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:

Wednesday, September 08, 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
Sierra Leone: War Crimes Court Impeded by Lack of Funds

U.N.-Backed Court Makes Great Strides, But Key Concerns Remain

(New York, September 8, 2004) – The U.N.-backed court for war crimes in Sierra Leone needs funding to ensure justice for victims of atrocities committed during the country’s 11-year civil war, Human Rights Watch said in a report issued today. The Special Court for Sierra Leone today resumes the trial of leaders of the government-backed Civil Defense Forces.

The United Nations and its member states – particularly the United States and Britain – should fund the Special Court’s budget so that it can complete its operations. They should also increase funding to several key areas of the court to ensure that it can deliver justice fairly and effectively.

“Justice is crucial for victims of atrocities committed during Sierra Leone’s civil war and for building respect for the rule of law across West Africa,” said Elise Keppeler, counsel with Human Rights Watch’s International Justice Program. “The Special Court has already made significant strides, but lack of funds could undermine its ability to carry out justice.”

The Special Court is charged with bringing to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes, crimes against humanity, other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and certain violations of Sierra Leonean law committed since November 1996. Created through an agreement between the United Nations and the Sierra Leonean government, the Special Court represents a significant new international justice model, often referred to as a “mixed” or “hybrid” tribunal.

The 56-page report, “Bringing Justice: The Special Court for Sierra Leone,” evaluates developments at the court, identifying achievements and making recommendations where operations should be improved. The report also urges the international community to provide more financial and political support for the court so it can complete its work effectively.

Since the Special Court began functioning in 2002, the court’s staff has made a tremendous effort to ensure accountability despite scarce resources and lack of adequate facilities. The court has investigated and indicted 13 individuals from three warring factions – the government-backed Civil Defense Forces, as well as the two rebel groups, the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

The court has also issued a number of precedent-setting decisions on international law. For example, the court ruled in May that heads of state are not immune from prosecution before an international court. This ruling removed any legal basis for Nigeria to continue to harbor former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is indicted by the court on war crimes and crimes against humanity.

However, Human Rights Watch has concerns about several aspects of the court’s operations, many of which relate to insufficient funding by donors. The operations of the Defense Office, the Witness and Victim Support Unit, the Chambers, and the Outreach section have been constrained by inadequate resources. The court established a Defense Office to help ensure protection of the rights of the accused, but lack of resources for defense teams has hampered case preparation.

The Office of the Prosecutor also has too narrowly interpreted the court’s mandate to exclude prosecution of regional or mid-level commanders who were notorious for their extreme brutality against civilians, Human Rights Watch said.
Insufficient witness protection and delay in establishing the second Trial Chamber raise additional concerns.

Furthermore, the absence from the court of former Liberian President Charles Taylor – who is charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in contributing to the death, rape, abduction, and mutilation of thousands of civilians during Sierra Leone’s civil war – threatens to undermine the court’s accomplishments.

“By continuing to harbor Charles Taylor, Nigeria is sending the message that some individuals should be above the law when it comes to the most serious crimes,” said Keppeler. “Nigeria should hand Taylor over to the Special Court immediately. It’s time for the United Nations and member states to call on Nigeria to do the right thing.”

**Background**

The Special Court began trials on June 3, with the trial of three Civil Defense Forces leaders: Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana, and Allieu Kondewa. On July 5, the Special Court began the trial of three Revolutionary United Front leaders: Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon, and Augustine Gbao. The trial of three Armed Forces Revolutionary Council leaders – Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara, and Santigie Borbor Kanu – has not yet begun.

The establishment of the second Trial Chamber, which has been delayed, would allow for the trial of Armed Forces Revolutionary Council leaders to be conducted simultaneously with trials of leaders of the Revolutionary United Front and Civil Defense Forces.

To read the report, see “Bringing Justice: the Special Court for Sierra Leone.”


