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

Wednesday, 21 June 2006

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston -Wright
Ext 7217
### Local News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Taylor Transfer To The Hague / <em>SCSL Press Statement</em></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General … / <em>United Nations</em></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Goes to The Hague / <em>Awoko</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian Peacekeepers Explains His Abduction / <em>Awoko</em></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Flies Taylor to The Hague / <em>Awareness Times</em></td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Court Judge Dissent on Kabbah’s Subpoena Ruling / <em>Concord Times</em></td>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Arrives in The Hague / <em>New Citizen</em></td>
<td>11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Gone / <em>Exclusive</em></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Taylor Now in The Hague for Trial / <em>Spectator</em></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Taylor Prepares for the Hague: Special Court Taken to Task / <em>Concord Times</em></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### International News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Flies in for The Hague Trial / <em>BBC Online</em></td>
<td>17-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor quits Sierra Leone for Hague war crimes trial / <em>Reuters</em></td>
<td>19-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Taylor: Hague Trial Must Be Accessible to West Africans / <em>Human Rights Watch</em></td>
<td>21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Liberia President Put in Dutch Jail / <em>Associated Press</em></td>
<td>23-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Trial Moved to The Hague / <em>Voice of America</em></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor arrives in Netherlands for trial / <em>Xinhua</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Liberian President's trial moves to the Hague / <em>EuroNews</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish troops hailed for Taylor transport / <em>RTE.ie</em></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Liberian leader awaits war crimes trial / <em>Associated Press</em></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Press Briefing by the Offices of The Spokesman for the Secretary General… / <em>UN News</em></td>
<td>32-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <em>UNMIL</em></td>
<td>34-36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Special Court Supplement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Taylor Transfer in Pictures / <em>Press and Public Affairs</em></td>
<td>37-38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PRESS STATEMENT
Freetown, Sierra Leone, 20 June 2006

Charles Taylor Transferred to The Hague

Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia, was today transferred to The Hague in accordance with an order on Monday by Special Court President Justice George Gelaga-King.

Mr Taylor was taken by UN helicopter from the Special Court compound shortly after 9:00 a.m. this morning and flown to Lungi International Airport, where he was transferred under heavy UN security to a chartered commercial jet. He departed from Sierra Leone at 9:40 a.m. local time.

Also on the flight were the Special Court’s Registrar, Mr Lovemore Munlo SC, the Chief of Security and the Court’s Medical Officer.

While the Taylor trial will take place in a courtroom of the International Criminal Court, it will be a trial of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, as permitted under the Special Court’s Rules. The headquarters of the Special Court remains in Freetown, where three other trials are continuing.

Photographs of the transfer will be available shortly on the Court’s website, http://www.sc-sl.org. They may be freely used with attribution to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the
Press and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Mobile: 232 76 655 237
Email: SCSL-pressoffice@un.org

Visit our website at www.sc-sl.org
United Nations  
Tuesday, 20 June 2006

Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General On the transfer of Charles Taylor

The Secretary-General welcomes the transfer of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, to the Netherlands, to stand trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague. He wishes to thank all who have made this transfer possible, in particular, the Government of the Netherlands for its willingness to host the Special Court for the conduct of Mr. Taylor’s trial, the International Criminal Court for agreeing to the use of its premises by the Special Court and the Government of the United Kingdom for agreeing, subject to parliamentary approval, to allow Charles Taylor, if convicted, to enter the United Kingdom to serve any sentence that the Special Court might impose.

The Secretary-General encourages all States to cooperate with the Special Court with respect to Charles Taylor’s trial, in particular by ensuring that evidence and witnesses are made available to the Special Court upon its request. He also recalls his appeal to States to contribute generously to the Special Court’s budget.

The Secretary-General expresses his determination to work together with the Special Court and relevant States to make the future trial proceedings available and to the people of West Africa in particular. He is confident that Charles Taylor’s trial will mark a further victory in the struggle to end impunity and will contribute to reconciliation in Liberia and the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia and in Sierra Leone.
Taylor goes to The Hague

By Betty Milton

The peace and quiet usually observed around New England Ville where the Special Court is situated was rudely broken early Tuesday morning by the vibrating rotor sounds of two white United Nations helicopters circling the area.

The vicinity around the court premises itself was a beehive of activity with armed Sierra Leonean police officers standing at attention along the entire perimeter wall of the court.

As it was on the day when the former Liberian President Charles Taylor was flown into Freetown, so it was again on Tuesday with one of the helicopters landing inside the grounds of the detention centre while the other continued circling the area.

Dressed in a brown double-breasted suit with matching brown shoes and a collarless white shirt, Charles Taylor walked slowly from the detention centre toward the waiting Special Court Toyota Land Cruiser.

As he walked past the security personnel one of them said “good-bye Mr Taylor” - he turned and watched the man and continued walking. By his side was the Chief of Security to whom Taylor then remarked that some people had already pronounced him guilty even before he was tried. He then entered the waiting vehicle, which drove slowly to the waiting helicopter, which he subsequently boarded, at approximately 9am in the morning.

Taylor’s transfer to The Hague was made possible by an order issued by the Court President Justice George Gelega - King on Monday 19th June 2006.

On Thursday 15th June 2006 the British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett had announced that subject to British parliament passing the necessary legislations, Britain would accept to let Mr Taylor serve his sentence in Britain if he is convicted.

This had been a stumbling block for the transfer of the case to the Netherlands who had agreed to provide the premises for the trial but had asked that a third country be identified to provide a prison for Mr Taylor if he is convicted.

On Friday 16th June the UN Security Council passed a resolution further clearing the way for the trial to be transferred to The Hague.

Most Sierra Leoneans interviewed by Awoko welcomed the move saying they were happy that Mr Taylor had been moved to the Hague though they called for the trial to be made more accessible.

A status conference starts today at the Special Court here in Sierra Leone where the modalities for the trial of Mr Taylor will be discussed by both the defence lawyers and prosecutors.

This shows that even though Mr Taylor has been taken to The Hague yet his trial is still under the rules and regulations of the Special Court Sierra Leone.
Malaysian Peacekeeper explains his abduction

Major Ganase Jaganadhan, a witness in the trial of the three Revolutionary United Front (RUF) members, yesterday revealed at the Special Court how he was abducted and maltreated by RUF combatants.

He said while they were in northern Makeni, he got a call informing him that RUF combatants were heading towards the camp. He stated that this made him to proceed to the Demobilization Camp to be better informed.

At the Demobilisation Camp, he came in contact with the RUF Commander Gbao who was holding an almost empty liquor bottle in his left hand “and a blood shot eyes together with 30-40 RUF combatants armed with Rocket Propel Grenade (RPG) and AK 47.”

Maj. Jaganadhan further stated that he pleaded with Gbao not do anything out of the way but all his efforts were futile.

