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, June 23, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday. If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact Mariama S. Yilla Ext 7217 / 7216
COMMENTARY

Court Administration. Just last year, he was kept incommunicado for two weeks for breaching detention codes of conduct. About two weeks ago also, he was banned from communicating with the public after again breaching detention laws. Then he had written a letter to all Mendes and/or Kamayors asking them to refrain from entering into any political arrangement with President Kabbah and his vice Solomon Berewa.

Part of the demand Norman is making this time to the SRSG is for him to “send as a matter of urgency, an international and national team of neutrals including Judges, Lawyers, Reporters, Human Right Activists” to meet him and other detainees and the Defense Counsel to investigate claims of partiality in the trials at the court and forms of human rights abuse that indictees are facing in the court.

It could be difficult to ascertain the long line of accusations that Norman outlines in his letter. Besides, how feasible it could be for the SRSG to undertake Norman’s assignment is another difficult question altogether. These notwithstanding, we at Saone Times believe that it is important that the Special Court dispenses justice in these trials since the court apart from punishing war criminals also has the dual purpose of deterring potential troublemakers. But all the good dreams could be drowned where an atmosphere of suspicion surrounds the entire exercise. This is not in anyway giving credence to Norman’s claims. We are merely putting the onus on the Special Court to prove to all and sundry that the court is indeed independent and owes no obligation to any political masters.

To achieve this, we believe that there is still need to encourage more human rights groups (both local and international) especially those versed in legal matters to be attending the daily proceedings of the court. This can give them the opportunity to give a more independent report of the court’s proceedings especially against the background that the Special Court is a case study that has the potential to be recognized as a sub regional establishment to try war crimes. The success of the Special Court therefore will impact on its future in dispensing justice.
At Special Court

Witness uncertain about cousin's age

By Betty Milton

During cross-examination by lawyer-Pa Momoh Fofanah defence Lawyer for the third accused, Prosecution witness TF1-334 said that his cousin who was raped by Bazzy was 25 to 36 years old though he had earlier stated to the Office of the Prosecution that his cousin was 16 to 20 years. The witness explained that when they were at Gbere Banna Bazzy called his cousin to meet him in one room before my cousin could go there he sent for me and informed me about the message the witness stated. He continued. "So I told her to go as he was the ‘Pa’. My sister went and later came out from the room weeping bitterly." The witness explained. "I asked her what was the Contd. Page 2

Witness uncertain about cousin's age

From Front Page

matter she said Bazzy has told his Chief Security Officer (CSO) to lock her in a box. She was locked in the box for some time and she later called the CSO to tell Bazzy she is now willing to do anything for him, she was then taken to the same room and later I heard her screaming." The lawyer for the third accused Pa Momoh Fofanah at this point challenged the witness that all what he has related to the court was a made up story, but the witness TF1-334 maintained that everything he has told the Court was true as it happened in his presence and that the said cousin was captured at Allen Town. He also pointed out that he was the one who had been constantly giving words of encouragement to her. He was also asked why as a junior commander, at that time he did not report the matter to Commander A, the witness replied that as Bazzy was the most senior in Command his orders could not be challenged.
"Charles Taylor Murdered 500 Nigerians"

This Day (Lagos)

INTERVIEW
June 20, 2005
Posted to the web June 21, 2005

Jude Igbanoi
Lagos

Only a few donor organisations have achieved so much as the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) in the area of public interest advocacy, opening the society and strengthening democratic institutions. Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, Africa Director of OSJI took time out of a rather tight schedule to chat with JUDE IGBANOI last week. The Visiting Professor at Harvard University explains why he is vexed with the continuous presence of Charles Taylor in Nigeria.

---SNIP---

The former Liberian president and warlord Charles Taylor is in Nigeria and this is against the wish of the Nigerian people, against so much protest from virtually all sections of the Nigeria society. And right now the America government wants Charles Taylor out of Nigeria. The Nigerian people are not comfortable with his continuous stay in the country. What is your opinion on this?

To begin with that, Charles Taylor is in court and there are those challenging Charles Taylor's presence in Nigeria. The court has admitted the Open Society Justice Initiative as an amicus curiae on the proceedings. So, I want to declare that we are involved in the proceedings. Having said that, I think the real issue here really is what is the value of a Nigerian life. That's the way I like to see the Charles Taylor thing. And I find it unfortunate to say the truth. Speaking as a Nigeria, speaking as a citizen of an African country and speaking as a human being, I find it rather unfortunate that at least at the governmental level, what people talk about is America is disturbing Nigeria to do this to Charles Taylor. It is not in dispute that the ECOWAS Heads of State and government verified that Charles Taylor killed over five hundred Nigerian soldiers, that is not in dispute. It is not in dispute that Charles Taylor personally ordered the execution of two very talented Nigerian journalists, Chris Imodibe and Tayo Awotusi. He made a widow of Tayo's wife and Chris's fiancee never got to get married to the man she wanted to get married to. That is also a fact. Notwithstanding all of these, we are very bothered about what other people say about Charles Taylor rather than what we can do to at least enable the souls of those who were killed at the instance of this fellow to rest in peace. I can't understand this, I honesty can't! I read the GUARDIAN Editorial, where it say Nigeria must not be blackmailed to handover Charles Taylor, and I was upset. This is the Guardian that sent Chris Imodibe to Liberia when he got killed. And the only thing Chris' family got after was Chris's salary for one month! We can do better! A Nigerian life has
to be worth more than just that. An African life is got to be worth something and until we get to the stage where we can feel upset as a people that somebody can do all of those and get away with it, we are not going to get anywhere. Let me ask a question and this is a question for every Nigerian, how many parents would give refuge to the man who raped their child? How many parents would give refuge to the man who killed their children? Why is it different for Nigerians after all, all of us as Nigerians share in the Nigerian humanity. Why is it that Nigeria cannot afford protection to average Nigerians. That is all! So, what I've got in relation to Charles Taylor is sort of rhetorical questions and our government must find a way of answering those questions satisfactorily for Nigerians.
UN Extends Liberia Sanctions, Expresses Concern at Taylor's Activities

