate reasoning for a delay. The question is, why has this matter already dragged on for so long? The Nuremberg war crimes tribunal took 11 months to try, convict, sentence and execute 10 of Hitler's top deputies. Israel's trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961 took eight months, and he was executed in 1962.

The war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague has been running the meter for a long time. And it is not a cheap ride - it has 1,238 staff members and a budget for this year of nearly $272 million.

Milosevic faces a 66-count indictment for crimes against humanity and violations of "the laws and customs of war." The case is focused on the 1995 massacre of more than 7,000 people in Srebrenica, various atrocities carried out in Kosovo in 1999 and crimes against humanity in Croatia between 1991 and 1992.

Now, genocide is surprisingly difficult to prove. Some legal experts say the case against Milosevic, based mostly on circumstantial evidence, might not stick. The prosecution brought in hundreds of witnesses and tens of thousands of documents and created a court record big enough to fill a boxcar.

But Milosevic has also been allowed to turn this into his own show. He is a lawyer, and he has insisted on mounting his own defense. Sporting his usual brushed-back gray hair, furrowed brow and a scowl that seems tattooed on his face, he has skilfully questioned some of the prosecution's 295 witnesses.

The prosecution rested its case in February. Now it's Milosevic's turn - assuming his health improves sufficiently to resume the case.

Don't expect a verdict anytime soon. Milosevic has drawn up a list of 1,400 defense witnesses, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former President Bill Clinton. That should keep the trial going for a few more years and pile up tens of millions of additional euros in expenses.

So what is the world to make - what are the people of the former Yugoslavia to make - of a trial that seems designed to provide everlasting entertainment for the accused?

That's not justice. That's a charade.

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'Unauthorized' Movements Spark Concern - UN Mandates UNMIL to Tighten Screws

The NEWS (Monrovia)
NEWS
July 14, 2004
Posted to the web July 14, 2004

By UN News
New York

Following an assessment visit to the West African region recently, the UN Security Council delegation has reported of concerns about "unauthorized" cross border movements in the region.

The Security Council delegation said it was concerned about the unauthorized movements and has recommended that United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) pay particular attention to monitoring the country's external borders.

The delegation emphasized that UNMIL be more effective at the borders in order to prevent the unauthorized movements. Security Council delegation also urged member countries of the Mano River Union (MRU) to implement their commitments by ensuring joint border patrols.

It can be recalled that from 20-29 last June, a Security Council delegation, headed by Great Britain Representative to the UN, Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry visited the Sub-region and came to Liberia.

While, in Liberia, members of the delegation met with the Chairman of the Transitional Government, Gyude Bryant.

In their report, the delegation said Chairman Bryant informed them that sub-regional stability is essential to Liberia's security, and that member states of the (MRU) had agreed at a summit held in Conakry, Guinea on May 20, 2004 to strengthen security and joint border patrols.

According to the report, the Security Council delegation said during discussions with the Special Representative in Liberia of the Secretary-General, they were informed that
UNMIL was working with other United Nations missions in the sub-region to develop a more effective response to cross border problems like movements of arms and mercenaries and human trafficking.

The delegation observed that during the visit to Liberia, several immediate priorities were identified, the most urgent of which was establishing security throughout the country.

Considering the significance to establish the authority of the Transitional Government throughout the country, the delegation added that it welcomes the deployment of UNMIL civil affairs officers in ministries and parastatals beyond Monrovia.

The delegation pointed out that from interactions with civil society groups and other individuals, reform of the security sectors and the establishment of justice and the rule of law as well as training and upgrading infrastructures for law enforcement agencies were of particular priorities.

On the issue of lifting sanctions on Liberia, the delegation said several civil society organizations argued that sanctions should remain in force until there was full accountability and transparency in government, and until the Transitional Government establish control over timber and diamond sectors.

The delegation reiterated that it wish to see sanctions ended as soon as the conditions defined in resolution 1521 (2003) has been met, and that it also welcomes steps being under taken or envisaged by the National Transitional Government to meet high standards in the management of public funds.

"The mission agreed that eradicating corruption was vital. The mission encourages the National Transitional Government to continue to take measures to combat corruption and to explore ways of attracting private investment, in conjunction with donors and development partners," the delegation, in its report stressed.

However, the Security Council delegation also urged donor countries to make good their pledges to Liberia's reconstruction, and contribute generously to the trust fund established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The delegation said it welcomes the contribution of the United States Government in the area of security reform and re-establishing the justice system and the rule of law in Liberia.
US to help Africa fight terror

13/07/2004 00:59 - (SA)

Abuja - The deputy commander of US forces in Europe, General Charles Wald, on Monday pledged Washington's support for African countries in their regional peacekeeping efforts and the fight against terrorism.

"We are doing everything we can to support African leaders on regional peacekeeping. We have been sharing information on terrorism issues with individual countries and regional groups in Africa," he said during a lunch meeting with the heads of Nigeria's army, navy and air force.

Nigeria, the west African economic and military powerhouse, was a major interest to the United States, he said.

"Nigeria is one of the most important countries in our area.... We would like to have more co-operation with Nigeria. We think it is crucial for both of us, given Nigeria's strategic importance."

He warned Africa was not spared the threat of a terrorist attack.

"Terrorism can happen anywhere. They (terrorists) have been in the US, Russia, Europe, Middle East. They could certainly come here.

"We hope to avoid that through intelligence-sharing, through helping Nigeria to continue to evolve its security through training," said the general.

US support could take the form of training and logistical aid for anti-terror and peacekeeping operations, he added.

"We are looking forward to more involvement with ECOWAS (west Africa's regional grouping) in both training and in providing some equipment. We will see how this works," said Wald.

"In specific terms, we are looking forward to co-operation in training, making ECOWAS a regional example for Africa and having it lead other regions in Africa."

ECOWAS recently deployed regional peacekeepers to Liberia and Ivory Coast, and last month moved to create a rapid reaction force to respond to conflicts within the region.

Edited by Elmarie Jack