For Human Rights Watch’s work on international justice in Sierra Leone, see http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=justice&c=sierra.

**Related Material**

**Information on justice in Sierra Leone**

**Bringing Justice: The Special Court for Sierra Leone**

Report: September 8, 2004


Copyright 2004, Human Rights Watch 350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor New York, NY 10110-3299 USA

By Thosphina S. Gbende

Following the end of the judicial review of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, from August 7 - August 31 2004, the Trial Chamber is scheduled to resume sittings of members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) today, September 8, 2004.

The commencement of the September 8 trials was preceded by a status conference held on 7th September 2004 and presided over by Trial Judge, Pierre Boubet.

The essence of the status conference was to clear any outstanding doubts on certain legal matters and at the same time set the stage for a smooth trial.

As part of the proceedings, issues bordering on the health and detention conditions of the accused persons as well as outstanding motions, were exhaustively deliberated upon.

Healthwise, 1st and 3rd accused persons, Chief Sam Hinga Norman and Allieu Kandeh, indicated that they are alright while the 2nd accused, Mambu Fofana, complained that the last two months he has been suffering from persistent headaches and chest pains, and that all efforts to seek medical attention at the detention center has proved futile.

On the general detention conditions, Chief Sam Hinga Norman who seemed to have spoken on behalf of all the accused persons said the conditions are appalling, as apart from the absence of facilities for exercise, sanitation is poor, and food provided is grossly inadequate and unacceptable.

Lauding the efforts of the diners, clothing and cleaning of their rooms, Chief Norman said, has to be done by them as there are no alternatives.

The running cost of the court, Chief Norman reiterated, is expensive, with employees paid fabulously by white men, for whom the court was made a reality, are offered very little.

A similar report, defense lawyers for the 2nd and 3rd accused persons said, were made in the last status conference held on 1st June 2004, but said it is sad to note that no action was taken.

Concerns were also raised as to the expediency of the trials, which by all indications, is expected to drag on beyond schedule owing to the number of witnesses lined up.

On the issue of case presentation and cross examination, the trial judge entered strongly on the defense lawyers, accusing them of wasting too much time on cross examination and irrelevant issues.

Similarly, the prosecution was also reminded of its obligation to keep the chamber and defence currently informed about the particulars and statements of witness it intend to call upon, so as to enable the defence adequate time prepare its case.

Among the witnesses lined up for this trial phase, is an insider of the former CDF, and according to the prosecution, it is currently negotiating with some expert witnesses (forensic experts) who might be useful in its case.

Meanwhile, the defence counsels have repeated their complaints over the gross budgetary inadequacies that seem to be holding them back to resume efforts by defence investigators to efficiently travel across the country to investigate allegations made against the accused persons.
As Special Court Trials Resume

Norman, Others To Appear Today

By Joseph Turner

After weeks of recess the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) defendants of the Special Court who were indicted by the court last year for bearing the greatest responsibility in the ten-year civil conflict will today make another appearance as the court resumes sittings.

Indicted members of the CDF comprise first accused Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, second accused Montina Fofana and Aliyu Kondewa. All three accused are facing eighteen count charges for various crimes ranging from murder, rape, looting, cannibalism, arson, abduction, recruitment of child soldiers.

Norman, Others To Appear Today

From front page

since the trials started mad this year with the CDF, four witnesses for the prosecution have so far testified against the CDF indictees. These witnesses have been cross examined by the defence teams for all three accused in which most of the alleged crimes committed by these indictees have been denied by counsel for the defence.

However, today's trial will mark the fifth prosecution witness for the CDF.

The exclusive

Tuesday 8th September, 2004
Sick officer may die in jail: colleague

By John Silvester
September 8, 2004

A senior Victorian police officer facing sex charges in West Africa will not get a fair trial and could die in custody, a fellow member of the United Nations' Special Court said yesterday.

