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:
Tuesday, 6 February 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taylor’s Trial Starts June Says UN Prosecutor / <em>Independent Observer</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hinga Norman Saga: Is It Another Mistake? / <em>Independent Observer</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will Charles Taylor Get a Fair Trial / <em>New African Magazine</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leoneans to Monitor Government’s Use of Debt Relief Funds / <em>Voice of America</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <em>UNMIL</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Soldiers ‘Are a Time Bomb’ / <em>BBC Online</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda: LRA Rebels May Send Lawyers to the ICC / <em>Voice of America</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guineans Return to Work After Costly General Strike, but …/ <em>Voice of America</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso Launches Mediation Attempt for Ivory Coast / <em>Voice of America</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberian Torture Case Traces Back to Orlando / <em>St. Petersburg Times</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event to Examine International Law / <em>The Daily Iowan</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taylor's Trial starts June
Says UN prosecutor

The lead prosecutor for the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone today said the trial of Charles Taylor, the notorious former Liberian President who has been indicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity, will commence in early June. The trial at The Hague on 4 June "represents the vindication of the principle that no person, no matter what their position, is above the law," Prosecutor Stephen Rapp, who was appointed to the post last December, told reporters at a briefing at UN Headquarters.

At the same time, he stressed the need for "a fair and just and equitable process" for any person, no matter what their reputation, which is "transparent to the people of the world and particularly to the people of Sierra Leone."

To ensure transparency, the BBC World Service Trust will send two Liberian and two Sierra Leonian journalists to The Hague for the duration of the trial so that they can report back to their home countries on the proceedings.

Mr. Taylor was indicted in March 2003 by the Court on 11 counts pertaining to his involvement in the decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone. He is accused of breaching international humanitarian law, including such grave offences as murder, rape, sexual slavery, acts of terror and conscription of children into an armed force.

According to Mr. Rapp, Mr. Taylor's trial will last approximately 12 to 18 months, which is considerably shorter than other UN-backed trials of people indicted for war crimes. For example, the trial for Slobodan Milosevic conducted by the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) spanned four years before his death obviated the need for it to continue.

Mr. Rapp stated that his prosecution team will "present the most concise case possible," drawing on evidence from crime scenes as well as testimony already presented in other tribunals. He also acknowledged that there are several challenges, including the logistics of having witnesses travel over 10,000 kilometres roundtrip to testify at The Hague and ensuring their safety upon their return to their home countries.

Also, unlike two other UN-backed war crimes tribunals - the ICTY and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) - which are funded by mandatory dues paid by UN Member States, the Special Court for Sierra Leone runs entirely on voluntary contributions.

Mr. Rapp said that he is confident that the Court will raise the $33 million it needs to operate this year and be "a model of international justice serving not just the legal principles that are so important, but also the people of the region."

The Special Court was established on 16 January 2002 by an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UN and is mandated to try "those who bear greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against community committed in the country after 30 November 1996. Thus far, 11 people have been indicted by the Court.
The Hinga Norman Saga: Is It Another Mistake?

Sir,
I write to ask for space in your popular news-letter.
First, I wish to thank you for your relentless effort made to keep Sierra Leoneans abreast with the day-to-day events within the nation.

I am writing to remind and warn all fellow Sierra Leoneans in general and Chief Hinga Norman and Co in particular. This election year in our beloved country (Sierra Leone), is yet another important milestone in the political history of the nation.

To start with, if history allows it, the colonial masters handed over to a team of beloved and able-bodied founding fathers; headed by a MARGAI, Sir Milton A.S. Margai to be precise) may his soul rest in perfect peace. We understand there were three Margais in the team; Sir Milton himself, Sir Albert Margai and Samuel Margai - Sam Margai for short; all of whom are no more living.

As history tells us, Sir Milton and his team played the game well; at least, to maximum satisfaction, whereby most of the people never even cared or knew what politics meant. That is, they were satisfied with the SLPP politicians simply because they delivered the goods to the people. As we are told, at a point in time, SIR ALBERT MARGAI (may his soul rest in peace), became disgruntled with his brother and teamed up with Siaka Probyn Stevens; may his soul rest in perfect hell fire. They formed a new political party which they called ‘Peoples National Party’ - PNP. The old man, PA Sir Milton of course, rightly called the PNP party ‘Pekin Na Pekin’. Even as Sir Albert later rejoined the only and way to the paradise of our beloved Sierra Leone, the SLPP, the mistake was already done. ‘If you say little things don’t matter, ask how the lion feels when a fly enters its nostrils.’ Many useful citizens were lost to the gallow of Siaka Stevens. Today we are still living with that mistake. Many other missteps had befallen that nation.

Chief Norman, I very well know that you were then a good player in the development of that nation. Your reputation still remains with history. And not only that you became a victim of that mistake at a point within the period in question, for your love for the country as well as SLPP in particular. Today I want to remind you again that even your present day predicament (imprisonment) stemmed from that mistake of Sir Albert Margai and others; who incidentally begot our brother - Charles Margai, another Margai escapee from our present day SLPP - who begot the PMDC out of disgruntlement; similar mistake as made by his late father - like father like son.