By Peter Heinlein
United Nations
21 June 2005

Heinlein report (Real Media) - Download 350k
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The U.N. Security Council has extended sanctions against Liberia, saying the country’s government has failed to control illegal diamond sales. The council also expressed renewed concern about the activities of former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

A resolution adopted unanimously Tuesday extends diamond and timber sanctions against Liberia for another six months. The British-drafted measure urges Liberia’s transitional government to do more to prevent illegal diamond sales that are fueling wars among West African states.

The Security Council approved the diamond ban in 2001 after finding that former president Charles Taylor had provided assistance to rebels fighting the government in neighboring Sierra Leone. A ban on timber sales was added in 2003.

Britain’s U.N. ambassador Emyr Jones-Parry said the decision to extend the sanctions until December should be seen by Liberia’s leaders as a hopeful message. "It tells them what can be possible but it tells them also that what they’ve been doing in terms of the way the diamond trade and industry is being run isn’t satisfactory... But we’re looking for progress in terms of managing all of Liberia's resources, and we’re sending a clear message of support for the sorts of development in Liberia that we all want to see," he said.

The resolution passed Tuesday expresses concern at information that the exiled former president Taylor and others associated with him continue to engage in activities that undermine the country’s peace and stability.

Mr. Taylor was granted exile by Nigeria in 2003. He has since been indicted by a U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal. The Sierra Leone-based tribunal last month asked the Security Council for help in bringing the former Liberian leader to justice, saying he is working with the al-Qaida terrorist network on a plan to destabilize West Africa.

Ambassador Jones-Parry said the latest resolution does not call for Mr. Taylor’s extradition because negotiations on his status are at a sensitive stage. But he suggested the former Liberian leader would soon face prosecution. "Taylor cannot avoid coming to justice, at some stage his impunity will have to end, the only question is how do we do it. We didn’t believe this was the vehicle to achieve that. The discussions continue, and at some stage, I hope before very long, Taylor will face justice," he said.

The U.S. House of Representatives last month passed a non-binding resolution urging Nigeria to

hand over Mr. Taylor to the war crimes tribunal. Nigerian authorities have refused to expel him unless there is proof he has violated the terms of his exile agreement.

In a recent report to the Security Council, however, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Mr. Taylor is suspected of trying to influence the outcome of Liberia's presidential election, which would be a clear violation of the exile agreement.
**REPORTER STORIES**

**Reporte's log: on trial in Sierra Leone**

18:00 AEST Tue Jun 21 2005

Peter Halloran, the former head of Victoria's homicide squad, is fighting a child sex conviction in Sierra Leone.

National Nine News reporter, Darren Lunny who is Freetown covering Halloran's appeal, shares his observations on justice Sierra Leone style and on the country itself, a nation ravaged by civil war.

**Wednesday, June 22**

Boy, what a difference a day makes in Sierra Leone.

Yesterday, Peter Halloran and his Australian lawyers were ruing yet another delay in the start of his appeal. Today, there's a pinch of light at the end of the tunnel.

Nobody in the Halloran camp is looking too far into the future, of course. But the fact that they now have a document stating the appeal will begin next Wednesday has brought smiles to a few faces.

Fifty-seven-year-old Halloran is keeping his cards pretty close to his chest. He says he's seen too many twists and turns in the case thus far to get over-excited. Nonetheless, he is cautiously optimistic it will get on next week.

Twenty-four hours ago, former ambulance royal commissioner Lex Lazary QC was planning on retuning home to Australia, having only arrived here on Sunday. Now he can unpack his bags and get down to business.

Like barrister Darren Bracken, it's Lazary's first time in Sierra Leone. And to anyone who hasn't visited this tiny West African nation, it's difficult to describe what it's like in a country that until five years ago was in the grip of a civil war.

Sure, I could tell you that Freetown is a city filled to overflowing, where people live from hand to mouth. I could tell you that most of them live in tin shacks that have been cobbled together with bits of wood and plastic and a few rocks to keep the roof on.

But you have to smell the rotting rubbish that sits in the streets and the streams for months to get a real sense of what life is like here.

And I could describe how cars, trucks, bikes and buses, human, dogs, chickens and goats all compete for a piece of pot-holed bitumen/dirt and that none particularly care what side of the thoroughfare they do it on. Mind you, the 'road system' works. And why fix what isn't broken?