During his negotiations with Gbao, the witness stressed, Maj. Bosco Odhiambo who was the second Battalion Commander of the Kenyan peacekeepers happened to pass by and he too tried to talk with Gbao but his effort was also futile.

The witness maintained that he immediately left for his camp “Few minutes later, I saw a pink Benz heading towards Makeni but stopped at the entrance of the Camp. I then saw Brigadier Morris Kallon who was the 5th Battalion Commander of the RUF based in Magburaka. One of my colleagues Maj. Salawaadin was assaulted by Morris and at one particular he wanted to stab him.”

Narrating further, Maj. Jaganadhan said Morris Kallon then gave orders that he should be arrested, which his boys executed, and that one even hit him on his private part and was subsequently dragged out of the Demobilization Camp to the pink Benz which had been bought by Kallon.

“I again saw Gbao now in a sober mood and was armed with an AK 47. He told me that they were going to kill me and bury my corpse in Sierra Leone and that I would never say goodbye to my family. We made a stop at a village called Makump where I was asked to stand under a tree. Kallon then threatened to kill me, saying that we the UNAMSIL peacekeepers had bought all this on them. During this time he was busy harassing me.”

Adding that, “later, a Landover carrying UN peacekeepers was heading towards Makeni when Morris Kallon ordered that the vehicle be shot at. When the vehicle finally stopped, the RUF combatants immediately ran to the rear where they tried to disarm the peacekeepers and Kallon then ordered the peacekeepers to join me under the tree.”

The witness stated that they were again taken to Teko Barracks where they were imprisoned in one room and later two of the other Commanders went in search of them and they too were arrested, noting that they were there without food and water.

The witness explained that the next day which was May 2nd 2000, at night they were taken out of the room and beaten.

Narrating his ordeal with the RUF, Maj. Jaganadhan said all seven of them were placed in a truck, which was driven recklessly until it almost got an accident and most of the men sustained injuries.

The witness further said they were taken to Matotoka and was introduced to ‘General’ Issa Sesay and later taken to Small Safedu where they continued to be harassed by RUF combatants.

He disclosed that they were given five tins of rice which they prepared for themselves, adding that in 2-3 days they were escorted by armed combatants to a stream to take their bath.

They were finally released on 18 May 2000 and taken to Liberia and back to Lungi where he stayed till the end of his mission.
UN flies Taylor to The Hague

Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia, was yesterday flown out of Sierra Leone to The Hague in accordance with an order on Monday, by Special Court President Sierra Leone-born Justice George Gelaga-King.

Mr. Taylor was taken by UN helicopter from the Special Court compound shortly after 9:00 a.m. yesterday morning and flown to Lungi International Airport, from where he was transferred under heavy UN security to a chartered commercial jet.

He departed the shores of Sierra Leone at 9:40 a.m. local time.

Also on the flight were the Special Court's Registrar, Mr. Lovemore Munlo SC, the Chief of Security, and the Court's Medical Officer.

Contd: Page 2
UN flies Taylor to The Hague

From Front Page

While the Taylor trial will take place in a courtroom of the International Criminal Court, it will be a trial of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, as permitted under the Special Court’s Rules. The headquarters of the Special Court remains in Freetown, where three other trials are continuing.

However, the news of the Taylor transfer was met with mixed reactions late yesterday afternoon. Several people expressed dissatisfaction that the transfer which had since been muted had come to reality. “I thought the international community would have listened to our concern that we needed to have this trial here so that we can be privileged to hear why Taylor brought war on us,” commented Abdul Rahman Sesay, a member of the Civil Society Movement.

Isatu Conteh, a Computer Student said she feels relieved now that Taylor has been finally taken out of Sierra Leone. “Now I can rest in confidence that we have peace in this country. My brother since that man was brought in here; I have been having bad dreams. Thank God he is gone,” Isatu stated.
Special Court Judge dissents on Kabbah’s subpoena ruling

*Story: Tanu Jalloh*

One of the presiding judges in the ongoing CDF (Civil Defense Forces) trial, Honorable Justice Bankole Thompson dissented over the ruling given recently that President Kabbah should not be subpoenaed before the Special Court, reports from the UN backed court say.

In his dissenting opinion for the issuance of a subpoena ad testificandum to President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, Justice Bankole Thompson observed,

*Cont. page 3*
Special Court Judge dissents on
Kabbah’s subpoena ruling

From page 1

and that it was a product of a much careful deliberation. My disagreement with it stems essentially from reasons anchored in the nature, scope, meaning and application of the Rule facilitating, implementing or executing the mandate of the Special Court specifically in respect of investigations or the preparation or conduct of a trial, and on the existing state of international law regarding the grant of presidential immunity from criminal process.”

Justice Thompson averred adding that he therefore feels compelled to observe that a subject of such legal delicacy and complexity requires a comprehensive judicial exposition of the various facets of the law involved.

Justice Thompson also maintained that there is nothing problematic about statutory powers to issue subpoenas, nationally or internationally because they do not ordinarily raise issues of constitutionality or illegality.

“My judicial comprehension of the context and purpose of the Rule leads me to conclude that it would seem fatuous to suggest that Rule 54, by its terms, was intended to be restrictive and limited in scope as to the persons amenable to the Court’s jurisdiction for the purpose of issuing of the orders contemplated by the provision…hence, it is clear from the said Rule that, as a matter of law, the Special Court can issue process in the form of any of the orders contemplated by its plain and ordinary meaning against any person amenable to its jurisdiction in Sierra Leone.”
Taylor Arrives in The Hague

UNMIL security personnel and Special Court Security Officers yesterday provided the security backup that resulted in the transportation of Mr. Charles Taylor from the Special Court premises in Freetown to the Lungi International Airport as he was being flown to the Netherlands where he is expected to stand trial at The Hague.

Charles Taylor, a Liberian citizen who ignited a rebel war in his native Liberia on the pretext of overthrowing former junta leader, President Samuel kayon Doe, headed a brutal rebellious war machinery that overran most of Liberia as the war was taken to the national capital of Monrovia.

Charles Taylor later allegedly gave a helping hand to Sierra Leone's dissident leader, Foday Sankoh when that rebel leader launched a war against his native Sierra Leone, creating one of the most destructive scenarios which also succeeded in wrecking the state economy, the national infrastructure and also creating a hellish cauldron that led to the deaths of thousands
of Sierra Leoneans as other citizens had their limbs amputated and as women were converted into sex slaves. The role of Charles Taylor in the destabilization of Sierra Leone has been seen by many as a greedy act of amassing wealth by using the Foday Sankoh war machine to extract diamonds for his own personal benefits.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, a UN-backed judicial system, few years ago indicted Charles Taylor as one of the people who bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed in Sierra Leone. His indictment, however, could not be effectively implemented to bring the former Liberia president to the courtroom because there apparently was an agreement between some of the Heads of State of West Africa when Charles Taylor was asked to stand down from the presidency of Liberia in an effort to restore peace to that war-torn country. When Charles Taylor stood down from the presidency of Liberia, and after an Interim Government was set up in that country, he sought sanctuary in Nigeria, the most powerful country among the ECOWAS group of countries.