Chief Norman, if you don’t realize it, I want you to know that, to most of us, you are a hero and you will ever remain a hero. Do not, I repeat, do not let any unforgivable mistake and over ambition over shadow your heroic deed which, if kept as it is, will ever remain intact in the history of Sierra Leone. History will ever remain to honour you, your deed and all your followers, as to the war. Never mind if there are areas of dissatisfaction as at now. Some day it shall be well with you as we all love you and pray for you and all those who fought to free the nation from Foday Sankoh and followers. Last but not the least, if you team up with rebels of Sankoh and Johnny Paul then your purpose must have been defeated. If you ride on a lion’s back, you will eventually end up in its mouth. Mind you, it is only the tree with fruits that people throw stones at.

To fellow Sierra Leoneans who have teamed up with Ngo Charles, I want to admonish you to think twice before you put yourselves in the group of ‘those disappointed adults’ of that nation. Before you go out with a widow or widower, you must first ask, what killed the spouse. If it were not for mistakes made in the past - not only that of Pa Albert Margai though -
Will Charles Taylor get a fair trial?

The trial of the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, is expected to begin in The Hague on 2 April 2007, but administrative and other bottlenecks have prevented his defence team from functioning properly. The defence has not yet been given an office or even a correspondence address in The Hague, and it is threatening to pull out if no remedy is immediately found by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) which transferred Taylor's case to The Hague. Osei Boateng reports on a messy pre-trial period that has brought no honour to the international justice system.

With Saddam Hussein executed after what human rights groups have widely criticised as a “flawed trial”, which itself followed a similarly “flawed trial” of the former Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague (Milosevic died before the prolonged trial was concluded), concerned voices have now been raised as to whether Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president, who is now in the custody of the ICC at its detention facility at Scheveningen (The Netherlands), will get a fair trial.

His defence team, led by the UK-based lawyer, Karim Khan, has threatened to walk out if certain pre-trial violations of Taylor’s legal rights and the lack of simple basic facilities and time to prepare his case are not immediately remedied.

“We have woefully inadequate resources and we will not take part in a charade unless matters improve,” says one defence team member. “Human Rights Watch [the US-based rights group] have criticised the Saddam trial and the operation of Milosevic proceedings. It seems as if no lessons are being taken on board by the SCSL and ICC, and they seem intent on making it a triumvirate of flawed trials.”

Charles Taylor faces 11 charges all woven around “helping or supporting” the former Sierra Leonean rebel group, Revolutionary United Front (RUF), to commit:

- **Count 1**: “acts of terrorism” (burning of villages);
- **Count 2**: “murder” (unlawful killings during the war);
- **Count 3**: “violence to life, health and physical or mental wellbeing of persons, in particular murder”;
- **Count 4**: “rape”;
- **Count 5**: “sexual slavery and any other form of sexual violence”;
- **Count 6**: “outrages upon personal dignity”;
- **Count 7**: “violence to life, health and physical or mental wellbeing of persons, in particular cruel treatment”;
- **Count 8**: “other inhumane acts”;
- **Count 9**: “conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed force or groups, or using them to participate actively in hostilities”;
- **Count 10**: “enslavement”;
- **Count 11**: “pillage” (looting).

Taylor has denied all the charges.

On 21 June last year, the SCSL moved the trial to the ICC in The Hague ostensibly for security reasons (or the fear of public unrest in Taylor’s home country, Liberia, and post-
sibly in Sierra Leone itself), Taylor protested against his transfer to The Hague, but he was ignored. Although he is now a detainee in an ICC facility, the SCSL is supposed to exercise legal responsibility and authority over him and his trial, not the ICC.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed on 13 April by the SCSL and ICC before Taylor’s transfer. It says the SCSL has control over Taylor’s detention and trial, but in practice, since the transfer, the ICC appears to be in control by default. The ICC detention framework differs significantly from the SCSL practice and rules. This has alarmed Taylor’s lawyers who now want the right things done and the SCSL reassert its control over their client.

For example, the ICC detention regime is unduly restrictive regarding visits and means of communication. Though the SCSL rules say “all accused shall be equal before the Special Court”, it has nevertheless caved in to a restrictive visa procedure demanded by The Netherlands which limits Taylor’s visitors to one person at a time, even though other SCSL detainees in Freetown, Sierra Leone, have no such visitor restrictions, nor any detainees of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) using the same ICC detention centre in The Netherlands.

Taylor’s lawyers are furious that the ICC has imposed “a plethora of unnecessary and discriminatory restrictions” on their client despite their many requests for administrative relief. For example, Taylor is not allowed to receive phone calls directly from outside the detention unit. And yet similar restrictions have not been imposed on other ICC detainees.