Still, you need to inhale the industrial quantities of carbon monoxide that each vehicle spews out to know that you really are in Freetown.

What impresses me most are the people and their endless ability to adapt. They don't have the latest technology and gadgets, they make do with what they have. The children don't have XBoxes or iPods or the latest in fashion accessories; they're just as happy kicking a stone around the streets as they are a football.

Then of course there's the judiciary. The English have donated millions to overhaul the system, which is literally bursting at the seams.

I've never experienced it first hand (and hope I never will), but everyone I've spoken to, from human rights activists to the everyday person, agrees that money is often the only thing that buys you justice.

Sierra Leone's president admitted in an interview with Channel Nine last year that corruption has a strong foothold in his country. It's easy to see what effect that has at street level.
But do people here crave the comforts many of us have grown to enjoy?

Maybe, maybe not.

After all, it’s hard to want what you or your neighbours have never had.

**Tuesday, June 21**

The first thing that hits you about Sierra Leone — apart from the heat and humidity — is the time it takes to get anything done.

If patience is not a virtue you possess, it would be wise to cross this tiny West African nation off your list of holiday destinations.

You need patience in this part of the world, plenty of it.

It can take an hour for a meal you didn’t order to reach your table and even longer to drive a few kilometres through Freetown’s often clogged streets; both can be frustrating, though hardly life-altering.

For those caught up in the justice system, however, there is a lot more at stake — and a long list of horror stories. One education official sentenced to six years in jail for corruption served his sentence before his appeal had even begun.

Peter Halloran is unlikely to suffer the same fate, but his patience is being pushed to its limit nonetheless.

This was supposed to be the week when the appeal against his conviction for child sex abuse began. But if Halloran has learned one thing while in Sierra Leone, it is to never get your hopes up.

In March last year, Halloran — a 39-year veteran of the Victorian police force and former head of its homicide squad — arrived in Freetown to take up a position as a war crimes investigator at the UN special court.

He shared a house in the upmarket suburb of Wilberforce with fellow war crimes investigator and former Tasmanian detective Mandy Cordwell and a Canadian who also worked at the special court.

But in August 2004, the 57-year-old was charged with carnal knowledge, procurement and the indecent assault of a local teenage girl — an allegation levelled by Cordwell.

When the trial eventually began, the 13-year-old told the Sierra Leone High Court that Cordwell had pressured her into making the false claims by offering to pay for her education and a trip to America.

Two of the three charges were dropped and Halloran was found guilty of indecent assault and sentenced to 18 months inside Pademba Road prison.

He was released on bail by the Court of Appeal and ever since has been busily preparing for the next phase in a bid to clear his name.

But legal heavyweights Lex Lazary QC and Darren Bracken, who had flown into town in the past week, barely had time to unpack their bags before confronting their first hurdle: instead of the appeal starting this week, the date now won’t be known for at least another eight days.

And when the court reconvenes on June 29, who knows how long it will be before the appeal finally gets underway.

So what does this mean for Halloran’s high-powered legal team?

Although Bracken will remain in town, Lazary will depart just as quickly as he arrived and return once an appeal date has been confirmed.

As for Peter Halloran, he’s got time on his side and he’s probably going to need it.
UN Diamonds Export Ban Extension Spells More Headache for Bryant, NTGL

Liberian Observer (Monrovia)
NEWS
June 21, 2005
Posted to the web June 22, 2005

United Nations Security Council notes that the measures imposed remained in force to prevent former President Charles Taylor, his immediate family members, senior officials of the former Taylor regime or other close allies or associates from using misappropriated funds and property to interfere in the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia and the sub-region.

Liberia's transitional government took another beating Tuesday as the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to extend a ban on Liberia's diamond exports for six months because the government was unable to prevent illegal gem sales from fueling wars among its West African neighbors.

The council expressed "deep concern" at reports that former President Charles Taylor, now in exile in Nigeria, and his associates continue "to engage in activities that undermine peace and stability in Liberia and the region."

The Council invited the Government to consider, with the assistance of international partners and for a specific time period, the possibility of commissioning independent external advice on the management of Liberia's diamond and timber resources, in order to increase investor confidence and attract additional donor support.

Monitoring Taylor, family aides

By other provisions of the resolution, the Council noted that the measures imposed remained in force to prevent former President Charles Taylor, his immediate family members, senior officials of the former Taylor regime, or other close allies or associates from using misappropriated funds and property to interfere in the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia and the sub-region, and reconfirmed its intention to review those measures at least once a year.

It reiterated its intention also to consider whether and how to make available to the Government the funds, other financial assets and economic resources frozen pursuant to paragraph 1 of resolution 1532 (2004), once that Government had established transparent accounting and auditing mechanisms to ensure the responsible use of government revenue for the direct benefit of the Liberian people.

The Council emphasized its concern that the Government had taken no action to implement its obligations under paragraph 1 of resolution 1532 (2004), and called on it to take such action immediately, particularly through adopting the necessary domestic legislation, with technical support provided by Member States. It noted also that the measures on arms, travel and timber imposed by paragraphs 2, 4 and 10, respectively, of resolution 1521 (2003) and renewed by paragraph 1 of resolution 1579 (2004) remained in force until 21 December 2005.
Arms, Timber Embargo still in effect

The council banned Liberian diamond exports after finding that Taylor was fomenting civil war in the region, especially through an illicit trade in guns for gems and other natural resources. Some 50,000 people died in neighboring Sierra Leone's diamond-funded wars in the 1990s.

