PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as at:
Monday, 19 November 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday. Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact Martin Royston-Wright Ext 7217
Women and girls are sometimes accused of consenting to being raped, and then found guilty. This is a common practice in many communities. Women and girls who were raped and sexually abused were often stigmatized and ostracized by their communities. They were often blamed for the assault, and were subjected to social exclusion and discrimination.

The psychological, social, and economic impact of sexual violence on women and girls is immense. The trauma of sexual violence can affect a woman's mental health, self-esteem, and ability to function in society. It can also lead to physical health problems, such as infections and chronic pain.

Survivors of sexual violence face many challenges. They may struggle to access justice, healthcare, and support services. They may also face stigma and discrimination from their families, communities, and society at large.

Sexual violence in Sierra Leone is a serious problem. The country has a high incidence of sexual violence, and women and girls are particularly vulnerable. The government and civil society organizations have worked to address this issue, but progress has been slow.

The lack of access to justice and adequate care for survivors is a major challenge. Survivors often face discrimination and stigma, which can prevent them from seeking help. They may also face economic barriers, such as a lack of access to resources and support systems.

There is a need for more comprehensive and culturally sensitive responses to sexual violence in Sierra Leone. This includes providing survivors with access to justice, healthcare, and support services. It also requires addressing the root causes of violence, such as gender inequality and power imbalances.

The government and civil society organizations are working to address this issue. They are working to raise awareness about sexual violence, and to provide access to justice, healthcare, and support services. They are also working to address the root causes of violence, and to promote gender equality.

In conclusion, sexual violence in Sierra Leone is a serious problem that requires urgent attention. The government and civil society organizations must continue to work together to address this issue, and to provide survivors with the support they need to heal and rebuild their lives.
Pademba Road Prison A Health Hazard

BY KOMBA ELLIE

The Chief Superintendent of Prisons CSP Cecilia Ellie has called on government’s urgent attention to the deplorable state of Prisoners throughout the country with special reference to those in the Western Area that sleep on bare floor. CSP Ellie expressed these sentiments at the close of a five days budget discussion organized by the Ministry of Finance at the Youyi building in Freetown.

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Pademba Road Prison A Health Hazard

FROM PAGE 1

Memorial School and Ansarul Secondary School, his message was to work with the school administrators in a bid to ensure quality education at all cost. The Mayor further commended the outstanding Basic Education Certificate Examination results obtained by these schools and admonished staff members and pupils to maintain the good work.

On the part of the pupils, the Mayor and team advised them to work hand and glove with their teachers for the progress of the school.

Commenting on behalf of The Bishop Johnson Memorial School, the Principal of the Junior Secondary School, Reverend Joseph A M Jarrette narrated the disadvantaged position the school finds itself with regards to criminals infiltrating the school compound and carting away with whatever they could lay hands on as the porosity of the school compound exposes it to criminals who are bent on vandalizing property and making away with valuable items.

Rev. Jarrette recounted the bad effects the war had on the school as classrooms were turned into dwelling rooms by displaced people who in turn destroyed the furniture and learning materials thus hindering education.
Sierra Leone Civil War

Where are they now?

On 13 January 2003 a small group of armed men tried unsuccessfully to break into an armory in Freetown. Former AFRC-junta leader Koroma, after being linked to the raid, went into hiding.

In March the Special Court for Sierra Leone issued its first indictments for war crimes during the civil war. Foday Sankoh, already in custody, was indicted, along with notorious RUF field commander Sam "Mosquito" Beckoarie, Koroma, the Minister of Interior and former head of the Civil Defense Force, Samuel Hinga Norman, and several others.

Norman was arrested when the indictments were announced, while Beckoarie and Koroma remained at large (presumably in Liberia). On 5 May 2003 Beckoarie was killed in Liberia, probably on orders from President Charles G. Taylor, who expected to be indicted by the Special Court and feared Beckoarie's testimony.

Several weeks later, word filtered out of Liberia that Koroma had been killed as well, although his death remains unconfirmed. In June the Special Court announced Taylor's indictment. Sankoh died in prison in Freetown 29 July 2003 from a heart attack. He had been ailing for some time.

Foday Saybana Sankoh

In August 2003 President Kabbah testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on his role during the civil war.