Superintendent Peter Halloran is in a prison hospital in Sierra Leone suffering from high blood pressure, the after-effects of pneumonia and gastric problems. He is unable to drink the local water because of an outbreak of cholera and is surviving on two bread rolls a day. He has been charged with having a sexual relationship with a Freetown schoolgirl whom he had allegedly hired to work in his home.

Mr Abe Haddad, a former Victorian policeman who has returned to Melbourne after a 12-month stint with the UN Special Court in Sierra Leone, said there was no evidence to justify the charges.

"The system there is very much geared towards the prosecution and not to the defence. Evidence just doesn't enter into it," he said. "It is not designed for fair trials. The only thing they will accept is a conviction."

He said because of the threat of violence in prison, the health risks and dietary problems, Halloran's life was in danger. Sources in Sierra Leone said that the alleged victim in the case had made at least three contradictory statements and that a UN board of inquiry found there was no evidence to sustain charges.

Halloran's lawyer, who tried to charge him US$20,000 for appearing at a bail application, has abandoned the case and left the country. Halloran has told friends he believes pressure has been placed on local police to prosecute the case.

Local sources said that, when the young girl refused to swear to her original statement of complaint, members of her family were arrested and imprisoned.

Halloran, the former head of the Victorian homicide squad and senior investigator for the National Crime Authority, took 12 months leave of absence from Victoria Police to work for the UN Special Court investigating war crimes and genocide.

More news
- Tougher health powers sought
- Tasmania woos students
- Bracks says state's not ready to kick butt

Home > National > Article

Copyright © 2004. The Age Company Ltd.
Hinga Norman Cries Foul As...
TRC Witnesses Testify
In Special Court

By Joseph Komol

The Trial Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Tuesday resumed sittings after an almost one-month judicial break with a 'status conference' at Room 1 of the new courthouse here in Freetown. Various issues bordering on recent proceedings and which are pertinent to the ongoing CDF trial were highlighted and addressed by the Trial Chamber, Registry, Prosecution and defence counsels.

On the issue of the trials, first CDF accused, Chief Sam Hinga Norman requested the court to expedite the trial. He said, "We have been too long in detention. We want to go home", adding, "We wouldn't mind to sit at night". On the issue of witnesses, Chief Norman told the court that most of the prosecution's witnesses, now testifying behind closed sessions and without the PH system, have testified at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). He argued it should take up to 12 years. One major issue raised by all the three accused persons is the quality and quantity of food at the prison. Earlier, Chief Norman displayed to the full view of the court specimens of the pieces of meat and chicken served. The CDF indictees are being fed on the diet given to them. They also complained that every time they gave out their bedding for laundering, they are charged in return.

David Crane: Should this be the trend?

Hinga Norman Cries Foul As...

From front page that if they have testified in public on the same issue, they have no reason to seek for protection in carrying out their testimonies. Earlier, Mr. Norman requested for a lap top computer for his use whilst in court as the provision of lap top computers has been approved for defence counsels. He further told the court that the desktop computer given to him is being restricted as the internet facilities and website connections are not provided. Defence counsel for second accused, Mr. Quincy Wiakeza also informed the court of Monina Fofana's complaint of chest pains for the past two weeks. He said his client informed him that the doctor is not doing enough despite various health problems reported by Mr. Fofana. He also told the court that Mr. Fofana is very much worried that the trial will never finish if it continues the same way. He said he calculated it to take up to 12 years. One major issue raised by all the three accused persons is the quality and quantity of food at the prison. Earlier, Chief Norman displayed to the full view of the court specimens of the piece of meat and chicken served. The CDF indictees are being fed on the diet given to them. They also complained that every time they gave out their bedding for laundering, they are charged in return.

New Image...

Tuesday 5th September 2004
Liberia: Former Top Aide to Taylor Surrenders Weapons to UN Peacekeepers

UN News Service (New York)
NEWS
September 6, 2004
Posted to the web September 7, 2004

Liberia's immediate former President, Moses Z. Blah, who took over from exiled President Charles Taylor in August last year, today surrendered his weapons to United Nations peacekeepers in the capital, Monrovia.