The Nigerian government was at pains to release Charles Taylor to the Special Court in Freetown be-
cause President Olusegun Obasanjo’s government argued that it had given its word to Charles Taylor and other Heads of State of Africa that if Charles Taylor stood down from the presidency of Liberia to avoid further carnage in that country, the Nigerian government would provide him sanctuary and that it would be a bad precedent if the Nigerian government was to renge on the promise made to members of the international community.

Charles Taylor’s attempt to flee from his lodgings in Eastern Nigeria suddenly put the Nigerian government under pressure as the Americans and the British shouted that if Charles Taylor was allowed to flee Nigeria with the possibility to start another war, the Nigerian government would be held culpable. When the Nigerians succeeded in capturing the fleeing Charles Taylor, they were most convinced that they had done their best in protecting Charles Taylor and that it was Charles Taylor who decided to violate the rules. The Nigerian government handed over Charles Taylor not to the Special Court but to the government of Sierra Leone headed by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Charles Taylor’s ace political rival, who in turn handed over Charles Taylor to the Special Court through UNMIL, the United Nations peacekeeping force in Liberia.

Once Charles Taylor was in the custody of UNMIL, it was no longer difficult to transport him to the Special Court in Freetown where he was kept in custody before he appeared before the judges to make a plea to a crowded courtroom that he was not guilty of any of the offences that were read out to him.

Charles Taylor will stand trial in The Hague to answer to charges of crimes against humanity, the violation of humanitarian law, the enslavement of innocent people and many other offences. The transfer of Charles Taylor to the premises of the International Criminal Court in The Hague had to go through processes such as a statement from the President of the Special Court in Sierra Leone, a United Nations Resolution of Chapter 7 status to give clearance for Charles Taylor to be taken to The Hague, the agreement by the Netherlands government to allow Charles Taylor to be tried in The Hague and the agreement by the United Kingdom government that in the event that Charles Taylor is found guilty, Her Majesty’s government will provide prison facilities where Charles Taylor will serve his prison term.

The Sierra Leone community is divided on the issue of taking Charles Taylor to the Hague as one group argues that Sierra Leoneans will be satisfied if they saw Charles Taylor standing trial to answer for his heinous deeds while another school of thought believes that peace in the West African sub-region is too fragile to accommodate the trial of Charles Taylor, especially since there is the possibility that Charles Taylor still has his fighting men who can shake the peace process in Sierra Leone and Liberia or even create a state of instability in the entire West African sub-region.

Charles Taylor, the first accused among the Special Court indictees arrived in the Netherlands yesterday and the Special Court is convening simultaneous press conferences, one in The Hague and another in Freetown to explain the present status of Charles Taylor.
From front page

in The Hague, but it will be
legal officials assigned to
the Sierra Leone tribunal
who will be responsible.

The proceedings have
been moved because of concerns that a trial in Sierra
Leone itself could provoke instability there.

Conflict

The tribunal's chief pros-
cecut or once described Mr
Taylor as the third most
wanted war crimes suspect
in the world.

Both Sierra Leone and
Liberia are recovering from
years of conflict, in which Mr
Taylor played a central role.

He is accused of funding
Sierra Leone's former
rebels, the Revolutionary
United Front (RUF) by selling
diamonds on their behalf and
buying weapons for them.

The RUF were notorious
for mutilating civilians, by
hacking off their arms or
legs with machetes.

Britain, the former colonial
power in Sierra Leone, sent
troops to help oust rebels from
the capital, Freetown in 2000.

Mr Taylor started Liberia's civil
war as a warlord in 1989, be-
fore being elected president in
1997.

In August 2003, with rebels
already in the Liberian capital,
he agreed to go into exile in
southern Nigeria to end the con-

He was captured after disap-
ppearing from his home follow-
ing diplomatic efforts to send
him to Sierra Leone for trial.

Tens of thousands of people
died in the interlinked conflicts
in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Profile: Charles Taylor
1989: Launches rebellion
1991: RUF rebellion starts in
Sierra Leone
1995: Peace deal signed
1997: Elected president
1999: Lurd starts rebellion to
oust Taylor
June 2003: Arrest warrant is-
sued
August 2003: Steps down,
goes into exile in Nigeria
March 2006: Arrested, sent to
Sierra Leone
Charles Taylor now in Hague for trial

Former Liberian leader Charles Taylor has left Sierra Leone on a plane ahead of his trial in The Hague. The UN-backed tribunal in Sierra Leone said he was taken by helicopter to Freetown's airport from his prison cell where he has been since his capture. Mr Taylor faces 11 war crimes charges after allegedly backing rebels in the decade-long Sierra Leone civil war. Last week, the United Kingdom offered to host any jail term he may serve, paving the way for his transfer. The Dutch government agreed to host Mr Taylor's trial, as long as he was imprisoned in another country if he was convicted. The trial is due to take place in the facilities of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, but it will be legal officials assigned to the Sierra Leone tribunal who will be responsible. The proceedings have been moved because of concerns that a trial in Sierra Leone itself could provoke instability there. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are recovering from years of conflict, in which Mr Taylor played a central role. He is accused of funding Sierra Leone's former rebels, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by selling diamonds on their behalf and buying weapons for them. Britain, the former colonial power in Sierra Leone, sent troops to help oust rebels from the capital, Freetown in 2000. The RUF were notorious for mutilating civilians by hacking off their arms or legs with machetes.
As the Special Court prepares to take war crime indictee, former president Charles Taylor of Liberia for trial in The Hague, Human Rights Watch has taken the court to task to be as transparent as possible about its assessment in seeking to move Taylor's trial; and take significant efforts to make the proceedings accessible to the people of Sierra Leone and West Africa.

Human Rights Watch has asked the court to facilitate local media coverage of the Special Court's work, which has been substantial, is another important aspect of ensuring accessibility of the proceedings, as it will be important that coverage of Taylor's trial would not be limited to international media.

"This will require journalists from Sierra Leone and the rest of West Africa to be able to observe proceedings and have access to sources involved in the trial. As such, the Special Court should facilitate attendance of Sierra Leonean and West African journalists to cover the proceedings in The Hague," HRW states and noted that this will be expensive and the number of journalists for which it could be made possible undoubtedly will be limited and that within this context, journalists and the Special Court could consider creating an agreement for journalists to share certain information they obtain with other journalists in the sub-region and to utilize a rotation among journalists to attend the proceedings.