On 1 December 2003 Major General Brigadier Tom Carrow, who had been the Chief of Defence Staff for the Government of Sierra Leone and an important figure in the Sierra Leonean army, was reassigned to civilian duties.

In June 2007, the Special Court found three of the eleven people indicted Alex Tanbo Brima, Brima Dassy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kamu guilty of war crimes, including acts of terrorism, collective punishments, extermination, murder, rape, outrages upon personal dignity, conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces, enslavement and pillage. Diamond revenues in Sierra Leone have increased more than tenfold since the end of the conflict, from $10 million in 2000 to about $130 million in 2004, although according to the UNAMISIL, surveys of mining sites, "more than 50 per cent of diamond mining still remains unlicensed and reportedly considerable illegal smuggling of diamonds continues."
THE CASE AGAINST GADDAFI: WILL CHARLES TAYLOR "NAME AND SHAME" HIM? - (FINAL PART II)

By Professor Hassan R. Sigger, Wisconsin, USA

In 1986 Reagan ordered an attack on Libya following the bombing of La Belle discotheque in West Berlin that caused American casualties. Reagan held Kaddafy responsible for terrorism aimed at America, and approved air strikes on the Libyan capital, Tripoli, that resulted in over one hundred people dead including Kaddafy’s adopted daughter, Hanna Kaddafy. Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, once described the Libyan leader as 100% insane, while other Arab leaders suggested that Kaddafy’s membership in the Arab League should be terminated. How Kaddafy was morphed by western powers from pariah to patron is a long and complicated diplomatic process.

Bruce Jentleson, a State Department official in the Clinton administration said this to explain America’s reversal of diplomatic direction: “the US didn’t make this decision because Kaddafy underwent some full transformation; we still don’t like him... but he wanted to stay in power and was willing to go on something important to us, so we struck a deal.” Further, Jentleson indicated that Western leaders convinced Kaddafy that if he gave up his nuclear programs and did a policy change, we would not do regime change.”

Jon B. Alterman, director of the Middle East Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C. noted: “while some aspects of the Libyan leader’s behavior remained objectionable, such as meddling in African politics it never challenged U.S. strategic interests.”

In other words, although some aspects of the Libyan leader’s behavior remained objectionable, such as meddling in African politics it never challenged U.S. strategic interests.

The Los Angeles Times put it best in its defense of the new policy: “if any atrocious record on human rights were enough to land a nation on the [terrorist] list, then the U.S. would have to add China, Egypt and Uzbekistan and dozens of others.”

Gama Nkrumah, son of the fiery Ghanaian Pan-Africanist, writing in the Al-Ahram weekly, a leading Middle East newspaper, described what happened between Washington and Tripoli as “a marriage of convenience cemented by business ties.” In short, when the rule of law, morality, human rights, and the so-called wider property, heinous rapes, displaced two million people, and resulted in immense hardship on the civilian populations of both countries, that unambiguous despicable record of human rights violations was not enough to maintain the diplomatic ostracism of Kaddafy. An exuberant Bush Official even proclaimed that, Libya “is out of the terrorism business.”

Such aid is miniscule compared to the billions the Libyan leader has spent to reimburse European victims of his alleged terrorist acts. He has become the self-appointed spokesperson of African causes such as human rights violations in Darfur, Chad, Somalia, and the plight of African would-be migrants to Europe. Kaddafy also got Africa to violate sanctions the western powers imposed on Libya.

Mandela visited Libya during the sanctions period, and air travel between the rest of the continent to Libya were resumed despite the sanctions.

Further, in the late 90s, Kaddafy began a campaign that revived the principles of African unity, as stipulated by the Founders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and these efforts resulted...
Human Rights Commission on sensitization tour

The newly established Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone has ended a week long sensitization workshop in the northern town of Makeni.

The programme was to acquaint the people in the north about the aims and objectives of the Commission. Speaking to her audience, Chairman, Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone, Mrs. Jamestina King said the UN and ECOWAS encouraged governments to set up national human rights institution to promote a culture of nationalism. She said the Commission was formed through the human right of Sierra Leone Act No.9 of 2004 as provided in Lome Peace Accord of 1999 and the recommendations of the TRC.

She said one of the functions of the Commission is to investigate or enquire into any allegation of human rights violations adding that when the Commission finds out that there has been a human right violation, it has powers to recommend compensation to victims. Mrs King said the Commission is independent and is not subjected to the control or direction of any person, authority or government even if such person, authority or government provides material support to the Commission.