Taylor’s lawyers are also angry that a surveillance camera has been placed in the conference room where they hold privileged legal discussions with their client. They say they have made several requests for the camera to be removed, but their requests have been rejected, even though a precedent had been set by the ICC itself when a Rwandan detainee asked that a similar surveillance camera be removed from a room where he held privileged legal discussions with his defence team.

No such video surveillance of legal discussions is imposed on other SCSL detainees in Freetown. Taylor’s lawyers are also unhappy that arrangements at the ICC detention cen-
Hotel lobbies, restaurants and cafes are hardly the proper environment to hold team meetings and prepare for trial.”

are mothballed in Freetown, inaccessible to team members in The Hague.

Furthermore, no materials can be stored in Monrovia for access by the Liberian team for want of secure office space, and defence investigators are forbidden to receive electronic disclosure.

What is amazing is that Taylor's defence team does not even have a correspondence address in The Hague. So they cannot even receive letters. The SCSL has promised the defence an office in The Hague but it will only be available from February 2007, and the trial is supposed to start on 2 April.

Taylor's lawyers are not amused. "The conditions that individual defence team members are working under in The Hague are intolerable," they have told the SCSL. "Simply put, the defence has been forced by circumstances beyond its control to prepare for a highly complicated international criminal trial without office facilities accessible to the bulk of its team members.

"Meetings between defence team members are irregular and held at informal locations. Hotel lobbies, restaurants and cafes are hardly the proper environment to hold team meetings and prepare for trial.

"Documents can only be printed at external printing agencies at considerable expense. Internet connections are private and unsecured. Mobile phones, paid for by the individual team members, are the primary means of communication with other team members based in various locations.

"Perhaps most troubling is that work may not be completed or confidential instructions discussed in a convenient, secure environment. The defence has nowhere to interview witnesses and no secure communication facilities."

On top of it all, the appointment of team members has been time consuming as each member must be vetted and approved by the SCSL.

In the circumstances, the defence has asked the SCSL to postpone the trial to "a more realistic date, namely 3 September 2007".

Quoting the legal principle of “the right to a fair trial and equality of arms” – which was cited in an appeals judgement by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY, also hosted by the ICC in The Hague) – Taylor's lawyers insist that equality of arms obligates a judicial body to ensure that neither party is at a disadvantage when presenting its case, and that lack of adequate time and facilities usually impinges on the right to equality of arms.

On 22 September, when they signed the "defence services contract" with the SCSL, Taylor’s lawyers assured the Court that they were looking forward to finishing the case in good time, "because it is the intention of the defence that, at the end, our client will be acquitted. So we are not going to delay matters. We are not going to grandstand. We are going to play this very straight because we have a very real legal defence."

But, because of what has happened since then, the defence lawyers do not want the trial to start on 2 April.

They say they do not want another "Milosevic trial" which started after only eight months of pre-trial preparation, and the chaos thereof ensured that the trial went on for years. They estimate that if Taylor's trial is postponed to September, the entire case could be finished in a year’s time.

"In the final analysis," the lawyers say, "the right to an expeditious trial belongs to Mr Taylor and not to the donor countries funding the
SCSL. If an accused person is satisfied, upon the best advice of his counsel, that postponing the commencement of a trial for a reasonable period is in his best interests, then the Court should be convinced that such postponement is in the interests of justice.

Pressing the point home, the lawyers say the volume of material served to date by the prosecution far exceeds that of any other case before the SCSL.

On 17 May last year, the defence was served with an initial tranche of over 32,000 pages of nothing else, the defence would not be able to finish its assessment of that first batch of disclosure by 2 April when the trial is supposed to start.

“Compounding the equation is the prosecution’s recent assertion that it expects to serve approximately 1,000 exhibits, the vast majority of which have not been disclosed to date... Much of this material will have to be considered afresh and a new phase of investigations triggered, potentially before the defence has the opportunity to

“In fact, what is causing the most angst to Taylor’s defence team is the lack of basic office accommodation and facilities to prepare his case before the trial begins.”

material, including statements and transcripts of 226 witnesses. Six further disclosure packages have been served comprising 154 additional statements and transcripts, 105 exhibits, 97 open-source documents, three TV programmes and nine radio programmes.

The defence says it is still in the process of reviewing this material and it is impossible to determine when this task will be completed. “However, the defence estimates that, at five minutes per page, perusal of the 17 May disclosure would take some 2,666 hours or 333 eight-hour working days. Even with three team members working full time on

examine all the material previously disclosed.”

The sheer enormity of the task facing the defence is illustrated by material submitted by the prosecution in connection with just one of the many witnesses it intends to call — 2,400 pages covering events said to have taken place over 11 years in seven countries. The defence lawyers say they have already spent 200 man-hours considering the material from this one prosecution witness, and a further 10 hours to draft a summary. To rebut his allegations, they have identified at least 23 individuals in Liberia, 10 in Sierra Leone, six in other African countries, five in the US, and three in Europe who will have to be interviewed.