Human Rights Watch says for the monitoring of the trials by civil society volunteers with the Special Court and also by at least one local monitoring organization, like the Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Programme will be another important aspect of making the proceedings accessible.

"Monitoring has helped to ensure that information about the proceedings is disseminated and the outreach section is able to adequately respond to developments in the courtroom. Again recognizing that costs will make it difficult to have a comprehensive monitoring program by Sierra Leoneans in The Hague," HRW states and continued that they believed that at least one to two representatives of Sierra Leonean civil society must be brought to The Hague on an ongoing basis to observe and report back on proceedings and perhaps this could involve a rotation amongst several civil society representatives.

HRW maintained that in order for the Special Court to meet the needs of making Taylor's trial in The Hague accessible and meaningful to Sierra Leoneans and West Africans, Donors (including the United States, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Canada, and the United Nations) and the international community must ensure adequate funding to perform these activities.
Liberian ex-President Charles Taylor has arrived in the Netherlands where he is to be tried on war crimes charges.

For security reasons, the UN-backed tribunal in Sierra Leone moved his trial to The Hague from Freetown where he has been in jail since his capture.

Mr Taylor faces 11 charges after allegedly backing rebels in the decade-long Sierra Leone civil war.

Last week, the United Kingdom offered to host any jail term he may serve, paving the way for his transfer.

The government of the Netherlands agreed Mr Taylor's trial could take place there, as long as he is imprisoned in another country if he was convicted.

On Tuesday morning, he was taken by helicopter to Freetown's airport from his prison cell in the capital.

The trial is due to take place in the facilities of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, but legal officials assigned to the Special Court for Sierra Leone will be responsible for its conduct.

The proceedings have been moved because of concerns that a trial in Sierra Leone itself could provoke instability there.

Mr Taylor's wife said he had been aware that he would be transferred to The Hague this week and was happy the process was under way so he could state his side of story.

"Mr Taylor is in a very reflective and pensive mood. This is his whole life we're talking about," Jewel Taylor, a serving senator in Liberia, told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme.

"Mr Taylor flies in for Hague trial"

Conflict

The tribunal's chief prosecutor once described Mr Taylor as the third most wanted war crimes suspect in the world.
Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are recovering from years of conflict, in which Mr Taylor played a central role.

He is accused of funding Sierra Leone's former rebels, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by selling diamonds on their behalf and buying weapons for them.

The RUF were notorious for mutilating civilians, by hacking off their arms or legs with machetes.

Britain, the former colonial power in Sierra Leone, sent troops to help oust rebels from the capital, Freetown in 2000.

Mrs Taylor said that the case against her husband was politically motivated.

"There is not basis for the charges that have been levied on Mr Taylor," she said.

"The cutting off of arms and legs of the Sierra Leoneans was done by Sierra Leoneans themselves. We didn't have that situation in Liberia. Charles Taylor has not been convicted or charged by his own people."

'Closure'

She said they were struggling to raise money to fund his legal fees at The Hague, but there were indications that people would help him.

"We're praying for God's will to be done and that it will be as quick as possible so that it brings closure to this issue."

Mr Taylor is the first African former head of state to go on trial at an international war crimes court.

He started Liberia's civil war as a warlord in 1989, before being elected president in 1997.

In August 2003, with rebels already in the Liberian capital, he agreed to go into exile in southern Nigeria to end the conflict.

He was captured after disappearing from his home following diplomatic efforts to send him to Sierra Leone for trial.

Tens of thousands of people died in the interlinked conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Also on Tuesday, the UN Security Council lifted a timber embargo on Liberia for 90 days but kept in place a diamonds ban. They had both been used during the civil war to finance arms trafficking.
Taylor quits Sierra Leone for Hague war crimes trial

By Christo Johnson

FREETOWN (Reuters) - War crimes court officials flew former Liberian President Charles Taylor out of Sierra Leone on a charter jet on Tuesday bound for trial at The Hague.

Taylor faces 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for backing Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels whose drugged child soldiers killed, mutilated and raped civilians during the West African country's 1990s civil war.

Taylor was flown in a U.N. helicopter to the country's main airport at Lungi from the compound of the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, which has charged him with war crimes and will conduct his trial in The Hague.

"He's in a plane headed for the Netherlands. He left Lungi International Airport at 9:40 this morning," said court spokesman Peter Andersen.

"I talked to Mr Taylor briefly. We didn't discuss his case, we joked around a little bit and I wished him a safe journey," Andersen said.

Asked about Taylor's mood, he said: "It's difficult to tell -- he looked very serious."

The Freetown-based court said its registrar, security chief and medical officer had accompanied Taylor on the flight.

The Dutch Foreign Ministry said Taylor would be held at the detention unit of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Scheveningen.

This means that the focus can now be on the trial against Taylor, who is accused of serious war crimes," Foreign Minister Ben Bot said in a statement.

"This is a signal from the international community that exemption from punishment will not be tolerated," Bot added.

MIXED REACTIONS

Sierra Leone's Vice-President Solomon Berewa welcomed the news.

"We are now satisfied that he is going to be tried in a well secured area by the Netherlands while we in Sierra Leone and the Mano River Union states will continue to consolidate our peace," Berewa told Reuters.

The Mano River Union groups Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, which were all dragged into a spiral of violence in the 14 years after Taylor began Liberia's civil war in 1989.
"All I think Sierra Leoneans were interested in was to see Taylor arrested and charged, which has been done," Berewa added.

But Taylor's half-brother Adolphus Taylor was disappointed.

"We are downhearted. They had told us that Mr Taylor will be transferred on Wednesday but instead they transferred him today. We just don't know what's happening. We do not know whether he will get a fair trial," he told Reuters in Monrovia.

Years of war in Liberia finally came to an end after Taylor agreed to go into exile in Nigeria in 2003.

Caught trying to leave Nigeria earlier this year as pressure mounted for him to be tried, Taylor was transferred to the Special Court and charged.

But Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf expressed concerns that Taylor's presence in the region could encourage instability in Liberia, where he retains some support.

The Netherlands agreed to host the trial after Britain promised last week to hold Taylor in jail if he received a prison sentence.

Court spokesman Anderson said defense and prosecution lawyers would still hold a pre-trial meeting already organized for Wednesday in Freetown, although he could not say when Taylor would appear in court in The Hague.

(Additional reporting by Nicola Leske in Amsterdam and Alphonso Toweh in Bo Waterside, Liberia)
Human Rights Watch
Wednesday, 21 June 2006
Press Release

Charles Taylor: Hague Trial Must Be Accessible to West Africans

Former Liberian President Arrives in the Netherlands for War Crimes Trial

(New York, June 21, 2006) - With the transfer of Charles Taylor to The Hague for trial, the U.N.-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone and its donors must ensure that the former Liberian president's trial remains accessible to the people of West Africa, Human Rights Watch said today in a briefing paper.