Signs of Progress, But

"Nevertheless, major deterrent in ensuring that rough diamonds do not fall into the hands of those who might fuel conflict is ensuring effective Government control over diamond-producing areas and Liberia's borders."

UN Resolution

An arms and timber embargo remains in force until Dec. 21 along with travel and assets freeze against Taylor, his family and associates.

The resolution expressed concern at the government's "limited progress" in "establishing transparent financial management systems that will help ensure that government revenues are not used to fuel conflicts."

It also noted with "serious concern" the increase in Liberia of unlicensed mining and illegal diamond exports, the absence of government control over diamond-producing areas, and "the lack of transparency" in the authorities' recent decision to grant extensive exclusive mining rights to a single firm.

Liberia's interim government, installed to run the country until democratic elections due in October, has repeatedly urged the council to end the ban to boost the ailing economy. The United Nations has 15,000 peacekeepers in the country.

But a panel of U.N. experts reported in March that Liberian authorities had secretly signed a deal with the West Africa Mining Corp., or WAMCO, a new company 90 percent-backed by the London International Bank Ltd., a private investment firm.

The deal would give WAMCO a de facto monopoly over much of Liberia's diamond-producing regions and preclude other dealers from competing for diamond purchases, the experts said.

No extradition call

On Taylor, the resolution did not ask for him to be extradited to a special war crimes court in Sierra Leone, which has indicted him. His exile agreement prevents him from being handed over to the court, providing he refrains from meddling in Liberian affairs.

Nigeria has refused to expel him until violations of his exile terms are proven.

But Britain's U.N. ambassador, Emyr Jones Parry, told reporters, "Taylor cannot avoid coming to justice and at some stage his impunity will have to end. The only question is how do we do it. We didn't believe this was the vehicle to achieve that."

Jones Parry said there were sensitive discussions taking place in Africa on the subject, but did not elaborate.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan told the council recently that Taylor was reported to be in regular contact with former business, military and political associates.
Annan's report said Taylor was "suspected of sponsoring a variety of presidential candidates, with a view to ensuring that the next Liberian government will include his sympathizers."

In Sierra Leone, Taylor is accused of arming brutal rebels, who seized control of diamond-producing areas. They became notorious for murder, rape and hacking off the limbs of men, women and children in a war that ended in 2002.
Brumskine: Arrest Warrant for Taylor Will Be Executed

Liberian Observer (Monrovia)
NEWS
June 21, 2005
Posted to the web June 21, 2005

By Rodney D. Sieh

"If Taylor and I shared the same philosophy, would I still be the leading candidate for president of Liberia? ", asks standard bearer of the United Democratic Party.

In a stirring rebuke of his controversial ties to former Liberian dictator Charles Ghankay Taylor, Counselor Charles Brumskine a candidate for the Presidency of Liberia says he will make sure any arrest warrant for Charles Taylor is executed if and when he is elected the president of Liberia.

The United Democratic Party's standard bearer told the Daily Observer in an exclusive interview that Taylor was indicted by an international court and is the object of an international arrest warrant.

"Any nation where Mr. Taylor is found will decide whether or not to honor the precepts. And I can assure the international community that if Mr. Taylor is found in Liberia during my leadership, the international arrest warrant will be executed," Brumskine told the Observer. "That is the legal issue, and the one that will be my guide," he said.

Brumskine asserted that asking Nigeria to turn Mr. Taylor over is a political issue which he says he trusts will be resolved by the parties involved. "I don't think it is fair to put Liberia in the middle of that.

Obasanjo's role

The presidential candidate said a lot will have to be consider for the execution of such a warrant to be carried, such as the role of Nigerian president Olee Segun Obasanjo in the Taylor ordeal.

"I would have to consider the role of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and that of President Obasanjo in particular. President Obasanjo, at great political risk to himself, intervened into the Liberian crisis at a time when it was necessary to avoid a human catastrophe in our country, for which all reasonable Liberians are eternally grateful to him," says Brumskine.

Brumskine alluded to the fact that Obassango offered Mr. Taylor political asylum, as part of a peace deal that he brokered, paving the way for the greater international community to participate in our peace process.

"I am, therefore, of the view that President Obassango should be allowed a certain amount of discretion in this
matter. Having said that, I am convinced that President Obassanjo will do what is necessary to ensure that justice is served," says Brumskine.

The UDP standard bearer asserted that the immediate concern of our country, however, is that President Obassanjo ensures that Mr. Taylor is not allowed to interfere or otherwise influence the direction of things in Liberia.

Doesn't share Taylor's philosophy

Brumskine, who at one point was a key player in Taylor's National Patriotic Front government rejected the notion that because he worked in the Taylor government means he and Taylor shared similar views or that in fact he harbors any loyalties to the former Liberian dictator.

"One's philosophy is one's inner core, your system of beliefs on how you live and view the world. If Taylor and I shared the same philosophy, would I still be the leading candidate for president of Liberia?, asks the presidential candidate.

