PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Monday, 7 November 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Special Court Witness recalls

At age 10 three rebels raped and impregnated me

By Betty J. Milton

In the trial of the three RUF indictees (Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao) at the Special Court, prosecution witness TF1-314 a 21-year-old girl has said that she was raped by three rebels, after which she became pregnant. The witness recalled that she was captured by some members of the RUF along with their commander C.O. Blood at her village in Masingbi in the Tonkolili District, where she was raped by three of them and left lying under the cellar as she was unable to move.

Early the next morning, she said she was forced to move with the troops through Banjorota to Buedu, where Issa Sesay who was their Commander ordered that all abductees

(No continuation)
Special Court Goes Bankrupt...
Human Rights Watch Reports

The UN backed court for war crimes in Sierra Leone is making major strides toward ensuring justice for serious crimes committed during the eleven-year war in Sierra Leone, Human Rights Watch said in a report issued recently. The devastating conflict, which lasted from 1991 until 2002, was characterized by brutal human rights abuses committed by all warring factions.

The 46-page report, titled "Justice in Motion: The Trial Phase of the Special Court for Sierra Leone," evaluates the conduct of the court during trials, which began last June. "The Special Court has broken new ground with practices to promote fair trials, protect witnesses and make justice accessible to Sierra Leoneans," said Elise Keppler, Counsel with Human Rights Watch's International Justice Programme. "The Special Court is setting benchmarks that other tribunals can look to."

Key accomplishments of this novel tribunal, which is hybrid international-national court, include:

* Significant progress on trials of accused associated with all three main warring factions.
* A defense office that advocates to ensure effective defense representation and fair trials.
* A comprehensive scheme of protection and support for scores of witnesses.
* Robust outreach that disseminates information about the court around the country through video, radio and discussion.

Initially forced to rely exclusively on voluntary donations from other countries, the Special Court has faced constant financial shortfalls. Recent pledges made at a funding conference on September 30 are commendable, but remain inadequate. As a result, the court currently lacks sufficient funds to complete operations and carry out critical "post-completion activities, such as protecting witnesses who have testified."
One Man Against The System

Former Deputy Minister of Defense, Chief Sam Hinga Norman has spent over two years in detention. The Special Court which was set up by the United Nations Security Council at the request of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, is the custodian of the man who doubled as National Coordinator of the disbanded Civil Defense Force (CDF).

The primary mandate of the Special Court is to try and bring to justice those that are thought to bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed during the recently concluded 11-year war that ravaged this nation. There were atrocities committed, ranging from mass killings of civilians, amputations of children, even as young as six months, arson, rape, compulsory conscription and a lot more.

Quite apart from their international accomplishments, there were three major protagonists in the war. The Revolutionary Unions Front, or the late Corp Officer Saybah Sankoh ignited the mayhem on March 23 1991. Of course, the Constitution of the country connects the defense, the security, as well as external entities of the state squarely in the hands of the national defense force. Sierra Leone Army (SLA). Though unprepared and ill-equipped at the time, the army put up force resistance against the invaders. Most barricades in Freetown had been captured by the RUF who had captured several towns and villages in the East and wanted to consolidate their positions but the barracks never fell and that indicates the immense sacrifice made by the gallant men and women of the SLA.

However, the RUF strategy of indiscriminate killing and abduction of women and children greatly confused the situation. This rebel outfit earlier proclaimed liberation for the people of this country from tyranny, but when it turned around and started inflicting mindless acts against the very people, the situation demanded second thought. This was especially the case when certain loyal officers and men of the SLA started betraying their constitutional duty by either dissenting the force or secretly conniving with the rebels at the detriment of the civilians. Confidence in the army became visibly shaken. To confuse the situation even further, rebel soldiers in the military barracks had been hiding innocent and defenseless civilians into trucks that usually cost them (civilians) their lives.

In a bid to counter this and other atrocious acts, most able bodied men in the military were killed or fleeing from the battle field. This had been the case for some time. The RUF leadership was not aware about the situation and could not protect the civilians.

Sinbad Sankoh and Sam 'Makita' Bockarie could have heard the announcement of the ousted Armed Forces Revolutionary Council who is presumed dead or at large - nobody seems certain. Their presence at the Special Court would have added momentum to its intent and purpose.