Taylor arrived in The Hague on Tuesday from Freetown, where the Special Court for Sierra Leone is headquartered. He is charged by the Special Court with war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law during the 11-year civil war in Sierra Leone. The trial in The Hague will be conducted by the Special Court using the facilities of the International Criminal Court.

Human Rights Watch has issued a briefing paper on the relocation of Taylor's trial to The Hague. The 15-page briefing paper provides:

* Background on the Special Court for Sierra Leone and Charles Taylor's alleged crimes;
* Analysis of the implications of moving Taylor's trial outside Sierra Leone; and
* Recommendations to ensure that the trial in The Hague is made accessible to West Africans.

"Now that Taylor is in The Hague, there is a real risk that his trial will feel distant and less meaningful to the people most affected by the crimes," said Richard Dicker, director of Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "The court will need to ensure the trial is accessible to people in Sierra Leone and across West Africa."

To make Taylor's trial in The Hague accessible in Sierra Leone, the Special Court should implement robust outreach activities such as video and audio summaries of the trial for dissemination throughout the country. The Special Court should also make live broadcasts of the trial available at the court premises in Freetown. Additionally, the court should ensure that representatives of Sierra Leone's media, nongovernmental organizations, and other sectors of the society, such as paramount chiefs, are able to observe Taylor's trial in The Hague. Human Rights Watch called on the court's donors to provide funding for these critical outreach activities.

"The Special Court has done a tremendous job so far in reaching out to Sierra Leoneans about its work," said Elise Keppler, counsel for Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "But for intensified outreach to ensure Taylor's trial in The Hague resonates in West Africa, donors will need to step up and provide the court with more funding."

"Now that Taylor is in The Hague, there is a real risk that his trial will feel distant and less meaningful to the people most affected by the crimes," said Richard Dicker, director of Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "The court will need to ensure the trial is accessible to people in Sierra Leone and across West Africa."

To make Taylor's trial in The Hague accessible in Sierra Leone, the Special Court should implement robust outreach activities such as video and audio summaries of the trial for dissemination throughout the country. The Special Court should also make live broadcasts of the trial available at the court premises in Freetown. Additionally, the court should ensure that representatives of Sierra Leone's media, nongovernmental organizations, and other sectors of the society, such as paramount chiefs, are able to observe Taylor's trial in The Hague. Human Rights Watch called on the court's donors to provide funding for these critical outreach activities.

"The Special Court has done a tremendous job so far in reaching out to Sierra Leoneans about its work," said Elise Keppler, counsel for Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "But for intensified outreach to ensure Taylor's trial in The Hague resonates in West Africa, donors will need to step up and provide the court with more funding."

"Now that Taylor is in The Hague, there is a real risk that his trial will feel distant and less meaningful to the people most affected by the crimes," said Richard Dicker, director of Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "The court will need to ensure the trial is accessible to people in Sierra Leone and across West Africa."

To make Taylor's trial in The Hague accessible in Sierra Leone, the Special Court should implement robust outreach activities such as video and audio summaries of the trial for dissemination throughout the country. The Special Court should also make live broadcasts of the trial available at the court premises in Freetown. Additionally, the court should ensure that representatives of Sierra Leone's media, nongovernmental organizations, and other sectors of the society, such as paramount chiefs, are able to observe Taylor's trial in The Hague. Human Rights Watch called on the court's donors to provide funding for these critical outreach activities.

"The Special Court has done a tremendous job so far in reaching out to Sierra Leoneans about its work," said Elise Keppler, counsel for Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program. "But for intensified outreach to ensure Taylor's trial in The Hague resonates in West Africa, donors will need to step up and provide the court with more funding."
Donors must also provide funding to cover other costs associated with holding Taylor's trial in The Hague. These include logistical and technical costs. Funding must further be provided to ensure the Special Court can successfully complete the rest of its work in Freetown.

Background

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up in 2002 to try those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during Sierra Leone's armed conflict. The crimes include killings, mutilations, rape and other forms of sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and the use of forced labor by armed groups.

The Special Court has indicted Taylor for war crimes (murder, pillage, outrages upon personal dignity, cruel treatment, terrorizing civilians), crimes against humanity (murder, mutilation, rape, enslavement, sexual slavery), and other serious violations of international humanitarian law (use of child soldiers) in the course of Sierra Leone's armed conflict. The indictment alleges that Taylor, as president of Liberia, provided training and financing to the main rebel group in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Taylor was allegedly the rebel group's main backer, providing logistical and military support to the rebels and benefiting greatly from the diamonds extracted in rebel-held areas.

On March 29, Taylor was surrendered to the Special Court. The court immediately requested to relocate Taylor's trial from Freetown to The Hague due to security concerns. On June 15, the United Kingdom announced it intends to provide detention facilities for Taylor if convicted. This satisfied the key outstanding condition of the Dutch government to hosting the trial. The next day, the Security Council on June 16 passed a resolution providing a legal basis for the transfer.

Initially forced to rely on voluntary contributions, the Special Court has faced constant financial shortfalls. The United Nations provided some financial assistance to the court, but this does not cover all of the court costs. Donors made additional pledges at a funding conference in late September 2005. However, these are insufficient to cover operations for 2006 and beyond.

To read the Human Rights Watch briefing paper, "Trying Charles Taylor in The Hague: Making Justice Accessible to Those Most Affected," please visit:

http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/ij/ij0606/index.htm

For further information, please contact:

In New York, Richard Dicker (English): +1-212-216-1248; or +1-917-747-6731 (mobile)

In New York, Elise Keppler (English): +1-212-216-1249; or +1-917-687-8576 (mobile)

In Dakar, Corinne Dufka (English, Spanish, Krio): +221-860-3863; or +221-636-1013 (mobile)

In London, Urmia Shah (English): +44-20-7713-2788

In Brussels, Lotte Leicht (English, French, German, Danish): +32-2-732-2009; or +32-47-568-1708 (mobile)
**Former Liberia President Put in Dutch Jail**

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press Writer

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) - Former Liberian President Charles Taylor was taken to a Dutch prison Tuesday to await a U.N. war crimes trial for the killing, rape or mutilation of hundreds of thousands in West Africa.

Taylor - the second sitting head of state to be indicted for war crimes - came to Rotterdam aboard a U.N.-chartered plane from Sierra Leone, where he had been in custody since March 29. His hands cuffed in front of him, he was whisked away in a black Mercedes van flanked by five uniformed police motorcyclists.

Taylor faces charges stemming from his alleged backing of Sierra Leonean rebels, who terrorized victims by chopping off their arms, legs, ears and lips during that country's 1991-2002 civil war. He also has been linked to violence in Liberia and elsewhere in West Africa.

The prosecutor who drafted Taylor's indictment hailed his arrival in the Netherlands as a great day for victims and survivors of Sierra Leone's conflict.