Brumskine says his contribution to the development of democracy in Liberia remains unbeaten over the last fifty years of the West African nation's political history.

"I did not stand on the side and criticize from without, and the moment I was given an opportunity to serve became a part of the problem. I entered public service with the objective of representing the interest of the Liberian people. That I did, and continue to do even at the risk of grave harm to my person and loss of income, among other sacrifices," he says.

Clouded by Taylor Ties

Despite his connections to Taylor, Brumskine fell out with the former Liberian president and was instrumental in setting up a Senate committees to investigate allegations of Taylor's involvements in Sierra Leone's rebel war.

The presidential aspirant once said of his participation in the Taylor government that his "attention was caught by the available opportunity to serve his country and people devastated by the war." Brumskine says Liberia had been devastated by a brutal civil war, so many lives had been lost, infrastructure - political and physical-had been destroyed, the need for men of integrity to enter public service was screaming out to anyone that would hear.

"There was a great need, which, regrettably is even greater today, to help rebuild our country and provide an example of democratic leadership. And for the little difference I made, I am grateful to God"," he says.

Brumskine says his association with the Taylor's administration ended abruptly because of his desire to serve with integrity and commitment, guided by morality rather than "political gauge; abiding by the rule of law, and not catering to any man; seeking the interest of the people, not enriching one's self ".

Charles Walter Brumskine: Pledging to Become 'A Multi-Task President'

Liberian Observer (Monrovia)
NEWS
June 21, 2005
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His early ties to former Liberian dictator Charles Ghankay Taylor has been a thorn in his side even long before he announced his candidacy for the Liberian presidency. Despite breaking away from Taylor and a much-publicized threat on his life, the cloud of the former rebel leader turned president continues to dog the campaign of Cllr. Charles Walter Brumskine, one of the fifty plus candidates in pursuit of power in Liberia. In an exclusive interview with Editor-in-Chief Rodney D. Sieh, the United Democratic Party's standard bearer sets the record straight about his campaign, his agenda, his ties to Taylor, the extend of his representation of Taylor's confidante and business partner, Gus Kouwenhoven, and among other things, why he believes-with total confidence, that he will become the the next occupant in Liberia's Executive Mansion.

Mr. Brumskine, Why are you running for the presidency of Liberia?

My quest for leadership is a mixture of Divine inspiration and personal passion to build a new country. I believe in Liberia and its people. About half of our population, our mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, our children, are either in exile, in refugee camps, or in internally displaced camps. They are without shelter; Liberians remain in a state of destitution characterized by hunger, poverty, disease, and lack of education. The rule of law has collapsed; good governance and democratic values have again eluded us. We seem to be right back where we started in 1847. Only courageous and bold leadership can lift our ship of state, which has been stuck at the bottom for too long. I want to put an end to our national shame and revive our national hope. I am ready, willing, and able to provide such a leadership. That is what makes me run.

If you were elected President, will you ask Nigeria to turn Taylor over to the War Crimes Tribunal in Sierra Leone or to one set up in Liberia?

That is not the issue. Mr. Taylor was indicted by an international court and is the object of an international arrest warrant. Any nation where Mr. Taylor is found will decide whether or not to honor the precepts. And I can assure the international community that if Mr. Taylor is found in Liberia during my leadership, the international arrest warrant will be executed. That is the legal issue, and the one that will be my guide. Asking Nigeria to turn Mr. Taylor over is a political issue. That, I trust, will be resolved by the parties involved. I don't think it is fair to put Liberia in the middle of that. Also, I would have to consider the role of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and that of President Obassanjo in particular. President Obassanjo, at great political risk to himself, intervened into the Liberian crisis at a time when it was necessary to avoid a human catastrophe in our country, for which all reasonable Liberians are eternally grateful to him. President Obassango offered Mr. Taylor political asylum, as part of a peace deal that he brokered, paving the way for the greater international community to participate in our peace process. I am, therefore, of the view that President Obassanjo should be allowed a certain amount of discretion in this matter. Having said that, I am convinced that President Obassanjo

6/23/2005
will do what is necessary to ensure that justice is served. The immediate concern of our country, however, is that President Obasanjo ensures that Mr. Taylor is not allowed to interfere or otherwise influence the direction of things in Liberia.

Should the Liberian people entrust you with the presidency in October. What would be some of the first tasks undertaken under the leadership of President Charles Walker Brumskine?

Rodney, given the condition our country is in, I do not have the luxury of concentrating on "first tasks." I will be a multi-task President. In addition to the obvious infrastructure needs, my priorities are reconciling our people, national security, education, health care, and housing. Within the first 100 days we have to make sure that electricity and safe drinking water are restored to Monrovia, state employees' salary arrears are made current to stimulate the economy, repairs of our major roads are underway, schools are reopened around the country. rehabilitation of our healthcare system is making major strides and genuine national reconciliation is taking roots. This will lay the foundation for short and long-term initiatives under my comprehensive national agenda for a New Liberia Under the Rule of Law. The pillars of this plan are reconciliation, restoration, reformation and rebuilding.

Win or lose, what happens to Charles Brumskine after the October elections?