The arms were turned over to Lt.-Gen. Daniel Opare, Force Commander of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), five days after senior UN envoy Jacques Paul Klein had announced that the disarmament programme would wrap up within two months.

Mr. Blah, a long-serving Vice President under Mr. Taylor, was Liberia's President for just over two months, until the inauguration of the National Transitional Government headed by Charles Gyude Bryant on 14 October as part of a peace deal brokered among the country's three warring factions.

Turning over his weapons as well as those of his bodyguards, Mr. Blah said after 14 years of war, Liberians could boast of no winners but only losers. "Since the United Nations is here to bring us the much needed peace through disarmament, it is no longer necessary to keep arms," he said.

"I have emptied this house of weapons. All around me, we have disarmed to you today," said the former President. "Our security now is in the hands of the United Nations and the Transitional Government."

Receiving weapons from the former leader, Lt.-Gen. Opare urged all former fighters in the country to emulate Mr. Blah's example and surrender their weapons to the UN. "I think it is a good opportunity for former President Blah to show the people of Liberia that having been a fighter himself, having been in leadership position, he has shown that all the leaders also must disarm, not only the ordinary combatants."

UNMIL has so far disarmed over 71,000 former fighters and collected and destroyed more than 20,000 weapons and over 5 million rounds of small arms ammunition. Disarmed soldiers are offered vocational training and formal education as part of the
efforts to reintegrate them into mainstream society and offer them a second chance at civilian life. The disarmament programme will come to an end on 30 October.
Russian Witness Refuses To Appear In Milosevic Trial

BELGRADE, Sept 7 (AFP) - A Russian deputy has refused to testify in the war crimes trial of Slobodan Milosevic in protest at the UN court's decision to impose a lawyer on the former Yugoslav leader, the Beta news agency reported on Tuesday.

"The court made an illegal decision by imposing lawyers upon Milosevic," Nikolai Ryjkov, who was due to appear as a witness at the UN tribunal in The Hague on September 13, said in a statement sent to the Serbian agency.

A member of Russia's upper house of parliament, Ryjkov charged that the court had acted "in breach of international law and of its own statutes".

The former Yugoslav strongman has denounced the imposition of a lawyer as a restriction of his right to mount his own defence.

Milosevic faces more than 60 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for allegedly masterminding the wars in Croatia and Bosnia in the first half of the 1990s and the Serb crackdown on Kosovo in 1998-99.

He has also been charged with genocide and complicity in genocide, the gravest of war crimes, for the war in Bosnia that left 200,000 people dead.

Copyright 2004 Agence France Presse. All rights reserved. The information contained in the AFP News report may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without the prior written authority of Agence France Presse.
"Mercenaries still active in the subregion" ...minister

Liberia's former Foreign Minister says mercenar-ies are alive and kicking in the West African sub-region, the Ghanaian Accra Mail reported recently.

Mr. Monica R. Captan, Liberian Foreign Minis-ter under former President Charles Taylor, has said the prolonged Liberian conflict, had created experienced combatants actively en-gaged in mercenary activities in the West Afri-can sub-region.

He alleged that the recruiting and participation of various West African nations in various international communities to seek strategies to armed insurgency by defining a limit to the appeasement of insurgent groups, "It's now common practice and expectancy to obtain a govern-ment ministerial post by simply being an influential member of an armed insurgency".

He said the logic of the exchange of arms for political power was a dangerous preced-ent as it clear out-lined the strategy for obtaining power, which was the pursuit and use of milita-rarian power.

"Such logic leads to the belief that civil so-ciety does not deserve to participate in govern-ance because civil society has no gun to give therefore not a major factor and contribu-tor to the peace process."

Mr. Captan said appearing armed insurg-ents with ministerial appointment was contrary to mediation processes carried out by ECOWAS.