"This is for and about the people of West Africa," David Crane, the former prosecutor at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, told The Associated Press. "For them to see Charles Taylor - who was so feared - humbled before the law, it is special because justice is being done."

"He's been terrorizing that part of the world for at least a decade," Crane added. "He has incredible power, influence - almost mythical powers. People are afraid of him."

Taylor's successor as Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, had called for the trial to be moved to Europe, fearing the sight of him in the dock could spark unrest in Africa.

"We've got 3 million Liberian people that we want to concentrate on," Sirleaf said.

Taylor will be held in a special wing of a maximum-security prison outside The Hague, where the International Criminal Court is located. He has pleaded innocent to 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and faces life imprisonment if convicted.

Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic is the only other sitting head of state to be indicted for war crimes. He died this year in a U.N. cell in The Hague before his genocide trial could be completed.

While the Milosevic trial dragged on for four years, prosecutors said they expect the proceedings against Taylor to be far quicker.

Crane said Taylor's trial should start in January and take about a year. Witnesses likely will include atrocity survivors and members of Taylor's inner circle who agreed to testify against him.
Taylor was arraigned in Sierra Leone on April 3, but proceedings had stalled because of questions about where the trial would be held.

The Netherlands agreed to host the trial on condition that a third country jail Taylor if he is convicted or take him in if acquitted. After several countries refused, Britain stepped forward last week. The U.N. tribunal for Sierra Leone then authorized Taylor's transfer.

Jewel Howard-Taylor, who divorced Taylor last year but remains in close touch, said she hoped for a speedy trial. "We look forward to the trial being free and fair and being held as soon as possible," she told the AP in Liberia.

Taylor had objected to the move, saying it would be difficult for his witnesses to travel to testify and for his family to lend him support. Many of his close associates face travel bans stemming from alleged corruption, making even trips to Sierra Leone impossible.

Taylor launched a Liberian insurgency in 1989 and won elections that handed him the presidency in 1997. Rebels took up arms against him three years later, and Taylor fled into exile in Nigeria in 2003.

Nigeria agreed in March to a request from Sirleaf to hand him over. Taylor tried to slip away but was captured and flown to Sierra Leone.

The step forward in Taylor's prosecution coincided with a breakthrough for Liberia's new government: On Tuesday, the U.N. Security Council voted to lift timber sanctions against Liberia to help spur economic growth in one of Africa's poorest nations.

The council maintained sanctions on Liberian diamond exports for six months but said it will review the measures in four months.

Liberia had been under U.N. arms and diamond embargoes since 2001 to stop government revenues from those industries from being used to fuel civil war.

Sierra Leone also is rich in diamonds. Prosecutors say Taylor and the rebels he allegedly helped train, fund and arm used a barbaric campaign of terror to destabilize Sierra Leone's government with the aim of taking control of diamond-rich regions.
Taylor's Trial Moved to the Hague
By Ashenafi Abedje
Washington, DC

Former Liberian president Charles Taylor has been flown from Freetown to the Netherlands. There, he will stand trial for war crimes allegedly committed during Sierra Leone's civil war. The UN Security Council approved his transfer last week. Mr. Taylor is seen as the central figure behind a series of civil wars in Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone between 1989 and 2003. He is specifically accused of sponsoring and aiding rebel groups in Sierra Leone -- in exchange for a share in the lucrative diamond trade.

Harpinder Athwal is political advisor and special assistant to the prosecutor of Sierra Leone’s special court. English to Africa reporter Ashenafi Abedje asked her about the significance of Mr. Taylor’s transfer to the Netherlands.

“What’s important is that it’s no matter where Charles Taylor’s trial takes place, it will be conducted by one trial chamber of the Special Courts. In this incidence that trial chamber will be sitting in the Hague. In reality it makes no difference, this trial will still be conducted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.”

She addressed the concerns of some who think Taylor should be tried in Africa rather than in Europe. “Absolutely, absolutely they have a point, especially as the Special Court was set up in Freetown. However, we have made all necessary arrangements to try to insure that the trial could take place here. But with regards to security concerns within Sierra Leone and in the region as a whole, the UN Security Council, which passed a resolution 1688, decided that this trial should be moved outside of the region for the security of the region and the court is complying with that request.”

Athwal says it’s unlikely that Taylor will serve time in Africa. “The Special Court actually does not have a single agreement with any African country which is willing to take any of our indictees to serve their sentences. So that’s not actually a possibility.”

As for the broader implications of this trial, she says, “The arrest of Charles Taylor and also the case of Charles Taylor is hugely significant for international law and also for Africa as a whole. This case makes it very, very clear that no matter how rich or how powerful one individual may be or how feared that person may be, no one, no one is above the law. And the trial process will show that even the highest, mightiest people will have to face the courts to answer for any acts they do commit.”

Let us know what you think of this report and other stories on our website. Send your views to AFRICA@VOANews.com, and include your phone number. Or, call us here in Washington, DC at (202) 205-9942. After you hear the VOA identification, press 30 to leave a message. We want to hear what you have to say!
THE HAGUE, the Netherlands, June 20 (Xinhua) -- Former Liberian President Charles Taylor arrived Tuesday in the Netherlands, where he will be tried on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, officials said.

Taylor had been taken into custody in Sierra Leone before his flight by a UN-chartered plane to the Netherlands. He is due to stand trial in The Hague on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed during his Liberian presidency.

Besides charges which implicates him in backing Sierra Leonean rebels who killed and mutilated civilians during the country's 1991-2002 civil war, Taylor is also accused of instigating violence in Liberia and elsewhere in West Africa.

The UN Special Court for Sierra Leone had asked the Netherlands-based International Criminal Court to host the trial for security reasons.

The United Nations Security Council on June 16 authorized his transfer from the Sierra Leone court to the court in the Netherlands. Enditem
Former Liberian President's trial moves to the Hague

The former President of Liberia has arrived in the Hague to stand trial on multiple charges of war crimes. Charles Taylor was flown to the Netherlands due to fears that his continuing presence in West Africa would provoke violence and unrest. The Hague agreed to be the venue for the trial if a third party would agree to imprison Taylor if convicted. The UK has agreed to jail him if need be.

A special UN-backed court in Sierra Leone was to try Taylor on charges that he backed rebels in the country's civil war in the 1990's. Officials from that court will preside over the ICC hearing. Sierra Leone was drawn into a spiral of violence along with Guinea and Nigeria after Taylor began Liberia's civil war in 1989.

It came to an end in 2003 when Taylor agreed to go into exile in Nigeria. But by then tens of thousands had died in the inter-linked conflicts. A trial could still be some months away. Taylor has yet to appoint a legal team. The rebels were notorious for their brutality - it is alleged they used machetes to maim civilians, as well killing, raping and robbing them. Many of the rebel fighters were little more than children.
Charles G. Taylor arrived Tuesday in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, before being brought to The Hague.