The UN-backed Special Court says it has authentic documents implicating former Liberian leader Charles Taylor in perpetrating war crimes in this country. Today he is comfortably under the protective wings of Big Brother Nigeria. This is not casting aspersions on President Obasanjo because Charles Taylor found his way into the safe confines of that country under an international arrangement. But if Obasanjo, I will protect my integrity by keeping my promise. President Kabbah is Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone and Chief Norman was his deputy. But he is a bitter President with certain constitutional immunities, he is virtually untouchable.

This is probably how and why Chief Norman's freedom and liberty had been restricted for close to three years by the Special Court.

He is the biggest fish on the Special Court's hook, kept there perhaps, to give a sense of importance to the deliberations of the court. Anyhow, there is ground for concern over Hinga Norman's continued detention by that court. There are fears that

His chiefdom is on record for suffering one of the first and most gruesome massacres of civilians to be inflicted by the RUF. His head was personally declared wanted by the RUF leader, with whom he had served in the SLA.

As a result, but for the efforts of the women's associations and the United Nations, the battle for the Special Court's recognition of his humanity and worth would have been lost.

By the way, it is to be stressed that the Special Court must respect the spirit of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, and cannot and should not be allowed to impose any penalties on anyone who otherwise has not committed any offense.

This is the case for Hinga Norman and the Special Court must be brought to its senses as to what is at stake. It must understand that the Special Court is not a court of justice but a court of vengeance.

One of the primary reasons for which Sierra Leone was granted independence could be that it must be made to recognize that people who had been soreated by the same system cannot now turn their backs on those who have suffered.

The Special Court must act in the best interest of the people, with due respect to the Constitution of Sierra Leone and the United Nations Charter. It must also respect the rights and interests of all parties involved in the conflict in Sierra Leone.

The Special Court must recognize that the Special Court is not a court of justice but a court of vengeance. It must also respect the rights and interests of all parties involved in the conflict in Sierra Leone.
BRINGING JUSTICE: The Special Court For Sierra Leone

Accomplishments, Shortcomings, and Needed Support (Part-1)

INRODUCTION

The devastating eleven-year civil war in Sierra Leone, which lasted from 1991 until 2002, was characterized by unspeakable brutality and serious crimes. Forces failed to distinguish between civilians and combatants. Families were gunned down in the street, children and adults had their arms twisted off with machetes, and girls and women were seized, raped, and subjugated to sexual violence and murder of civilians. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed and up to 200,000 at the population was displaced. The majority of crimes were perpetuated by rebels from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and the government forces. The International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) were established in 2001 to prosecute those responsible for the atrocities.

Human Rights Watch has actively supported the efforts of the Special Court. "We have encouraged governments to cooperate with the Special Court to ensure that suspects do not escape its jurisdiction and have urged the international community to provide adequate financial support for the court. Human Rights Watch has also provided recommendations to ensure that trials are conducted fairly and efficiently, that the Special Court operates independently and impartially, and that investigations and prosecutions are effective and bring justice to those who bear the greatest responsibility for crimes committed in Sierra Leone."

This report evaluates the Special Court's efficacy around a series of recommendations that are critical to its success: 1) ensuring international fair trial standards; 2) ensuring effectiveness in achieving its mandate; 3) ensuring protection of witnesses; 4) ensuring accessibility to Sierra Leone; and 5) ensuring quality and independence of judges.

The Special Court has made significant accomplishments in dealing with the legacy of past atrocities. However, the court's capacity to hold perpetrators of serious crimes accountable remains an ongoing challenge. The Special Court needs to address its capacity to hold perpetrators of serious crimes accountable and to ensure that its operations are transparent and accountable. The court has made progress in this area, but more needs to be done to ensure that the court is truly independent and impartial.

Following the end of the conflict, the Sierra Leone justice system lacked the capacity to hold perpetrators of serious crimes accountable. The Special Court was established to address this issue, and it has made significant progress in this area. However, the court's operations need to be strengthened in order to ensure that justice is done.

At the Special Court, persons working with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, members of civil society, and diplomats. Additional interviews with Special Court staff, defense counsel, and diplomats were conducted by telephone and in person in New York, and Freetown between April and August 2004. Many of the individuals we interviewed wished to speak candidly, but did not want to be cited by name. We have cited the majority of sources with only generic references, such as "Special Court staff" or "defense counsel."
SPECIAL COURT: Accomplishments, Shortcomings, and Needed Support

INSECURE AND INADEQUATE FUNDING BY DONORS

One of the most serious challenges facing the court is insufficient and insecure funding by donors. This has led to an enormous strain on the court's operations. Key cases of the Special Court have been underfunded. Donors have contributed to the Special Court's activities to an insufficient level, leading to the inability to procure the necessary personnel and materials to handle cases efficiently.