They will also have to review documents obtained from the UN and various ministries, corporations and other organisations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, the US and the UK.

It is indeed an onerous job which needs more time to execute, which the lawyers say they cannot finish before the tentative trial date of 2 April.

Taylor’s family shares the same view. On 3 January 2007, they issued a press statement in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, signed by Taylor’s sister, Mrs Thelma Taylor Seye, saying: “President Taylor is anxious to defend the charges made against him. However, we are extremely concerned that he is being denied the facilities and the time to do so, and that consequently a fair trial of the case will be prejudiced.

“What is more,” the family said, “the prosecution enquiries are still going on. In addition to such a plethora of documents relating to the factual case, the prosecution intends to call 19 expert opinion witnesses. Not all the opinions of these experts have been served to date.

“It is therefore impossible for the defence to determine if defence experts in rebuttal need to be instructed. Some of the factual statements disclosed require the defence to interview persons in several countries in Africa, Europe and the USA.

“It is impossible at this stage for the defence to obtain full instructions from President Taylor since neither the president nor his defence counsel know the full case of the prosecution. Indeed, since the prosecution enquiries are still ongoing, it may be that even the prosecution does not know the entirety of the case upon which it seeks to rely.”

The family said they had been concerned from the very beginning that Taylor (a constitutionally-elected president) was “being targeted, victimised and treated differently, with impunity, in order to satisfy the agenda of his political opponents despite his voluntary surrender of power in order to save Liberian lives and in spite of international undertakings with respect to his future. The very least that should be granted to [him] by a court ostensibly established under the aegis of the United Nations is fair treatment. This, he has so far not received.”

The family therefore called on the SCSL and the ICC to provide conditions for a fair trial by giving Taylor’s time, facilities and resources to mount a proper defence.}
Voice of America  
Saturday, 3 February 2007

Sierra Leoneans to Monitor Government's Use of Debt Relief Funds

By Kari Barber  
Dakar

Sierra Leone, which was recently forgiven more than $1.5 billion in debt, is now looking at how to spend the extra funds. Some in the impoverished nation say they worry the government will mishandle money set aside to repay the debt and that little benefit will reach those who need it. Kari Barber reports from our West Africa bureau in Dakar.

The announcement in January that the last of Sierra Leone's debt to major world lenders, including the World Bank, was forgiven was met with excitement as many Sierra Leoneans saw it as a step toward improved international standing.

This represents 90 percent of the debt owed, with a much smaller portion still owed to private lenders.

However, many are concerned that with pressure off from lenders and a new windfall of cash available, the government will not adopt good economic practices. The government is widely perceived as corrupt by Sierra Leoneans.

Abu Brima of the National Movement for Justice and Development, a Freetown-based civil society organization, said people are waiting to hear the government's plan. "So people are now like, 'So what, the debt has been canceled,'" he said. What steps are now being taken to make sure the resources are to be used for the real development of the country.'"

Brima says he would like to see the money go toward paving roads, paying teachers and making electricity and clean water available.

Activist Morlai Kamara is organizing a campaign to monitor the spending of the newly freed funds. He said he is asking international organizations and Sierra Leone's civil society to work together to keep the government accountable. "We have to make sure that we continue to keep our eyes on our government and on even international financial institutions to insure that we do not go back to reckless lending and illegitimate contraction of laws," he said.

Timothy Armitate, an economic consultant with the London-based group Global Insight, says the fact that the Sierra Leone government earned debt relief proves it has some commitment to transparency and reform. Armitate says the government is likely to continue many of the practices the lenders required because the country still needs international approval to get much needed aid. "What this does is it puts pressure on the government to comply with deficit targets and local revenue generating targets," he explained. "Also it leads to more prudent fiscal policies as they risk losing the backing of the international community if they do go on renegade spending."

Sierra Leone's debt relief is a result of programs, such as the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, which allow impoverished nations to be forgiven debt so that money can be used, instead, to fight poverty. Sierra Leone's government was granted the relief based on efforts to fight corruption and increase economic growth.
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 5 February 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

BBC Last Updated: Thursday, 1 February 2007, 09:27 GMT
Liberians to Cash in on Peace
By Jonathan Paye-Layleh, Ganta

Liberians living in rural areas ravaged by the country's civil war are eager to start cashing in on peace. For the first time in 16 years, a bank is opening up in the remote north-eastern trading hub of Ganta - situated on the border with Guinea and on the road to Ivory Coast. Most banks away from the capital, Monrovia, were looted and destroyed during the 14-year war that ended in 2003. Nohn Tappia, who struggles to make a living out of her store in Ganta, believes the new bank will help her and other businesses.

International Clips on West Africa

VOA 03 February 2007
Sierra Leoneans to Monitor Government's Use of Debt Relief Funds
By Kari Barber, Dakar

Sierra Leone, which was recently forgiven more than $1.5 billion in debt, is now looking at how to spend the extra funds. Some in the impoverished nation say they worry the government will mishandle money set aside to repay the debt and that little benefit will reach those who need it. Kari Barber reports from our West Africa bureau in Dakar. The announcement in January that the last of Sierra Leone's debt to major world lenders, including the World Bank, was forgiven was met with excitement as many Sierra Leoneans saw it as a step toward improved international standing.