By MARLISE SIMONS

Charles G. Taylor, the former president of Liberia and one of West Africa's most feared men, arrived in handcuffs in the Netherlands on Tuesday, and was immediately taken to the jail near The Hague where the former Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, spent the last five years of his life.

Mr. Taylor, 58, will be tried in the Netherlands by a specially created outpost of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the United Nations-backed tribunal that has indicted him on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The long list of atrocities attributed to Mr. Taylor, a former warlord, includes running a rebel force that killed tens of thousands of civilians and hacked off the limbs of countless others.

A descendant of the returned slaves who founded Liberia, Mr. Taylor became notorious for his use and abuse of children who were pressed into his forces. The children were often brainwashed or drugged into killing their own parents or relatives, prosecutors have said.

Getting Mr. Taylor to The Hague has been a diplomatic headache ever since his capture as he tried to leave Nigeria in March. The Sierra Leone government requested that he be tried outside the country because, it argued, his followers could destabilize the region once again, after more than a decade of war.
Mr. Taylor is accused of financing the rebel force in Sierra Leone.

He will now be tried in The Hague, in a new courtroom at the International Criminal Court. The Dutch government, while agreeing to the trial on its soil, had insisted that Mr. Taylor was not welcome until another nation had committed to taking him into prison if he were convicted.

Britain, the former colonial power in Sierra Leone, whose troops helped end the war there, announced Thursday that Mr. Taylor could serve any sentence he might receive in Britain.

Mr. Taylor will be held in the wing of a Dutch prison, where both the United Nations tribunal for Yugoslavia and the new International Criminal Court have rented a cellblock. He will be tried by judges from the Sierra Leone court, which was created by the United Nations and the local government to try people responsible for atrocities since 1996. The court has nine people in custody.

It may take some months before Mr. Taylor begins his trial in The Hague. After his arrest, he attended a brief hearing at the Sierra Leone court, where he pleaded not guilty to all 11 charges he faces.

He also declared he was partly indigent, saying he could not pay for defense lawyers. Peter Andersen, the Sierra Leone court spokesman, said Mr. Taylor would be assigned a temporary counsel until the court has finished investigating his financial situation.

Mr. Taylor was known for trading diamonds and tropical hardwood for weapons, and is believed to have stolen millions of dollars from Liberia's coffers.
Irish troops hailed for Taylor transport

The Minister for Defence has congratulated Irish peacekeepers in Liberia who were heavily involved in security operations to airlift former president Charles Taylor to The Hague to stand trial for war crimes.

100 Irish troops were deployed this morning in neighbouring Sierra Leone when Mr Taylor was transported from the International Court to the airport in Freetown.

The soldiers secured and held the airport from last night until mid-morning.

Colonel Paul Pakenham from Dublin personally took charge of the operation in moving Mr Taylor from the court to the airport.

This afternoon, Defence Minister Willie O'Dea said the successful contribution of Irish soldiers to this morning's operation means that Mr Taylor can now be made accountable for the horrendous pain and suffering he inflicted in the region.

Mr O'Dea said Irish peacekeepers are a source of great pride on the world stage for the effective work they have done in supporting stabilization in Liberia since 2003.
Associated Press  
Wednesday, 21 June 2006

**Former Liberian leader awaits war crimes trial**

THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS - Former Liberian President Charles Taylor was taken to a Dutch prison Tuesday to await a U.N. war crimes trial for the killing, rape or mutilation of hundreds of thousands in West Africa.

Taylor — the second sitting head of state indicted for war crimes — came to Rotterdam aboard a U.N.-chartered plane from Sierra Leone, where he had been in custody since March 29. His hands cuffed in front of him, he was whisked away in a black Mercedes van flanked by five uniformed police motorcyclists.

Taylor faces charges stemming from his alleged backing of Sierra Leonean rebels, who terrorized victims by chopping off their arms, legs, ears and lips during that country's 1991-2002 civil war. He also has been linked to violence in Liberia and elsewhere in West Africa.

The prosecutor who drafted Taylor's indictment hailed his arrival in the Netherlands as a great day for victims and survivors of Sierra Leone's conflict.

"This is for and about the people of West Africa," David Crane, the former prosecutor at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, told the Associated Press. "For them to see Charles Taylor — who was so feared — humbled before the law, it is special because justice is being done."

"He's been terrorizing that part of the world for at least a decade," Crane added. "He has incredible power, influence — almost mythical powers. People are afraid of him."

Taylor's successor as Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, had called for the trial to be moved to Europe, fearing the sight of Taylor at the dock could spark unrest in Africa. Taylor will be held in a special wing of a maximum-security prison outside The Hague, where the International Criminal Court is located. He has pleaded innocent to 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity and faces life imprisonment if convicted.

Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic is the only other sitting head of state indicted for war crimes. He died this year in a U.N. cell in The Hague before his genocide trial could be completed.

While the Milosevic trial dragged on for four years, prosecutors said they expect the proceedings against Taylor to be far quicker.

Crane said Taylor's trial should start in January and take about a year.
Good afternoon. Sorry I’m a little late. We were waiting for a couple of statements.

**Charles Taylor**

As you know, Charles Taylor was today transferred to The Hague in accordance with an order issued on Monday by the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor was taken by United Nations helicopter from the Special Court compound earlier today and flown to Lungi International Airport in Freetown, where he was transferred to a chartered commercial jet. He departed from Sierra Leone at 9:40 a.m. local time and should be landing shortly in the Netherlands.

Photographs of the transfer will be available shortly on the website of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and there’s a press release on this upstairs.

**Charles Taylor Statement**

Then we have a statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on this transfer.

“The Secretary-General welcomes the transfer of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, to the Netherlands, to stand trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague. He wishes to thank all who have made this transfer possible, in particular the Government of the Netherlands for its willingness to host the Special Court for the conduct of Mr. Taylor’s trial, the International Criminal Court for agreeing to the use of its premises by the Special Court and the Government of the United Kingdom for agreeing, subject to Parliamentary approval, to allow Charles Taylor, if convicted, to enter the United Kingdom to serve any sentence that the Special Court might impose.

“The Secretary-General encourages all States to cooperate with the Special Court with respect to Charles Taylor’s trial, in particular by ensuring the evidence and witnesses are made available to the Special Court upon its request. He also recalls his appeal to States to contribute generously to the Special Court’s budget.

“The Secretary-General expresses his determination to work together with the Special Court and relevant States to make the future trial proceedings available and to the people of West Africa in particular. He is confident that Charles Taylor’s trial will mark a further victory in the struggle to end impunity and will contribute to reconciliation in Liberia and the restoration of peace and stability in Liberia and in Sierra Leone.”
**Security Council**

Here at United Nations Headquarters, after brief consultations on Liberia this morning, the Security Council moved to a formal meeting in which it decided not to renew the sanctions measures that obliged Member States to prevent the import into their territories of all round log and timber products originating in Liberia. The Council will review that decision after 90 days.