FROM PAGE 3

General Assembly remove the restriction on the U.N. grant immediately and authorize the remaining $23.3 million of the secretary-general's request to fund the court through December 2006. We further urge the Registry to support additional allocations for underfunded areas, and for the Management Committee to advocate strongly on behalf of such funding. We urge governments to provide additional voluntary contributions and the U.N. secretary-general and General Assembly to intervene as necessary to address outstanding shortfalls.

Interpretation of "Those Who Bear the Greatest Responsibility"

The OTP has taken important steps to ensure justice for serious crimes in Sierra Leone by investigating and prosecuting individuals associated with all sides of the conflict and charging accused with gender-based crimes and child recruitment. However, Human Rights Watch believes that the existing indictments reflect an inappropriate narrow interpretation of the court's mandate.

The individuals currently indicted could be characterized as the highest-level commanders in the CDF, the RUF, or the FPRC. We regret that the OTP's current mandate is insufficient to address the broader responsibilities of the court.

Independent Observer

Monday, November 07, 2005

Credit: Human Rights Watch
BY AUGUSTINE BEECHER

Hinga Norman has once again challenged the election of the vice president, Solomon Berewa as SLPP party leader and presidential candidate for the 2007 elections, and in the opinion of many, he is merely trying to make trouble for President Kabbah, who chose Solo B. as he is fondly called by his supporters, and Mr. Berewa himself.

But a keen look at the issue that has now been charged to court would reveal that there is more to the court challenge than meets the eye.

It may be that Chief Norman is so angry now that he does not know the difference between a winnable case and that which cannot be won. Or it may be that he is very certain of his legal position on the matter, which he has been trying to articulate since his initial attempt to derail the Makeni convention in late August.

In that manner, he requested for an injunction against the conduct of the party convention was thrown out by the Supreme Court on the grounds that his was “locus standi,” meaning he was not in the position to bring to court that matter.

Chief Norman also said he will have the right to stop the convention in Makeni, but he is a citizen who has not been tried guilty of any offence. In our courts of law, he should have a right to challenge the election of Solo B. as being a recognized member of the party.

This is now up to the courts again to determine whether he has a right to challenge the election of Solo B. as their leader. If the courts ruled in his favor, would it be right in the eyes of the party leadership if the court does not grant their leader the right to lead the party?

Chief Norman is challenging the fact that the judiciary is stocked with supporters and cronies of the president and his vice, it is hard to see how justice could be allowed to prevail.

In another vein, the report that Chief Norman has endorsed Charles Margai’s breakaway from the SLPP and is advising his followers to support Mr. Margai is definitely another blow to the chances of the vice president, who is appearing increasingly embattled. No matter what Victor Reider and J.J. Blood would say about Charles Margai, it remains true that his breakaway results in the diminishing of the support for the SLPP and Solo B. as will the declaration of support by Chief Norman for the Margai leadership campaign.

What has the SLPP to show for the people’s support for them in all these years? The Sababu Education Project or the President’s Food Security drive?

The people are desperate for a change in their lives, a change that would make them forget about the days of suffering under Tejan Kabbah and his vice. That is why some of us believe the ruling party has to double its efforts to retain the confidence of the people by allowing the law to take its course, instead of simply kicking out cases brought against them in court.

The matter in court is nothing new, as it has been going on for quite a while now, with the opposition party in parliament, the All Peoples Congress (APC) who members have been in court in a bid to control the apparently dictatorial tendencies of the leader in parliament, Hon. Ernest Koroma, who has now been elected a party leader and presidential candidate.

Despite the conclusion of the party’s convention, which was meant to bring a halt to the court cases, the cases have refused to go away and are still ongoing in our courts. It is easy to simply throw out the case of the radical faction in the party, but it appears as if because it involves an opposition party, the judges have allowed it to go on and on, hoping that it may destroy the chances of the opposition in the 2007 elections.

It just might, but how fair and free will that election be, if the ruling party throws cases against it out of court while ensuring that the opposition continues to slug it out in court?