Local Media – Newspaper

Liberian Delegation in U.S. Partnership Conference
(The News, Heritage, The Analyst, Public Agenda, and The Informer)

- A high-powered Liberian delegation headed by Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh is in Washington D.C. for the Partnership Conference on Liberia’s economic recovery and reconstruction programme.
- The Technical delegation is to discuss a comprehensive blueprint on the strategic economic recovery programmes for Liberia.
- Meanwhile, a forum to bring together Liberians and international investors has been planned to take place in Washington D.C. this month, said a recent dispatch from the Liberian Embassy in the U.S.

All Set for Nimba County By-Election Tomorrow
(The Inquirer)

- The National Elections Commission (NEC) said all is now set for the Nimba County District #6 By-elections which is expected to take place tomorrow.
NEC Chairman James Fromayan told a news conference over the weekend that the Supreme Court of Liberia has upheld the decision of the Board of Commissioners of NEC and has denied and dismissed the appeal of complainants on the decision to dismiss a petition brought against Mr. Evan V. Koah, an aspirant in By-election.

TRC May Reduce Activities
(The Inquirer)

- [sic:] It is likely that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) may reduce its activities and programmes to engender financial support. According to a reliable source, the planned move by the TRC is based on an advice from the American philanthropist, George Soros, whose foundation, Open Society Initiative for West Africa, is also funding the Commission. Mr. Soros had suggested a review of the Commission’s budget which he said include huge salaries, with the view of reducing it in order to galvanize the necessary support and funding.

Local Media – Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 9:45 am)

President and Visitors Dedicate Development Projects in Rural Liberia
(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

SRSG Calls for “People-Centred” Development in Liberia
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss said that “people-centered” development remains a key approach towards moving Liberia forward stressing that development must include people and be focused on equity.
- Addressing a workshop for the County Support Teams, Mr. Doss noted that when Liberia was considered the highest Gross National Product in Africa, most parts of the Country were left out in the economic progress and development.
- The forum was intended to review and provide effective recommendations for Liberia’s local authorities who he encouraged to re-think the way development is done.
(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Lawmakers Confer to Resolve Leadership Saga
- Impeccable sources have told reporters in Monrovia that rival parties in the leadership saga at the House of Representatives were locked in discussions to reach a compromise and that the talks were being held in “good faith” to end the deadlock.
(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

World Bank Pledges US$42 Million for Liberia’s Reconstruction
- The Country Manager of the World Bank, Mr. Luigi Giovanni announced that the Bank pledged US$42 million to rebuild Liberia and that said amount would be committed to the Country by July, 2007.
(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

American Billionaire Donates US$2 Million to Education Trust for Liberia
- The Head of the Liberia Education Trust United States Office, Madame Deborah Harding said that more than US$2 million has been raised for the program and billionaire and philanthropist George Soros donated US$1 million of the amount while the rest came from foundations and individuals interested in girls’ education in Liberia. The Trust provides education for Liberian girls and women in primary, secondary schools and colleges.
(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)
Community Radio Conference Opens in Monrovia Tuesday

- In a press release issued yesterday, the Liberia Media Center announced that it was organizing a community radio conference in collaboration with the Radio Netherlands Training Center to find ways to strengthen the community radio sector and develop ideas for its future. Outcomes from the conference would serve as strategies for the overall future development of the sector.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

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 or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.
Child soldiers 'are a time bomb'

France's foreign minister has warned that the use of child soldiers is a time bomb that threatens stability and growth in Africa and beyond.

Philippe Douste-Blazy told a Paris conference child soldiers were "lost children, lost for peace and lost for the development of their countries."

An estimated 250,000 child soldiers are now fighting in wars, mostly in Africa.

Delegates heard a former child soldier tell of his experiences on the frontline in Sierra Leone.

Ishmael Beah, who fought for almost two years, described shooting someone as being "as easy as drinking a glass of water".

Paris Principles

The former child soldier, now 26, was barely 13 when recruited to fight in an armed faction in Sierra Leone.

"It is the most difficult thing to regain your humanity. I'm living proof that it is possible," he said.

The two-day conference, hosted by the UN children's agency and the French government, will seek to get countries to sign up to a new framework of action known as the Paris Principles.

These aim to ensure countries work harder to release children from conflict and reintegrate them into normal life.

Mr Douste-Blazy said that countries that recruited children to fight should no longer be allowed to "slip through the net".

Mr Beah said that a failure to follow through on rehabilitation programmes left children at risk becoming mercenaries and fuelling further conflicts.

"They know how to use a gun. And there is a conflict next door offering $100 a day and all-you-can-loot, and they will go back to that," he said.