Mr. Captan said the principles of power through un-constitutional and undemocratic means, a policy also emphasized by the Algiers declaration.

It seems, however, in practice, that it was acceptable to seize power through negoti-a-tion with ECOWAS, he said.

Insurgent groups had simply placed a condition that unless they win power, they would not surrender their arms, be added.

Mr. Captan said ECOWAS had had to yield to such demands because of incapacity to mobilize and support a credible force.

He said the donor community had also shield away from supporting peace keep ing operations because of the huge cost and therefore encouraged a policy of appeasement, which required less decor for the implementa-tion of a peace pro-cess.

He said ECOWAS must think realistic-ally to develop a reasonable sized, but well-equipped rapid response force that

---

Mercenaries

From front Page

Luoec and Research (ASDR) in Accra dis-abled "Reflections". Mr. Captan said merce-naries and insurgents were free roaming the sub-region as ECOWAS citizens and would remain an integral factor in civil conflict in the sub-region.

Mr. Captan said the activities of mercenaries and insurgents could be controlled through the collective effort and commitment of ECOWAS through common policy.

Mr. Captan, who was Foreign Minister under exiled leader Charles Taylor alleged that during the various phases of the Liberian civil war, Sierra Leoneans, Ivorians, Burkinaf, Ghanaians, Gambians, Senegalese, Guineans, among other nationalities, fought for at least one faction.

The same had also occurred, with Liberians involved, in other conflicts emerged in the sub-region, including conflicts in Sierra Leone, Guinea Bassau, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire of armed insur-
Source: News & Business > News > News, Most Recent 90 Days (English, Full Text) i
Terms: annan urges more international support for un peacekeepers (Edit Search)

✔Select for FOCUS™ or Delivery

[Xinhua General News Service September 7, 2004 Tuesday]

Copyright 2004 Xinhua News Agency
Xinhua General News Service

The Materials In The Xinhua File Were Compiled By The Xinhua News Agency. These Materials May Not Be Republished Without The Express Written Consent Of The Xinhua News Agency.

September 7, 2004 Tuesday 5:00 PM EST

SECTION: WORLD NEWS; Political

LENGTH: 311 words

HEADLINE: Annan urges more intl support for UN peacekeeping operations

DATELINE: UNITED NATIONS

BODY:

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Tuesday called for more international support for UN peacekeeping operations, which are projected to need 30,000 more peacekeepers worldwide and 2 billion US dollars of extra funding next year.

In a report to the UN General Assembly, Annan said the demand for UN peace operations has surged in recent years, representing "a challenge not seen since the rapid increases in the scale and complexity of operations in the 1990s."

New operations were authorized over the past year in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and Burundi, and planning is ongoing for a substantial mission in Sudan. The UN chief is also seeking to strengthen significantly the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo to ensure progress in the country's peace process is not reversed.

Annan projected that more than 30,000 military personnel may be required to meet the surge in demand for peacekeeping operations, in addition to more than 50,000 already deployed in early 2004.

With these new troops, the number of UN peacekeepers would reach a record high of more than 80,000 in 2005, higher than in 1993 when 78,000 uniformed personnel served with UN operations.

While welcoming the increased demand for UN missions as a signal of new opportunities for peace, Annan warned that commitments of political, financial, material and human resources are necessary, and that a clear exit strategy is vital for each operation.

"This jump in the demand for United Nations peace operations is a welcome signal of new opportunities for the international community to help bring conflicts to a peaceful solution," he said.

"However, those opportunities can only be truly seized if the necessary commitments of political, financial and human resources are made and if each peace process is seen through completion."
Africa News September 7, 2004 Tuesday

Copyright 2004 AllAfrica, Inc.
Africa News

September 7, 2004 Tuesday

LENGTH: 1516 words

HEADLINE: Children and Youth; Rehabilitating Child Soldiers is a Tough Job

BYLINE: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks

BODY:
It is a simple matter to give a child a gun, drug him up to the eyeballs and tell him to kill your enemies.