As has been said on many occasions, the rigging of elections begins long before the day of the elections. But as we all know, where we are coming from, and do no want to go there again, it is very important that the elections are seen to be free and fair
Cocorioko website

HINGA NORMAN CHALLENGES SOLOMON BEREWA’S ELECTION AS SLPP LEADER

By Olu Faulkner

Wednesday November 2, 2005

The former Commander of the Civil Defence Force (CDF), Chief Hinga Norman has not given up yet on the SLPP Leadership. He has filed another case in the Sierra Leone Supreme Court, claiming that the election of Vice-President Solomon Berewa as leader of the ruling SLPP in September was illegitimate.

The plaintiff in this latest case by Chief Hinga Norman is the Ex-CDF Boss himself while the defendants are the SLPP (First accused), Alhaji U.N.S.Jah (Second Accused), Mr. Jacob Saffa (Third accused) and Sierra Leone’s Attorney General Fred Carew (Fourth accused).

If Chief Norman wins the case and the Supreme Court rules that the election of Berewa was illegitimate, the results of the SLPP Delegates Convention in Makeni, where Berewa was elected SLPP Leader would be null and void and a new convention and election will have to be held.

The dramatic aspect of this new development is that the other candidates who lost the election for SLPP Leader are watching this new case closely. If it swings the way of Hinga Norman, there will certainly be copy-cat law suits against the ruling SLPP. The Hinga Norman case could show the way for more legal challenges to the election.
NIgerians device more creative ways of bringing Charles Taylor to justice

Saturday November 5, 2005

Though faced with a very stubborn government that looks ready to stick to its guns to the bitter end, Nigerians have started finding more creative legal ways of bringing former Liberian rebel leader and President Charles Taylor to justice. A flash of dramatic success by two Nigerians who decided to sue the ex-Liberian leader as private citizens for pain and suffering will see Taylor appearing in a Nigerian court for the first time soon.
War court hampered by funds
02/11/2005 10:03 - (SA)

Freetown - Human Rights Watch (HRW) on Wednesday lamented a perpetual funding shortfall facing the United Nations-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone, as well as its failure to extradite former Liberian president Charles Taylor.

In a new report, the rights watchdog called on governments to make good on pledges made in September this year that have brought the special court's budget to above $100m.

The court, established on the basis of a combination of local and international justice, was created in 2002 by order of the United Nations and the Sierra Leonean government to try those with the greatest responsibility for the 1990s war in the impoverished West African state.

Donors must give generously

It also urged greater vigilance in demanding that Nigeria hand over Taylor to face 17 counts of war crimes for having armed and trained rebels in what was considered one of the most brutal wars in modern history.

"With everything the special court has achieved, it would be shameful if it didn't receive the funding it needs to wrap up its work," said Elise Kessler of HRW's international justice programme.

"Donor countries should step up and contribute generously so that the court can make a strong and historic finish."

Nine people are in the court's custody, representing three warring factions including the pro-government civil defence forces militia that many still consider to be heroes for having released Sierra Leone from the grip of rebels notorious for hacking off people's limbs, lips and noses.

Taylor's exile a major issue

That Taylor, the former Liberian president indicted on 17 counts of war crimes for...
arming and training Sierra Leone's rebel Revolutionary United Front, remains in exile in Nigeria beyond the court's reach is another major obstacle to justice, HRW said.

"Nigeria's ongoing harbouring of an indicted war criminal undermines the court's ability to achieve its mandate to prosecute those bearing the greatest responsibility for serious crimes committed in Sierra Leone's armed conflict," HRW said.

Taylor arrived in Nigeria in August 2003 after stepping down as president under the terms of a peace deal to end the second of two civil wars in his own country.

--- Top stories in this category ---

See the video
Torture & forced confessions alleged at Guantanamo!

Cry Freetown
A unique and harrowing documentary about the civil war in Sierra Leone
Africa's Insurgencies: Training On Demand From Libya

FrontPageAfrica (Monrovia)
NEWS
November 1, 2005
Posted to the web November 2, 2005

By Emmanuel Abalo

The Mathaba Guerilla Training camp in Libya, North Africa remains active even today churning out classes of trained insurgents who have made a long term lucrative profession of fuelling Africa's civil wars.

It is a sad commentary that conflict ridden Africa has these insurgents to thank for unleashing untold catastrophic humanitarian toll and wanton violations of international laws in the name of revolution. The Libyan government, by extension continues, to support and train these insurgents at Mathaba.