Several countries are under special scrutiny by the UN over child soldiers and there has been growing concern over the use of child soldiers in the troubled Darfur region of Sudan.

Since 2002, the International Criminal Court has defined the use of children in combat as a war crime. Last week, it announced it was opening its first trial - against a Congolese militiaman Thomas Lubanga, accused of recruiting child soldiers during the Democratic Republic of Congo's civil war between 1998 and 2003.
Uganda: LRA Rebels May Send Lawyers to the ICC

By Peter Clottey
Washington,D.C.

In Uganda, leaders of the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) have reportedly hired lawyers to represent them at the international criminal court (ICC) in the Hague. The ICC has indicted LRA leaders for crimes against humanity. The rebels say their lawyers would find out the exact charges against the indicted commanders, and how ICC plans to execute those indictments.

Obonyo Olweny is the spokesman for the rebel LRA. He said the rebels are yet to make any commitment whether to make the much talked about trip to the Hague.

“I know that in our delegation there is a lawyer, but he has been there since negotiations began last year. We also have not made a firm commitment to go to the Hague, but it was a general idea towards the end of last year that some of our delegation should go and visit the ICC and hear for themselves the accusations and have some exchanges with them,” he said.

Olweny said the leadership of the LRA has decided not to go back to Juba for the continuation of the peace talks with the Ugandan government.

“We are not going back to Juba; we’ve made a strong decision that we are not going back, and that is also shared by the high command of the rebels. We have given reason that the chief mediator in Juba is not neutral. He has been supporting the government of Uganda and so we have pulled out of Juba, and we have made that very clear even to the UN chief envoy Joaquim Chissano. And we are looking for a neutral venue, Olweny noted.

He said for the peace talks to continue, both the rebels and the Uganda government should make a compromise on the venue and the mediator.

“Certainly there must be a compromise at some stage, and the government of Uganda must accept to come to a neutral venue…they must accept to come to a neutral venue as demanded by the LRA,” he said.

Olweny said a different mediator would not be biased and would not side with the Uganda government as he said the current one is allegedly doing.

“We think that a new mediator would be neutral and non partisan, unlike the government of Southern Sudan which is headed by Vice President Riek Machar. That is why we are suggesting Nairobi, Kenya. Alternatively we can go to South Africa, and we have also suggested Rome in Italy,” he said.

Meanwhile, Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni has said the South Sudan city of Juba will remain the venue for the peace talks and that Riek Machar who is also the vice president of South Sudan would stay as chief mediator. Kenya has also rejected calls by the LRA that it hosts peace negotiations with the government, saying it did not want the talks delayed by distractions of “venue or forum shopping”.

Voice of America
Monday, 5 February 2007
Guineans Return to Work After Costly General Strike, but Nation Faces Uncertain Future

By Nico Colombant & Tatiana Mossot
Conakry, Guinea

Last month's general strike in the mineral-rich West African nation of Guinea became a popular movement demanding the resignation of President Lansana Conte, in power for 23 years. Security forces killed scores of protesters, but the 18-day strike ended January 27th after Mr. Conte promised to name a prime minister with decision-making powers to fight corruption and ease grinding poverty. The country's bauxite mines are back in operation now, but there is widespread concern about possible further unrest. VOA's Nico Colombant updates the situation, with reporting by Tatiana Mossot in Guinea's capital.

Guinea's capital is busy again, but after last month's deadly protests, some things will never again be the same.

In markets, the price of rice has gone up, and will probably never go back to pre-strike levels. Instead of bringing prices down, the protest action worsened inflation. The price of gasoline also nearly doubled.

In the slums of Conakry, families are mourning the dead.

Amadou Oury Diallo was killed by a soldier's bullet to the head. His brother remains defiant: "I have a right to defend myself. I have a right to defend Guinea. We must all fight for change. I am not afraid to die. I have suffered too much."

A few streets down, a father mourns his son, who was killed by security forces on the deadliest day of the strike. The father remembers how his son's friend came to break the news. "He said, 'I need your help with Adramane.' I said, 'Why can't you help him?' He said, 'They shot him down.' I said, 'Did you leave him in the streets?' He said, 'Yes.' I asked him, 'Is that his blood on your shoes?' He said, 'Yes.' I knew then that my son was dead. His friend would have never left him behind alive."

Guineans, who used to be afraid to speak out -- afraid they would be arrested, now gather in courtyards talking about politics. One protester says, "Change is still needed. And this change needs to happen on all levels: economic, social, and cultural. Everything is oppressive here. Before, we were too afraid to even talk. But now we are really determined. If they don't want real change, they will have to kill us all."

Guineans are waiting to see if the changes to end the strike will go far enough, or if they will have to return to the streets for more protests.
Voice of America  
Monday, 5 February 2007

**Burkina Faso Launches Mediation Attempt for Ivory Coast**

By Nico Colombant  
Dakar

High-level rebel and presidential delegations from divided Ivory Coast have started meetings in Burkina Faso in a renewed attempt to end more than four years of stalled negotiations. VOA's Nico Colombant reports from Dakar.