The Security Council also voted unanimously to extend the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste until 20 August. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to provide a report on the future role of the United Nations in that country, taking into account the current situation and the need for a strengthened United Nations presence.

The Council is now holding an open meeting on Kosovo, during which it heard a briefing from Søren Jessen-Petersen, the Secretary-General’s departing Special Representative for Kosovo.

Jessen-Petersen said Kosovo was making steady progress and that its leaders had become more dynamic and progressive than ever. He added that, after seven years, Kosovo was ready — indeed impatient — to move on, and that it would be risky to keep the province in limbo for much longer. In that context, he called for the Kosovo status process to wrap up sooner rather than later.

And just a reminder, Søren Jessen-Petersen and Kosovo’s Prime Minister, Agim Çeku, will speak to you in this room immediately after the Council meeting, which should be shortly.
International Clips on Liberia

Liberia's Taylor leaves Freetown for trial in The Hague

FREETOWN, June 20, 2006 (AFP) - Former Liberian President Charles Taylor was flown from Freetown Tuesday to the Netherlands where he will stand trial for war crimes allegedly committed during Sierra Leone's brutal civil war, court and government officials told AFP.

Liberia's Taylor to be held in same jail as Milosevic

THE HAGUE, June 20, 2006 (AFP) - Former Liberian president Charles Taylor, who was Tuesday en route to the Netherlands for trial for war crimes, will be kept in the same jail that held Yugoslav ex-president Slobodan Milosevic. As soon as he arrives, Taylor will be transferred to the detention unit of the International Criminal Court (ICC) which shares a prison with the UN court which tried Milosevic, known as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Taylor's family protest at transfer for trial in The Hague

MONROVIA, June 20, 2006 (AFP) - Relatives of Liberia’s former president and warlord Charles Taylor protested Tuesday at his transfer to The Hague, where he is to stand trial at a special court on war crimes charges. Taylor's brother, Adolphus, said in Monrovia: "They just want to kill him. That is why they have decided to take him out abruptly.

U.N. council lifts ban on Liberian timber exports

By Irwin Arieff

UNITED NATIONS, June 20 (Reuters) - The U.N. Security Council voted on Tuesday to lift its embargo on Liberian timber exports which had been used during the African nation's civil war to finance arms trafficking and line the pockets of corrupt leaders.

International Clips on West Africa

June 20, 2006

AP Interview: Taylor's former prosecutor says case will name, shame Gadhafi

By ARTHUR MAX

UTRECHT, Netherlands _ The former prosecutor who drew up the war crimes indictment against Charles Taylor said Tuesday that the former Liberian president's trial was likely to shed light on the activities of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi and a network of war profiteers.
Abidjan poultry markets reopen as bird flu scare abates

ABIDJAN, June 20, 2006 (AFP) - Ivory Coast has authorized the reopening of its capital's poultry markets, shut since early May due to an outbreak of the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu, according to a communique released Tuesday. To eradicate the virus, a large-scale disinfection of affected poultry farms, slaughter houses and the market itself was carried out by public health officials, the communique said.

Local Media - Newspapers

International Rights Group Concerned About Attacks on Journalists
(New Democrat)

- In a communication to President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf dated 16 June, the U.S.-based Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ) protested the attacks on journalists by security men around her. The President must follow her pledge to honor press freedom with actual steps against abuses, CPJ maintained.

U.S. President Signs US$50 Million Aid for Liberia
(The Inquirer)

- The Executive Mansion announced yesterday that U.S. President George Bush had signed an assistance package for Liberia approving the release of US$50 million.
- The U.S. government pledged the amount earlier this year when President Johnson-Sirleaf visited the U.S.

Governance Reform Commission Reviews Public Officials Code of Conduct
(The Inquirer)

- The Governance Reform Commission yesterday started a three-day working session in Monrovia to review the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Assets for public servants.

Local Media – Radio Veritas

U.S. President Approves US$50 Million Grant for Liberia
(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

US-Based Journalists Group Abhors Attacks on Journalists
(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Refugees Say UNHCR Has Abandoned Them

- Speaking to journalists yesterday, a spokesman of Sierra Leonean refugees and Togolese asylum seekers in Liberia said that the inmates were abandoned by the UNHCR in the past three years. Mr. Clarence Sesay said that there are more than 3,000 Sierra Leonean refugees and 30 Togolese asylum seekers in the country some of whom are unable to return to their countries for fear of their lives
(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

UN Envoy Frowns at Donors for Providing Less Support to the Needy

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said that the international community had failed to give effective support to post-war countries.
- In an interview upon his arrival in Liberia yesterday, Mr. Guterres said that developmental support for such countries was crucial and must be addressed.
(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Continental Rice Development Group Donates Seed Rice to Liberia
The Africa Rice Center has donated to the Government of Liberia and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 1.5 metric tons of seed rice known as the ‘New Rice for Africa’. FAO Resident Representative Wilfred Harmon said that the seeds would be initially planted at the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) in Bong County.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Court Judge Wants Additional Court to Try Real Estate Cases

- In his remarks at the opening in Monrovia yesterday of the June Term of Court, Civil Law Court Judge Boima Kontoe called for the establishment of Civil Law Court B at the Temple of Justice to deal with real estate cases which remained on the docket for a long time.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Lawyers Argue Petition to Prohibit Associate Justice Ja’neh

- Legal arguments on the petition to bar the sitting of Associate Justice Kabineh Ja’neh on the Supreme Court Bench began in Monrovia, yesterday. Journalists covering the Supreme Court said that the petitioners requested the Court to nullify Cllr. Ja’neh’s Senate confirmation on grounds that he had bad human rights records and should not be allowed to sit on the Court’s Bench.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Police Offer Bounty for Clue to Whereabouts of Suspected Armed Robber

- Liberia National Police Acting Inspector-General Al Karlay said that the LNP would reward a bounty of US$1,000 to anyone giving clue that would lead to the arrest of the suspected armed robber who shot and killed 17-year-old Jestina Kerkulah in Paynesville on Sunday morning.

(Also reported on ELBS Radio Star Radio)

Lawmakers Hold Retreat to Resolve Controversies

- Members of the Liberian Senate yesterday converged in Tubmanburg, Bomi County to resolve controversial issues which faced the Lawmakers. Senate President Pro Tempore Isaac Nyenabo told journalists in Tubmanburg that the Senate would not be the same again with the retreat at which vexing issues were being discussed.
Special Court Supplement
The Transfer of Charles Taylor in Pictures
Tuesday, 20 June 2006