This charge is evidenced and confirmed as part of the indictment of former Liberian President Charles Taylor by the United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone. In the late 1980's CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR received military training in Libya from representatives of the Government of MU'AMMAR AL-QADHAFI. While in Libya the ACCUSED met and made common cause with FODAY SAYBANA SANKOH

The indictment further charges that While in Libya, the ACCUSED formed or joined the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). At all times relevant to this Indictment the ACCUSED was the leader of the NPFL and/or the President of the Republic of Liberia

Mr. Taylor remains in forced exile in Calabar, Nigeria under an arrangement brokered by President Olusegun Obasanjo to end the bloodletting between rebels and Taylor forces in the Liberian capital Monrovia in 2003. The Special Court for Sierra Leone and the international community including Britain and the United States are pressuring Nigeria to turn over Mr. Taylor to the Special Court for prosecution, something the Federal Nigerian Administration has so far resisted. Mr. Taylor is also wanted by INTERPOL.

In its indictment of the former Sierra Leonen wedding photographer and army corporal -turned rebel chief Foday Sankoh, the Special Court charged, "The organized armed group that became known as the RUF, led by the ACCUSED, was founded about 1988 or 1989 in Libya. The RUF, under the leadership of the ACCUSED, began organized armed operations in Sierra Leone in March 1991. During the ensuing armed conflict, the RUF forces were also referred to as "RUF", "rebels" and "People's Army"

Authorities announced in October 2002 that Mr. Sankoh had suffered what they at first called a mild stroke.

The war-crimes court later said in June, 2003 it was pursuing a waiver on a U.N. travel ban against Sankoh so it could send him outside Sierra Leone for treatment. Mr. Sankoh, however, died in U.N. custody at a hospital in the capital Freetown in July 2003 and the indictment was subsequently withdrawn.
Insurgent Recruitment Strategy

Recruitment of insurgent personnel is both voluntary and coercive and targets mostly young men and women who are able bodied, and mentally and psychologically pliable. Those joining voluntarily do so for a number of reasons: ideological conviction and the desire to do "something" about the perceived persecution and discrimination against their family members, ethnic group, nationality or religion and attacks on their home by the government in power.

There is also the forced conscription factor which especially targets the most vulnerable - children. There are hundreds of thousands of child soldiers who are products of armed conflicts in Uganda, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Clearly, this is a violation of International law. Local and international human rights field representatives have documented confirmation of these tactics among rebels and their victims. New recruits add to the tragic picture because they are shown a rifle and given a few hours of training and let loose!

Another example of the thriving professional insurgent livelihood in West Africa can be found in the longest running conflict in the south western Casamance province in Senegal. This "silent war" has raged on for over 20 years prosecuted by the rebel group Mouvement Des Forces Democratique de la Casamance in the name of independence for Casamance. Although this low grade insurgency is being carried out with limited weapons and perhaps a small band, the guerillas are dedicated to their cause and continue to harass, wound and sometimes kill some members of the well trained Senegalese military. Diplomatic observers maintain that some of the rebels have had training at Mathaba.

It goes without saying that rebels who graduate from Mathaba also leave that guerilla base with their weapons and supplies as the first installment on their journey to wherever and then the black market, shady arms dealers, terrorists and financiers are later co-opted to maintain the supplies of arms and ammunitions. Corruption, weak borders and poor state infrastructures in many African states facilitate the lucrative arms trade.

International Players and Their Complicity

The impoverished country West African nation of Burkina Faso, headed by another coup maker President Blaise Campaore is also complicit in providing "muscle" and mercenaries especially in the Liberian and Sierra Leonen rebel incursions. There is clear evidence of Burkinabe nationals who were detailed to Messers Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh rebel outfits. There were numerous secret meetings among Campaore, Taylor, Sankoh and Al-Quadahi held frequently in Ouagadougou and Tripoli.

In an article entitled, War Against Terrorism: Indicting Libya and Burkina Faso, written by the Liberian political analyst Abdoulaye Dukule in June, 2002, he maintains that "If the war crime tribunal in Sierra Leone indicts Taylor, Burkina Faso and Libya must be brought in as co-conspirators. After the criminal case, civil law cases could and should be brought forth against Libya and Burkina Faso for the killing of over 250,000 Liberians and the destruction of our national infrastructure. There is no "if" and "but" about this, it must be done. How long it would take to win the case is another issue but the case can and must be made. It would discourage other sponsors of terrorism against peaceful civilians "

Certainly, this would be a welcome development given the culpability of Presidents Campaore and Al-Quadahi in fuelling some of Africa's deadliest insurgencies. What else is there to refute the fact that at the end of the day, the reality is that some of the leaders in modern day Africa, unbeknownst to their citizens, are discreet graduates of Mathaba guerilla training camp in Libya and have their photos hanging on the wall at that base. And Africa continues to bleed!