Ivorian presidential advisor Desire Tagro said Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore was in an ideal position to mediate the conflict. He says he knows the players well, and has proven his mediation skills recently in Togo.

Tagro was part of a presidential delegation in Ouagadougou meeting with Mr. Compaore, along with high-ranking rebels.

This is part of an initiative launched by Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo, seeking what he called direct dialogue with the rebels, who hold more than half of Ivory Coast.

Mr. Gbagbo has previously accused Mr. Compaore of being behind the rebellion. Many of the rebel leaders have homes in Ouagadougou.

Mr. Gbagbo has also said international mediation efforts have failed to reunite Ivory Coast.

Rebels say they will not disarm, until many northerners who say they are considered second-class citizens in the world's leading cocoa producer are given nationality papers and voting cards.

Elections have already been delayed twice, while thousands of U.N. peacekeepers and a French rapid reaction force have manned a buffer zone separating the north from south.

The latest U.N. Security resolution for Ivory Coast, 1721, has been largely ignored.

A national unity prime minister, Charles Konan Banny, was given expanded powers to organize national identification and disarmament schemes before scheduled October elections, but little progress has been made.

An opposition leader Kandia Camara tells VOA time keeps on passing without progress, while Ivorians suffer.
"Our hope is that this dialogue starts and ends at the end of February," she said.

She says she also hopes the talks will be in line with international efforts.

"There is a resolution, 1721, and in that resolution, there are some steps which have to be done," she said. "The main aim is the election at the end of this year. So we have to do our best to give the papers to all the Ivorians who can vote. And we have to make our best so that the warriors, if I can call them like that, put down the guns and we go to elections so that all the Ivorians will choose the person they want to be the president of Ivory Coast, so that peace can come again."

Rebel leader Guillaume Soro says he wants to make sure renewed dialogue is transparent and in line with the U.N. resolution.

Rebels accuse Mr. Gbagbo of blocking reforms, saying he is afraid he would lose a free and fair election. The two main opposition leaders in Ivory Coast were barred from the vote Mr. Gbagbo won, in conditions he himself called "chaotic", against a military ruler in 2000.
Liberian torture case traces back to Orlando

By CARRIE WEIMAR

Charles Emmanuel grew up in a tan two-story home in a middle-class Orlando neighborhood 9 miles from Universal Studios.

His stepdad was a welder. His mom was a homemaker. Emmanuel liked computers.

In 1994, he ran afoul of Orange County sheriff's deputies. So he flew to the west African nation of Liberia to live with his biological father.

Today, the boy from Orlando is known as Charles "Chuckie" Taylor Jr., son of Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia and one of Africa's most feared warlords.

As the head of his father's security unit, Emmanuel developed his own reputation.

"His unit did things like beating people to death, burying them alive, rape - the most horrible kind of war crimes," said Elise Keppler, counsel for Human Rights Watch's International Justice Program.

Emmanuel, now 29, sits in a Miami detention center awaiting trial. He will be the first person prosecuted under a 1994 law that makes it illegal for a U.S. citizen to commit acts of torture abroad. If convicted, he could face more than 60 years in prison.

The trial will be watched closely in the United States and elsewhere. Human rights activists hope it will encourage American prosecutors to more aggressively pursue overseas abusers. Legal scholars believe it will give the courts a definition of torture that could be applied to the treatment of prisoners at places like the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

For pure spectators, the case will provide a view of a troubled young man from Central Florida who wound up in the middle of an international scandal.

The early years

Emmanuel's mother met Charles Taylor at Bentley College in Boston, where he was an economics student.

Taylor returned to his native Liberia in the early 1990s. He served as the country's president for six years and now faces a U.N.-backed war crimes trial for alleged atrocities during Sierra Leone's civil war.

Emmanuel was born in Boston in 1977 and moved to Orlando in 1987. Shortly after, he changed his name to Roy Belfast Jr., after his stepfather.
He had his first brush with the law in Florida in 1990 when he was charged with auto theft, according to court records. In 1993, he was arrested on six counts, including aggravated assault, retail theft and grand larceny, court records showed.

The most serious charge came in 1994, when sheriff's deputies said he and two friends tried to rob a young man on a west Orlando street. When confronted by the victim's father, Emmanuel pulled out a .38-caliber handgun and pointed it at his head, according to a sheriff's report.

A psychiatric evaluation performed at the time said Emmanuel had anger management problems.

Facing a potential felony conviction, he fled to Africa, court records showed. The charges were eventually abandoned.

**Serious accusations**

According to the U.S. Justice Department, Emmanuel was the head of his father's antiterrorist unit in Liberia.

After his father's regime was overthrown, Emmanuel moved to Trinidad. When he attempted to return to the United States in March, he was intercepted at Miami International Airport carrying a falsified passport.