Commissioner Joseph Stanley in his contribution said the Commission interacts with NGO's and other organisations working in the interest of human rights. He said they have visited prisons and other detention centres to inspect and report accordingly adding that the Commission has power to intervene in legal proceedings involving any human rights issue.

Paramount Chief of Bombali Shebora chiefdom, Bai Shebora Kasanga II extended appreciation to the Commission for organizing such programme. He disclosed that rape, early marriage, 'bondo' society and child trafficking are some of the problems they face. He called on government to address the issues as soon as possible.

Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Project Officer, Ibrahim Darany called on parents to encourage children especially girls to go to school. He blamed chiefs for encouraging early marriages. Similar workshops went on in Kambia district.
PRESS RELEASE

UNIOSIL SUPPORTS REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTING THE TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS IN SIERRA LEONE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 19 November 2007 --- The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, in collaboration with UNIOSIL and a number of civil society groups, is organizing a Stakeholders Conference on the Status of Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Recommendations.

This Conference will be held from 19 to 20 November 2007, in Freetown, and is conceptualized around ongoing collective efforts by the Government and people of Sierra Leone and their international partners to disseminate and give greater visibility to the TRC Report, to sensitize the public on its key findings and to facilitate their implementation.

Most importantly, within the context of the post-conflict, nation-building and peace consolidation process currently underway, the Conference is not only to create a forum for interface between the main actors on the TRC but will present the opportunity for all stakeholders to be informed on the recommendations that have been implemented thus far, those still pending and strategize on the way forward.

It is also anticipated that this forum will create the opportunity for greater citizen engagement towards a further strengthening of the legal, judicial, institutional and administrative mechanisms, as well as cultural and democratic values, vital to entrenching the climate conducive to broader respect for, promotion and protection of human rights in Sierra Leone.

It is envisioned that the resolutions reached at this Conference will immensely contribute to greater citizenry interest on the findings of the TRC and further facilitate the implementation of all the recommendations as contained in the TRC Report.

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International Clips on Liberia

There were no relevant stories on Liberia in the international media today.

International Clips on West Africa

AP 11/15/2007 12:50:55

New president for diamond-rich Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP) - Thousands cheered Thursday as Ernest Bai Koroma was inaugurated as this war-battered country's newest president. He vowed to fight the corruption that has kept diamond-rich Sierra Leone in the ranks of the world's poorest nations. 'I will exercise zero tolerance toward corruption,' the 54-year-old Koroma said.

Local Media – Newspaper

Police Storm Coast Guard Base
(The Analyst)

- Residents of the Coast Guard Base on Bushrod Island, most of them former personnel of the Liberia National Coast Guard and the Armed Forces of Liberia yesterday resisted attempts by members of the Liberia National Police to evict them from the base. About seven officers of the LNP and UNMIL, apparently acting on the orders of the Ministry of National Defense went to the base to have the retired and former personnel of the Coast Guard division of the AFL evicted.

Four Transport Ministry Officials Dismissed
(Daily Observer)

- Four Transport Ministry officials have been dismissed for unauthorized actions and extortion of money from vehicles drivers. Inspectors Christian Cooper, Ralph Jacobs and William Swen were dismissed for setting up road blocks in Kakata and the 15-Gate area. A Transport Ministry release says the inspectors impounded vehicles, removed license plates and extorted money in their unauthorized inspection.

Road Rehabilitation Work Begins
(Daily Observer)

- Government will today formally launch the rehabilitation of the Monrovia-Buchanan Highway and streets in Monrovia. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf will grace the ceremony to mark the roads rehabilitation programme to be held in Monrovia. The Ministry of Public Works said it has put in place a traffic management plan in collaboration with the Liberia National Police. In a statement issued by the ministry, vehicles heading to Central Monrovia would travel by way of 19th Street to Russell and Cheeseman Avenues.

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

Drug Enforcement Agency Arrests Ex-Soldier for Selling Marijuana

- According to a release, the Drug Enforcement Agency yesterday arrested one Emmanuel Plato, a so-called ex-soldier of the Armed Forces of Liberia for allegedly selling and distributing marijuana at the Fiamah Market in Sinkor. The Agency noted that Emmanuel was
also arrested with 27 wraps of drug valued at LD$270; a military police helmet and a Motorola handset.