Emmanuel Abalo is an exiled Liberian journalist, media and human rights activist. He is the former Acting President of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL). Mr. Abalo presently resides in Pennsylvania, USA and works as an analyst with CITIGROUP, North America.
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 6 Nov 2005

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

International Clips on Liberia

'King George' versus the 'Iron Lady' in Liberia's presidential vote
by Lauren Gelfand

MONROVIA, Nov 6 (AFP) - Liberians will make history on Tuesday with a vote between George Weah, trying to transit from the football pitch to the executive mansion, and Harvard-educated banker Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who could become Africa's first female president.

But be it "King George" or the "Iron Lady" who inherits the mantle of the 23rd president of Liberia, they will have to contend with a bankrupted economy, suffocating unemployment and illiteracy and a legacy of ethnic and regional divisions that have fueled conflict for decades.

Weah has destiny of Liberia, and self, in sight before presidential vote
by Lauren Gelfand

MONROVIA, Nov 6 (AFP) - He is growing used to people coming to hear him speak, not to watch him play, to being asked to comment on the poverty and misery facing his fellow Liberians. Slowly but surely, despite a surfeit of good counsel and decent strategy, George Weah is becoming a politician.

Liberia's "Iron Lady" ready for history as Africa's first woman president
by Lauren Gelfand

MONROVIA, Nov 6 (AFP) - She has been bouncing around in the back of four-wheel-drive vehicles, strapping herself into helicopters and dancing in marketplaces across Liberia. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is showing the same tenacity in her campaign to become the west African country's next president as she has over her three decades in politics.

VOA 06 November 2005

Liberian Police, UN Peacekeepers Separate Rival Camps
By Nico Colombant, Monrovia

Liberian police and U.N. peacekeepers have intervened in downtown Monrovia to prevent any unrest between rival camps in Tuesday's run-off presidential election.

Newly U.N.-trained Liberian police, wearing riot gear and wielding batons, pushed back supporters of former soccer star George Weah from the party headquarters of former finance minister Ellen Johnson Sirleaf late Saturday.
Liberians hope presidential runoff can unite nation
By Daniel Flynn

MONROVIA, Nov 6 (Reuters) - Liberians hope a second-round presidential run-off on Tuesday pitting soccer millionaire George Weah against a former finance minister known as the "Iron Lady" can heal the wounds left by a brutal civil war.

06/11/2005 13:12:53

Liberia's ex-female fighters now training for peacetime
By EDWARD HARRIS, Associated Press Writer

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - Oretha Davis once cradled an AK-47 assault rifle in her arms. Now she stitches pants and caresses Roland, her 4-month-old son.

Some 20,000 female fighters, a fifth of all combatants in Liberia's 14-year war, have been demobilized, and some, like Davis, gather daily in a classroom full of antiquated sewing machines in battle-shattered Monrovia, training to re-enter society.

BBC Last Updated: Saturday, 5 November 2005, 17:46 GMT

Weah supporters rally in Liberia
By Mark Doyle BBC News, Monrovia

Tens of thousands of supporters of the retired football star George Weah have gathered in the Liberian capital ahead of presidential elections on Tuesday.

National Democratic Institute and Carter Center to Observe 2005 Liberia

WASHINGTON, Nov 5, 2005 (U.S. Newswire via COMTEX) -- The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and The Carter Center today announced the arrival of their delegation to observe the November 8 presidential run-off election in Liberia.

The 28-member multinational delegation is led by former Nigerian Vice President Alex Ekwueme and others, and includes elected officials, electoral and human rights experts, regional specialists and political and civic leaders from North America, Africa and Europe.

International Clips on West Africa

06/11/2005 12:00:45

French peacekeepers commemorate bombing of their base in Ivory Coast a Year Ago
By DANIEL BALINT-KURTII, Associated Press Writer

BOUAKE, Ivory Coast (AP) _ French peacekeepers marked Sunday the first anniversary of Ivory Coast's bombing of one of their bases, saying the airstrike which left nine French soldiers dead was aimed at damaging relations between the two countries.

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board and would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Jeddi Armah at armahj@un.org.