The law used to prosecute Emmanuel was passed to comply with a U.N. treaty, said Luz Nagle, a professor at Stetson University College of Law. It prohibits Americans from committing or attempting to commit torture overseas.

The United States faced growing international pressure to exercise the law.

"Everyone was waiting to see what kind of action the United States would finally take," Nagle said.

Defense attorneys Monday challenged the law's constitutionality and asked a federal judge to dismiss the case. U.S. Magistrate Judge William Turnoff did not immediately rule.

The defense's main complaint is the government's refusal to identify the man who said he was tortured by Emmanuel and others. Miguel Caridad, Emmanuel's lawyer, said he needs the identity to prepare a defense.

"How can we do anything but speculate at this point when confronted by four-year-old allegations of misconduct in a foreign country we may not be able to visit that has been racked by ten years of civil war?" he wrote in court documents.

But prosecutors want to protect the man's identity for his safety. They say circumstances described in the indictment are specific enough - detailing the time, place and events surrounding the alleged torture - that the name is unnecessary.

According to the indictment, the unidentified victim was abducted from his home.

Emmanuel supervised questioning at the presidential residence, known as Whiteflower. The man was then taken to another site where the interrogation continued with torture.
Prosecutors say Emmanuel and his co-conspirators pressed a hot iron into the man's flesh, shocked him with electrodes, rubbed salt into his wounds and forced him at gunpoint to hold scalding water in his hands.

Emmanuel's federal trial is scheduled for Sept. 4 in Miami.

Beyond the constitutional questions, the case raises questions about the definition of torture, said Julian Ku, associate professor at Hofstra University College of Law.

If a judge finds Emmanuel guilty of torture for committing certain acts, it will create a standard that could be applied to U.S. agents who interrogate prisoners in foreign countries.

"Before, no one really knew what torture meant under the 1994 law," Ku said. "Now, there will be a better definition and that could pose a problem for the administration."

'A bad man'

No one will be watching Emmanuel's trial more closely than human rights advocates and Liberian refugees.

Moses Allison, 32, fled Liberia in the early 1990s to avoid the bloody civil war Emmanuel's father helped start. Now living in Clearwater, he gets updates from friends and family still in Liberia. They anxiously await Emmanuel's trial.

"A lot of people were very scared of him," Allison said. "He is a very bad man."

Staff researcher John Martin contributed to this report. Carrie Weimar can be reached at cweimar@sptimes.com or 813 226-3416.
Event to examine international law

Internationally known U.S. diplomats, UI law professors, and others will discuss the role of international law and the execution of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, during the War Crimes Symposium at the UI law school this week.

University of Connecticut law Professor Laura Dickinson, who will speak about hybrid courts - which include both domestic and international judges - told The Daily Iowan on Monday that she felt that the former Iraqi dictator's trial was rushed.

International law - or rules governing nations beyond their borders - could have moderated the Shiite and Kurdish judges who presided over Saddam's trial, Dickinson said. Saddam was a Sunni.

The judicial panel's composition, along with politicians who urged a speedier trial, calls the proceeding's independence into question, she said.

"That's a real shame, because the atrocities Hussein committed were enormous," she said.

The former Iraqi dictator was convicted in November 2006 for his involvement in the Dujail massacre of hundreds of Shiites in 1982. He was executed on Dec. 30.

Dickinson noted that the U.N.-supported Special Court for Sierra Leone, created in 2002 by an agreement between the United Nations and the African nation's government, is an example of a hybrid court.

The day-long symposium will also explore truth and reconciliation commissions - which hear public grievances regarding war crimes and other human-rights abuses and potentially order reparations for victims - as alternatives to prosecution, said UI law Professor Adrien Wing.

An example of such a commission is a body in South Africa established to hear from victims of apartheid.

Wing is proposing a similar panel for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Meanwhile, keynote speaker Kenneth Quinn will discuss his career as a U.S. diplomat during the symposium, specifically relating to his involvement with Cambodia. Quinn, who served as a rural-development officer in Vietnam, said he conducted the initial reporting on the Khmer Rouge, a communist organization that seized power in Cambodia in 1975 and forcefully evacuated urban Cambodians into the countryside to labor in "collective work brigades." It is estimated that 2 million Cambodians died in the Khmer Rouge "killing fields."

Quinn later served as U.S. ambassador to Cambodia from 1996-99, and he is now president of the World Food Prize Foundation, which awards $250,000 to individuals who find ways to increase the quality and availability of food worldwide.
The symposium is sponsored by the student-run *Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems Journal*, the International Law Society, the UI Center for Human Rights, International Programs, and the Law Foundation.

E-mail DI reporter Colin Burke at: colin-burke@uiowa.edu

**The War Crimes Symposium**

**What:** A conference of international law experts.  
**Who:** Speakers include Kenneth Quinn of the World Food Prize Foundation, University of Connecticut law Professor Laura Dickinson, and UI law Professor Adrien Wing.  
**Where:** Boyd Law Building  
**When:** Proceedings start at 8:00 a.m. Friday.