After October elections I will be busy with the transition to inauguration in January and a new Liberia. I don't understand the losing part.

What's your view of the current wave of corruption in the current interim government and what would a President Charles Walker Brumskine do to restore Liberia's image on the international scene?

You know. I was the first to raise the issue of corruption and impunity. No sooner had we arrived from Accra than the Transitional Chairman began making political appointments in violation of the CPA. Even politicians got caught in this game. I warned then that this was a precursor to massive corruption. Many people were uncomfortable with my position on the issue of corruption in Liberia, including some representatives of the international community. Some political parties even issued statements of condemnation for speaking out against corruption. Nearly two years later, all have accepted the fact that the level of corruption in this government meets or exceeds those of the Taylor government. In a period where our international partners were hopeful that Liberia would turn the corner, this government has succeeded in further dampening those hopes. The worse thing about this is that not many in the international community expected much from Mr. Taylor, but I guess it is safe to say that everyone expected so much more from the "neutral businessman" who was selected as Chairman. To restore Liberia's image on the international scene I will deal swiftly and decisively with the culture of impunity. It does not mean that corruption will end immediately. It means that we will push through the legislation to make sure that those engaged in corruption or violation of the rights of the Liberian people are quickly and steadfastly brought to justice. There will be an atmosphere of transparency and accountability in the public sector, ensuring that the resources of our country will be used for the benefit of common good.

Some of your harshest critics say that because you worked for a while in the Taylor government that means you and him share similar philosophies. Is that a fair criticism?

One's philosophy is one's inner core, your system of beliefs on how you live and view the world. If Taylor and I shared the same philosophy, would I still be the leading candidate for president of Liberia? My contribution to the development of democracy in our country remains unbeaten over the last fifty years of our political history. I did not stand on the side and criticize from without, and the moment I was given an opportunity to serve became a part of the problem. I entered public service with the objective of representing the interest of the Liberian people. That I did, and continue to do even at the risk of grave harm to my person and loss of income,
among other sacrifices.

If you were a betting man, how would you rate your chances out of the sea of presidential candidates out there?

Because I am a man of faith, and not a betting man, let me put it this way to you: I am the next president of Liberia. A betting man would not have returned to Liberia in January 2003, when Mr. Taylor was still in charge, and declared on February 11, 2003, that he would unseat Mr. Taylor democratically and become the next president of Liberia. I would have concerned myself with my own personal security and the economic security of my family and me, and waited until Mr. Taylor left Liberia, and then decide to take my chance like any one else. But then I would not have been a natural leader, but a political opportunist. I would not have the guts to face the Liberian people today. Because if I did not care for them then, when it really mattered, how would I make a case for them to trust me tomorrow?

If you do not win the presidency of Liberia, will you be available to work in some other capacity?

Rodney, my answer to your previous question makes this one redundant.

AIDS is become a rapidly becoming a nuisance in Liberia, what would you do as president to alleviate the problem?

First and most important, we must break the silence in talking about HIV transmission and the AIDS disease. We have to be frank and clear about what we say when we talk to our children about sex. I know that traditional norms and practices of modernization are fueling the epidemic. This is true especially of those traditions that perpetuate gender inequalities. We must, therefore, provide the leadership that changes the tradition that marry girls early, and that extinguish the right of refusal of women. We must end discrimination against those living with HIV/AIDS so that they would not be ashamed to admit that they are ill.

Second, Liberia needs to ensure that the full power and authority of the government is brought to bear on the crisis. For us, it cannot be business as usual. We must realize, even at this stage in the fight against HIV/AIDS that we are not dealing with simply a health issue but a national crisis. National AIDS plans, coordinated at the highest level of government and involving all relevant actors and institutions, will be a hallmark of a Brumskine Administration's response to the AIDS epidemic.

A coordinating body will be established to drive this process of integrating AIDS issues into overall development plans. In this regard, we have to address the availability of drugs to treat this disease. Treatment of AIDS is extremely costly, which our people cannot afford. So we must look to other avenues to resolve this cost issue. There are generic alternatives that are being used in India, Thailand, and Brazil-they must be considered.

Under my plan to expand the free zone area in Liberia, I will have a policy objective that encourages pharmaceutical firms to set up shops in Liberia to assemble generic HIV drugs as well as other medicines, such as for malaria. Nowhere on the sub-continent are HIV/AIDS drugs produced. We will provide incentives for investors to produce generic antiretroviral drugs in Liberia for export throughout Africa.

The garbage situation in Monrovia has been horrifying at best. What would your administration do to alleviate the problem?

The garbage situation in Monrovia is a symptom of several problems: overcrowding, inadequate housing, poor sanitation, poor management, ignorance, and apathy, not to mention corruption, which permeates every aspect of our society. The repatriation exercise must continue and the housing stock in Monrovia must be developed in
a quality manner. We will develop a new sanitary sewer system and construct a landfill for garbage disposal. We will encourage the establishing of recycling facilities in Liberia that will recycle papers, bottles, cans and other materials that make up a great portion of the garbage in Monrovia. This idea will help reduced the quantity of garbage in and around Monrovia. Our capital city must be managed like the corporation that it was intended to be, and we have a right to expect results.

What would your administration do to improve the security situation in Liberia if you are elected?