But Father Henry de Penfenteny, a Roman Catholic priest who runs a youth centre in the rebel-held north of Cote d'Ivoire, says it takes his large team of carers several weeks, and usually several months, to rehabilitate each one to the point where he or she can be sent back home safely.

"It depends on the development of each individual," the French missionary told IRIN. "The one who stayed with us for the shortest time was only here for a month and a half for stabilisation and guidance the length of time also depends on the family and how long it takes them to face up to their responsibilities towards the child."

The church-run Children's House in the rebel capital Bouake, is currently caring for seven children aged between 13 and 18 who formerly fought with the rebel army or were recruited to help support it.

All of them have been there for the past 11 months, but are due to be sent home shortly.

"We offer the children a stabilising influence," de Penfenteny said. "We give back to them the hope of building a future that is worthy of its name, which they lost in the war, whatever their degree of involvement in it. The activities include a lot of sport and we try to teach those who are past primary school age how to read and write."

The former child soldiers also receive intensive counselling from 15 carers and a trained psychologist.

Perhaps even more importantly, the Children's House also supervises the education and entertainment of several hundred other kids to try and prevent them from falling under the spell of those who carry guns. It pays school fees for 180 of them.

"These are not children who have gone to the military camps, but who will end up going there if we don't do anything for them," de Penfenteny said. "A child who sees his brother go to the checkpoint every day will end up doing the same thing. We prefer to do preventive rather than curative work."

Violent, excitable and deeply superstitious

The carers of the former child soldiers said their charges were violent, excitable, deeply superstitious and easily sexually aroused by the sight of women.

http://www.lexis.com/research/retrieve?_m=1b137ba5c0df87800a2b7735c5995032&docnum=1&_fmt... 9/8/2004
They had only the vaguest notion of what they were fighting for. But most were proud of their military achievements and expressed nostalgia for the prestige and power that a gun once gave them.

"I spent five months with the FN (the New Forces rebel movement)," said Philippe, who comes from the "Wild West" of Cote d'Ivoire and is now 15.

"It wasn't a political war for us but a tribal war," he explained simply. "I am a Yacouba and we were fighting against the Guere I had a Kalashnikov and I fought at Toulepleu. I used to shoot people in the legs."

Abdoulaye, 17, from the northern town of Ferkessedougou, also portrayed the civil war, which erupted two years ago, as a tribal conflict.

"They wanted to kill people because of ethnic problems," he told IRIN. I am a Senoufo and they wanted to kill Senoufos," he added.

The Senoufo are a large ethnic group in northern Cote d'Ivoire and southern Mali, whose members include Guillaume Soro, the leader of Cote d'Ivoire's rebel movement.

All the child soldiers encountered by an IRIN correspondent who visited the rehabilitation centre said they had joined the ranks of the military of their own accord.

Biman, 15, said he had joined up because his parents were Malian and President Gbagbo had been persecuting people of immigrant origin. "I decided to fight because we really wanted to get rid of Gbagbo. He was bugging our parents," he said.

Not all child soldiers were actual combatants.

De Penfentenyo said that most of the Ivorian child soldiers who passed through his rehabilitation centre were not so much combatants as auxiliaries and hangers-on with the rebel forces.

"Most of the kids in the centre haven't actually fought. They never wore a uniform or carried a gun," he told IRIN. "You shouldn't really speak of child soldiers so much as children who have more or less been involved on the fringes of military activity. People think about what happened in Sierra Leone and Liberia. When you talk about child soldiers you form a mental picture of young Liberians, but the kids here are not really like that."

Abdoulaye described how he simply spent 13 months guarding a roadblock with three other child soldiers.

However several others said they had been involved in real battles.

Thirteen-year-old Lassina, who is now back at primary school, said he became so scared by the gunfire and the killing, that he was eventually sent away from the frontline.