(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY FM and Truth FM)

Deactivated Soldiers Appreciate Job Creation Initiatives

- An alliance of deactivated security personnel said that it appreciates the initiatives being taken to create jobs but calls for concrete action to settle their arrears. The alliance chairman, Norrison Kanyen told reporters that they would not wave months of arrears owed them by Government.
- Mr. Kanyen assured Government of a peaceful Christmas celebration but called on President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to speedily address the issue of the arrears.

(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY FM and Truth FM)


- The Jim Blake’s Law Firm in the United States yesterday donated 14 cartoons of law books to the Ministry of Justice. Mr. Nathan Miller, Program Officer of the International Senior Lawyers Project said that the donation is in appreciation of the hospitality accorded Mr. Blake during his six-week visit to Liberia. According to Mr. Miller, Mr. Blake promised to assist in strengthening the Justice Ministry.
- For his part, Solicitor-General Tiawon Gonglo commended Mr. Blake for the donation and that the Ministry would continue to count on its foreign partners in ensuring improvement in the justice system of post-conflict Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS, Star Radio, SKY FM and Truth FM)

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.
Former Khmer Rouge leader arrested

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) -- Khieu Samphan, the former Khmer Rouge head of state, was arrested Monday by a U.N.-backed genocide tribunal after being taken from a hospital where he was being treated following a stroke, officials said.

Police escorted Khieu Samphan from a Phnom Penh hospital, where he had been admitted Wednesday. They held his arms for support and led him to a police car, which sped away in a convoy of a half dozen police vehicles.

"Khieu Samphan, the former head of state of Democratic Kampuchea was arrested," said tribunal spokesman Reach Sambath, referring to the official name of Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Khieu Samphan's arrest by a U.N.-backed genocide tribunal has been widely expected. The tribunal already has arrested four of his colleagues to face trial for atrocities during the regime's 1975-79 rule that led to the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people.
Arrests Highlight Need for Reform at Khmer Rouge Court

~ New Report Urges Donors to Lead Improvement of ECCC ~

New York, November 16, 2007—This week's arrest of two high level Khmer Rouge leaders, Ieng Sary and Ieng Thirith, marks a significant step forward for Cambodia's war crimes tribunal, the Open Society Justice Initiative said today.

But in a report released today, the Justice Initiative urges the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) to take immediate action to improve the court's functioning and calls upon donor states and the United Nations to take more assertive action to ensure that needed reform takes place.

"Additional donor funds alone will not contribute to the success of the court," said Robert O. Varenik, the Justice Initiative's acting executive director. "For the court to succeed in its historic task, international donors and the United Nations must take immediate, concrete steps to address shortcomings in the court's administration and leadership."

Ieng Sary and Ieng Thirith, the first husband and wife to be charged by an international court, were arrested at their Phnom Penh home on November 12 and taken into the ECCC's custody. Ieng Sary was deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Democratic Kampuchea during the Khmer Rouge rule between 1975 and 1979. He is charged with crimes against humanity and war crimes. His wife, Ieng Thirith, was minister of social affairs and education and is charged with crimes against humanity.

These arrests come in advance of the ECCC's appeal to donor states for an estimated $45 million in additional funding to ensure the trials can continue through 2010. They underscore the significant strides the court is making and why it should be supported by the international community. But in its new report, Critical Issues Surrounding the Fundraising Drive of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, available here {http://www.justiceinitiative.org/db/resource2?res_id=103943}, the Justice Initiative urges states to condition future funding on demonstrated results addressing administrative, transparency, and leadership problems at the court.

According to the Justice Initiative's latest report, the ECCC needs to:

• Effectively address corruption allegations, minimize translation backlogs, institute best practices in human resource management, and prepare the courtroom and other physical structures for trial;

• Increase transparency through the more frequent release of public information about the court's operations;

• Develop an active management oversight group to ensure all donor funds are administered effectively and efficiently; and

• Work with a UN-appointed special advisor to the court, to assist with administrative and management reforms and monitor their effectiveness.

"These arrests highlight the urgent need for the ECCC to address crucial issues affecting the court's administrative efficiency and its ability to meet international fair trial standards," said Varenik. "International donors who are supporting the court should link future donations to the court's efforts to address these challenges urgently and effectively."