I believe in a wholistic approach to security. If we provide employment opportunities for our people, educate our children, provide quality health care, institute a land reform program, make our justice system fair and equitable for all, and build a truly unified body politic based on my agenda of what I call the 4R's- Reconciliation, Reformation, Restoration and Rebuilding, then we create stakeholders in each and every Liberian. It is a concept of mutually assured security. We want to ensure that each Liberian has a stake in the national pie. If our citizens have economic security, health security and education security, then the President of Liberia would not have to buy $400,000 bullet proof vehicle, spend 60% of our national budget on security, or create paramilitary organizations. My specific security sector reform involves two principles. First, we must have a small active, but mobile military force capable of decisively defending our borders. Second, we must have mutual defense and non-aggression treaties with all of our neighbors and a comprehensive one for the Mano and Cavalla River Basins, and a professional police force which will enforce our laws and keep us safe while respecting individual liberties and protecting and serving our people. Our security apparatus must control our security apparatus and not have it control us.

What has been the most negative criticism you have heard about your candidacy so far?

I don't listen to negative criticism. It has no redeeming value. I leave that to the critics, for even they have a role to play in building the New Liberia. I do listen to constructive criticisms, though.

Some people have suggested that the chairman of the transitional government Gyude Bryant not be allowed to leave the country following the elections and should in fact be tried because of some of the corrupt practices under his watch. Would you consider such action if you are elected by the people of Liberia?

You know, I always like to go back to the rule of law because it is so important. The Constitution guarantees freedom of movement for each Liberian citizen. Therefore, the President of Liberia cannot just arbitrarily announce that a citizen cannot leave the country. That is what Taylor did to me in February of 2003. Having said that, in order to curtail the culture of impunity, I believe we must be vigilant in the prosecution of official corruption. A Minister of Justice under my administration will take a look at the evidence and follow it where it leads. No person will be immune, regardless of rank or privilege. As you know, when a person is duly arraigned in court on a particular charge, a condition of bail may include surrender of travel documents. I will leave that up to the courts.

What guarantee can you give the Liberian people that you will not follow in the footsteps of Charles Taylor, Samuel Doe and Gyude Bryant?

My character is my guarantee. The reason why I became more popular when I left government than when I went in is that people have observed me and can now judge my track records and my character. I refused to ignore the plight of the Liberian people or the need to build a society based on the rule of law. Mr. Taylor found that offensive; the Liberian people found that refreshing. That is my philosophy and my guarantee. There are many who still have to understand the difference between public character and private character. The difference basically is that with regard to public character, there is this stuff call "power". One may be said to possess good
character until he/she is placed in a position with the power (not the right or authority) to steal, cheat, take advantage of others, for the sake of personal aggrandizement or perpetuating one self in office. It is only then that you find out the true character of the leader. But you see, I am different. My public character has been tested, during my tenure in government, and even up to this point. I returned home at a time when my presence made a difference, I did not take any job in or with the transitional government, and so on. So, comparing me with others may be like comparing day and night.

Some people who have worked with you have suggested that you are very dedicated and passionate about your work, but that you have a temper and you have a tendency to become impatient at times. Are there any truths to that?

Dedication and passion can easily be confused for impatience. But temper is an emotional trait, which is not part of my demeanor. What I strive to do is bring out the best of those with whom I work.

A lot have been reported about your criticism of the Liberia Agricultural Company. What really are your views on the whole LAC affair?

You should read my press statement of December 2004. In brief what I said was that the Liberian Agriculture Company (LAC) had no right to evict Liberians from their land. I did an analysis of LAC's Concession Agreement and the law in support of my position. Because what I said was not only legally right, but was also morally correct, no one has yet reacted to the content of what I said or the substance of my press statement. Instead, all those who opposed what I said, have simply employed the old-aged political tool of accusing me of every imaginable offense. But you see, I do understand that my action, in the LAC matter, like many other undertakings in my public service, challenged the status quo, and of course that means terrible resistance. For the first time in a long time, if not in the history of our country, there was someone of my standing, to speak out on behalf of the least fortunate, not for any economic reward, but simply out of care for other Liberians. Liberians and foreigners alike were shocked by my defense of Liberians being dispossessed of their ancestral home land, disrupting their farming season, destroying their burial grounds to plant rubber trees. In the old Liberia this was common practice. But if we are to make the transition into the New Liberia, this has to stop. And I am glad that I was around to raise my voice.

Now that the dust is settling and you consider yourself as one of the lead candidates for the Liberian presidency. If you had to do everything all over again amid all the Charles Taylor cloud. Do you regret it all ever occurred and would you have done anything differently?