But Moussa, 15, told IRIN that after overcoming his initial fear, he began to enjoy the prospect of battle.

"I was in charge of the arsenal. When there was fire-fire, it was me who handed out the guns," he said. "I was at the front in Man (in the west of Cote d'Ivoire) and I wouldn't be afraid to go back there. In fact I would rather like to do so because there we were earning money and it didn't really make you afraid. I was only a little bit afraid the first time (we went into battle)."

The 15 carers and supervisors at the Children's Centre are mainly students who were left idle when the universities and colleges in northern Cote d'Ivoire shut down after the outbreak of civil war in
September 2002.

However, the **child soldiers** also receive counselling from a qualified psychologist.

"The psychological work is all about love and affection," de Penfenteny said. "We have to understand the difficulties of the child who has broken the links with his family. We have to make him aware of his problems in order to try and find solutions to them. We spend a lot of time with the kids."

The **Children's House** can handle the rehabilitation of up to 50 former **child soldiers** at any one time, although De Penfenteny is reluctant to say how many had passed through its doors since the conflict began or who referred them to his centre.

Sometimes the **children** get out of hand

The carers described their charges as violent and temporamental **youths**, who were often high on drugs when they were sent to the frontline and who still thought of themselves as real **soldiers**.

"**Children** who have cracked under the strain of war are prone to sudden outbursts of violence," said Gregoire Tchobo, one of two carers who looks after the former **child soldiers** at night in their hostel.

"Sometimes we can no longer manage," he added. "They carry knives and we have to deal with very difficult situations. Sometimes we have been forced to call in the FN. When they see their military chiefs, the kids calm down. They identify with them. They think they are still in the armed forces."

"They deny that they used to take drugs, but in fact they were drugged," Tchobo said. "They were either given injections or they were handed amphetamine tablets."

Tchobo, 28, said many of the former **child soldiers** still felt themselves to be invincible warriors on a mystic mission who were protected from harm by the magic charms they insisted on wearing.

"The **children** wear amulets to protect themselves," Tchobo said. "For them it is a mystic war. They regard themselves as invincible. They are very difficult to control. They get violent and hysterical and the sight of women turns them on and sends them into a frenzy."

After eight months of fierce fighting in Cote d'Ivoire, a truce was finally agreed on 3 May 2003 which left the country partitioned.

Cote d'Ivoire remains today in an uneasy situation of no war, no peace, in which none of the underlying issues that led to the rebellion have been resolved, despite an agreement in principle for fresh elections to be held in October 2005.

Father de Pentenfenyo, who has been working with **children** in Cote d'Ivoire since 1990, said there were no reliable estimates for the total number of **child soldiers** in the country.

But he expects a lot more to be demobilised shortly, if a long delayed disarmament programme really gets under way on 15 October as planned.

The priest said the **Children's Centre** had already reunited several **children** with their families.

Despite the difficulties involved in helping these junior combatants to return to civilian life in a divided country, about five or six had successfully been sent to join their families who were now in Abidjan on the government side of the frontline, he noted.

"We have partners in Abidjan who continue to monitor them and keep up the work. It is going quite well. The overall outcome is positive," he said.
Most of the kids who come under the wing of the Children's House in Bouake are sent to school, but for those over the age of 15, the centre organises vocational training.

One told IRIN he wanted to become a carpenter. Another said he wanted to train to be doctor. But sometimes the kids still hanker after the military life they left behind.

"I want to become a warlord," Lassina told IRIN proudly. But then he added: "Well not really. I actually want to become a teacher."

LOAD-DATE: September 7, 2004
Unamsil Hosts Meeting On West African Inter-Mission Cooperation

Concord Times (Freetown)
NEWS
September 7, 2004
Posted to the web September 7, 2004

By Tanu Jalloh
Freetown

The working Group on United Nations Inter-Mission Cooperation in West Africa, under Unamsil held a one-day discussion on the current state of and future potential for further collaboration and the legal, operational and political implications of resulting recommendations.

Following a meeting last Thursday, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngackukwa Mwakawago in a press release states that the discussion would focus on the need for UN Peace Keeping Missions in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) to cooperate closely on cross-boarder activities, sharing of assets, staff deployment and information sharing. Mechanisms to facilitate these initiatives had been put in place, he said.

The release further described the three countries as "conflict zones that lie side by side" and should therefore exploit the synergy already created by the proximity to look into potential areas relating to military operations; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); and law enforcement for future cooperation.

Some of the proposals, the release states, would "entail obtaining the consent of the concerned governments, as the operation would impinge on the territorial integrity of a state outside a mission's area of operation adjusting the mandate of the missions and seeking the consent of troop contributors" for their military operatives to be used in cross border activities.

Copyright © 2004 Concord Times. All rights reserved. Distribute by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).
The Hague: Former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic was forced to take a back seat at his trial for genocide and war crimes as lawyers imposed on him by a UN tribunal examined his first defence witness.

It provoked Milosevic into a denunciation, swiftly curtailed by the court, of what he claims is a restriction of his right to mount his own defence.

"You took away my right to defend myself and put it in the hands of Mister (Steven) Kay who does not represent me, he represents you," Milosevic said at the start of the hearing in The Hague.

Presiding judge Patrick RoFinson cut off Milosevic's microphone, saying he did not want to hear the "same tired refrain".

After the outburst Milosevic seemed to accept the judge's intervention and sat calmly, taking notes as his assigned defence counsel Kay questioned Serbian legal expert Smilja Avramov.

On his first day as a defence lawyer, Kay touched on some important points with Avramov, a member of Serbian teams sent to negotiate on behalf of rebel Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia with European Union representatives at the start of the Balkans conflicts in the early 1990s.

Avramov cast Milosevic as a peacemaker, testifying that he did not have any influence over rebel Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia.

Milosevic faces more than 60 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for allegedly masterminding the wars in Croatia and Bosnia in the first half of the 1990s and the Serb crackdown on Kosovo in 1998-99.

He has also been charged with genocide and complicity in genocide, the gravest of war crimes, for the war in Bosnia that left 200,000 people dead.

He faces a life sentence if convicted.

The prosecution has tried to show that Milosevic ran Yugoslav politics in the 1990s and wielded considerable power over rebel Serb leaders.

Avramov denied this, saying it was Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic who "was the be all and end all authority" for the Bosnian Serbs.

In his own defence opening statement, Milosevic blamed western powers and especially Germany for the bloody break-up of Yugoslavia, casting himself as a peacemaker.

Avramov backed his remarks, even chiding Milosevic for being too cooperative with the international community during the wars.

"We criticised him at home because we thought he was yielding to the international community to the detriment of Serbia," she said.

Later in the hearing Milosevic insisted that Kay was not following the line of the defence that he would like to present and rejected the suggestion that he could put questions only after his lawyers had examined the witnesses.

The judges again cut off his microphone and ordered Kay to continue his examination of the witness.
When the judges forced Milosevic to take on a lawyer last week they made it clear in an accompanying order that although the defence counsel should try and seek Milosevic's instructions, in the end they would have the right to conduct the defence as they saw fit.

Milosevic has so far refused to meet his assigned lawyers.

Judges last week imposed Kay and his associate Gillian Higgins as defence counsel on Milosevic after medical reports showed he was not fit to represent himself in court. The judges hope to avoid further delays in the mammoth trial due to the former president's continued ill health due to his high blood pressure.

The trial, which started in February 2002, has already been interrupted over 14 times after Milosevic fell ill. The case is expected to last until at least late 2005.

The hearing was adjourned and will resume Wednesday with more testimony from Avramov.

- AFP

Copyright © 2003 MCN International Pte Ltd