No, not really, another journalist asked me the same question and I said well the best thing that happened to my political career was being in one of the worst governments in the history of our country and I can assure the Liberian people that actually it is the character of the individual that matters and not being in the government. You see, because as a matter of our system we don't judge one by association. One is not deemed guilty by association. The fact of the matter is we had bad governments including the one we have now in Liberia. Although Taylor is considered to be one of the worst, you have to look at the individuals that worked in the various governments. You know what happened when I was in government, if you follow recent Liberian history. For the first time in the history of the Liberian Senate, the Senate was independent of the executive branch of government. For the first time in so many years, the president, Mr. Taylor sent bills to the Senate and they were rejected. They were killed because they were deemed not in the interest of the Liberian people. For the first time in the history of the Liberian Senate the activities of lawmakers were broadcast live on national radio so that the Liberian people could hear what their Representatives and Senators were advocating on their behalf. And our people learned that it didn't have to be business as usual. And I think dealing with Mr. Taylor government gave our people a sense of what democracy is all about, and what it should be. So I think it was a good thing to have been a government and come out without anyone being able to say Brumskine stole money or he took advantage of people or he abused power, but if anyone who really followed the issues and who is...
really reasonable and objective will say that Brumskine did the best he could for the Liberian people.

There's been a lot reported about your alleged representation of Gus Kouwenhowen, the Dutchman, who was arrested this year by authorities in the Netherlands on charges of illegal arms dealing and supporting militias that brutalized Liberian civilians, according to the Dutch prosecutor. What's the connection between you and him?

As you know by now I am a lawyer by profession. I operated this law firm and we had a wide range of clients from the top officials to the top business people and Gus happened to have been one of our clients that we represented from the business side and we did not represent him in any other aspect.

Why did you leave the Liberian Unification Party?

Well, the elections commission upon taking over, one of the first pronouncements they made was that any political party that was involved in a pending litigation would not be allowed to take part in the ensuing national elections. And LUP was certainly in dispute because one group was against another. So the most reasonable thing to do was to leave LUP and form another party in order to make sure that our position was carried through.

If you had one last thing to say to the Liberian people what would that be in terms of all this cloud surrounding your campaign?

Well, I don't think there's any clouds around me or my campaign because the detractors would like to think that there is, but I think the best thing that ever happened to me was being that there's not many Liberian politicians today who can say that I went into a government and came out clean. I left the government because it was bad. I had the opportunity to make money and become rich, but I put my self interest aside in the interest of the common people. What I want to tell the Liberian people at this time is that look, we are about to have the most important elections in the history of our country. The elections that will be held on October 11 will determine the state of our nation for the next hundred or so years. We will decide on that day as a people whether the leadership of our country will be in the hands of someone who has been tried and tested. We must realize as a people that we never know how one would act in government, you never know how a character is until he is entrusted with power. Yes, a man or a woman can be good in the private sector, but when he is in the public sector it is different.

There are many who still have to understand the difference between public character and private character. The difference basically is that with regard to public character, there is this stuff call "power". One may be said to possess good character until he/she is placed in a position with the power (not the right or authority) to steal, cheat, take advantage of others, for the sake of personal aggrandizement or perpetuating one self in office. It is only then that you find out the true character of the leader. But you see, I am different. We see that with Gyude Bryant today. It is a completely different thing We will also have decide whether we want to put power in the hands of the future generations. In any case, let the Liberian people make the choice as we move our nation forward as supposed to moving it backward or keeping it at a standstill.
At special court.
Forensic Anthropologist describes how four men were killed.

Thursday June 23, 2005

By Tamba Borbor

Led in evidence by the prosecutor team, witness William D. Haglund (TF2-EW3) told the court that examinations were done on certain corpses to know the causes of death. In his evidence, the witness said he has been in this field for the over twenty years and has worked with several Non Governmental Organisation for Human Right, in Cambridge Massachusetts. " I also have an international experience. I have been sent on several Human Right activities in Croatia, and East Timor. In 1996 to 1998 I have been a senior Forensic Anthropologist in several international Tribunal in Rwanda and ISTY and ISTI." In Forensic anthropology, the witness said entails the examination of Human Skeleton to determine the age, sex statue and ancestral of a dead person. To determine the age, "which is evidence of the skeleton" stated, "the age to be determined would be on the skeleton of the teeth. Also on the bones, wherein as an adult you have 450 bones and when you are born you will have about 206 bones as some membrane take a couple of years to turn into bones. To determine the sex in the skeleton this would be in the pelvic. In women, it needs to be wider to allow babies to come out. The skull of the men is more pronounced than the women". The witness maintained that the Office of The Prosecutor (OTP) first of the Special Court of Sierra Leone contacted him in May 2002 was tasked to do a Forensic assignment which involves large International Project. The project the witness said involves evaluating report on site or grave and other places where bodies were allegedly buried. The witness further stated that he started his work in October 2003 wherein he visited 20 of these sites where bodies were buried in person, photos were also taken after which report was written to the OPT about what was done. This report, the witness stated related to various gravesites but not all were related to the CDF. The Anthropologist stated that the four bodies that were done at Mahei Boima Road in Bo where two gravesites were found. In of them was found a single dead body and the other three dead bodies. Family members helps to identify the corpses of these individuals, sex was identify by their names, their clothing were also identified. The first corpse sustained a blunt force trauma in the head which may have come from booth or club instrument, both legs were amputated. The second Foday Bangura sustained trauma at the back of the head and to the siding end of the left front. The two other corpses lying face down. Abdul Conte who sustained to the head, a blow that destroys the bones on the face. The anthropologist maintained "the impress has to cut the through the muscles and soft tissues. The other dead body received three separate blows from a sharp object that amputated the middle finger. The cause of death all three cases were shot force trauma." He said.