PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Wednesday, 25 June 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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PRESS RELEASE
Freetown, Sierra Leone, 25 June 2008

Testimony Ends in RUF Trial; Last Witness Testifies in Freetown

The Defence concluded their case late Tuesday in the trial of three former leaders of Sierra Leone’s Revolutionary United Front (RUF). An Expert Witness, called jointly by counsel for First Accused Issa Sesay and Third Accused Augustine Gbao, was the last witness to testify in the RUF trial and also before the Court in Freetown, as the Special Court for Sierra Leone takes a significant step forward in completing its mandate.

The trial of The Prosecutor vs. Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao opened in Freetown on 5 July 2004. The Judges of Trial Chamber I heard testimony from 86 witnesses during the Prosecution case, including one called at the behest of the Defence. 85 witnesses were called by the Defence. Of the 85 Defence witnesses, 59 witnesses were called by counsel for Sesay, while counsel for Kallon called 22 witnesses, and counsel for Gbao called eight witnesses. Three of the witnesses were common to Sesay and Kallon, and one was common to Sesay and Gbao.

Final trial briefs are due by 29 July 2008 and oral arguments will take place on 4-5 August, prior to the Court’s judicial recess. The Judges will then retire for deliberations. A trial judgment in the case is expected later this year.

Two other cases were concluded at the Special Court earlier this year. On 22 February 2008 the Appeals Chamber rendered its judgment in the case of three former leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. On 28 May 2008 the Appeals Chamber handed down its judgment in the case of two former Civil Defence Forces leaders.

The Special Court trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor continues at The Hague.

#END
Swedish General reveals RUF command structure

By Betty Milton

Giving evidence yesterday at the Special Court, the last and final witness of the defence team a Retired General in the Swedish Army Johan Herderstedt has revealed to the court his understanding of the command structure of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) during the war.

In his evidence General Herderstedt who testified as an expert witness told the court that during his visit to the country, and in some of his reports he concluded that the RUF was a guerrilla movement which uses typical guerrilla tactics and warfare during the fight.

The witness said that the RUF used military structure to set up their organization and that the RUF also used hit and run tactics which was very common with guerrilla movements.

The composition at that time the Swedish General said was a mixture of police and military which was used during the initial stage of the movement.

General Herderstedt also in his evidence said that when he came to Sierra Leone, he traveled extensively with Mr Francis Musa and Lawrence Womandia and they went information was shared with him by these two men.

With the information he had he started working with it in order to compile his report and then relate his experience.

In his profile it was revealed that General Herderstedt, had been working with experts from other nations and mostly Generals or Colonels from France, South Korea, Japan and Finland, who were involved in the Gulf war and that he has been training soldiers in guerrilla fighting.

The retired Swedish General has also been an expert working under the US government and he does have a special task which is advising on the issue concerning the Gulf war.

In 2004 the General gave his opinion for peace and not for war in the Gulf.
'US gangsters' upset Taylor

Monrovia - The family of former Liberian strongman Charles Taylor is up in arms after Americans allegedly searched his family home this weekend, Sando Johnson, the spokesperson for Taylor's family, told AFP on Tuesday.

The men came to the house in US embassy vehicles on Sunday backed by heavily armed national police officers and took the keys from Taylor's security guards at gunpoint, said Johnson.

According to the family, the Americans brandished a search warrant from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, where the former Liberian president is currently on trial for war crimes, but the court denied any involvement.

"Prosecutor Stephen Rapp told me it was not done by the special court or at the request of the special court," court spokesperson Peter Andersen told AFP by phone from Sierra Leone on Tuesday.

"They pushed the security man out and went in. They were there for 40 minutes while the police officers prevented us from entering to see what they were doing," Johnson told AFP.

During the search a huge crowd gathered in front of the residence, and began to boo the Americans. A lawyer for the family said the men showed him a warrant from the court.

A bunch of gangsters

The American embassy in Monrovia and the Liberian minister of justice both refused to comment on Tuesday.

Observers said the search might be linked to the US indictment of Charles Taylor's son Charles McArthur Emmanuel, also known as Chuckie Taylor, on torture charges.

Chuckie Taylor, formerly head of his father's anti-terrorism unit, is awaiting trial in the US on charges that he tortured several people in Liberia between 1999 and 2003.

Charles Taylor's party, the former ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP), reacted with fury to the search on Tuesday.

"I do not understand why the government will allow a bunch of gangsters to do what they feel like in our country," Cyril Alen, chairperson of the NPP, told Star Radio.
Boiling Rage
For White Flower 'Invasion'

- Cyril Allen, Taylor's Lawyer Register Protest
- Special Court Denies Invasion Participation

If anyone thinks former Charles G. Taylor, now in jail facing war crimes charges, who led the bloody invasion of Liberia in 1989 and who presided over the darkest chapter of the country is sufficiently demonized and has no one to weep with him in his calamity, then it is big folly. Even the forceful entry of the ex-president's multimillion-dollar compound by persons whose full identity and mission are yet unknown—a compound from which he was commandeered some five years ago—is witnessing fuming exasperations from some Liberians, as Zeze Evans Ballah reports. See story on page 6.
Belligerent Rage for White Flower Invasion

One Liberian who has so far demonstrated total rage and bitterness for the forcible entry into the home of former President Taylor's house by individuals residing in the United States Embassy vans is the Chairman emeritus of the former ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP), Cyril Allen.

Cyril Allen, who is one of the fat beneficiaries of the largesse of the Taylor era, has described as an act of "unpatriotism" the action of some security personnel from the United States Embassy and armed uniform officers of the Liberia National Police force to enter the home of former President Pryce Taylor on last Saturday.

Cyril Allen said it is a pity that a few Americans were afraid to go to the country and do as they like as Liberians were their private farms.

The American defense of Taylor particularly among Americans when the ropes of regime changed to the neck of the NDP regime is widely known.

The Americans can do this to a little country like Liberia because the leaders have sold out their pride for bread, the fiery-souled ex-party chairman said.

In his characteristic verbose tone, Allen accused Philip Banks and Foreign Minister Obuobie King-Akele of being, according to him, part of the action of the Americans to invade Taylor's residence.

"It is over 48 hours now and the government of Liberia has not spoken on the issue which is a clear indication that they are all gangsters playing on the lives of the people of Liberia," Allen stated during an interview with this paper yesterday.

The government, he said, would have been responsible had such a, marauding occurred.

The same Allen, who 25 years ago cold-bloodily killed President William Tubman, placed them at the feet of some non-commissioned officers of the AFL, Allen said in rage.

"They are here again to cause more trouble. They gave us guns years ago to kill Drama, but now war is over, so they are coming back again."

According to Allen, the failure of the government to make statement on the so-called invasion of Taylor's house is a "b o o m b a s s a irresponsible" act.

Allen: "Few months ago, the same America said the Liberia justice system was corrupt and dubious. They have proven it by going to the court, dressed a Sheriff on a Sunday, which is a non-official working day and prepared a writ to be served on a Liberian. This simply gives credence to fact that the justice system in Liberia is rotten."

The former LPRC Managing Director said the Americans and the LNP officers forced themselves in the house and did a lot of things to induce evidence against Taylor.

"We are aware they cannot prove their case against the brother; so they have come to his house to manufacture evidence against him," he pointed out.

Every effort made to get Justice Minister Banks to comment on the issue failed.

At the time of writing, the Solicitor General of Liberia could not respond to several calls. He also failed to reply to SMS messages sent him on the Allen allegation.

A spokesman of the Special UN-backed War Crimes Court for Sierra Leone, Kanny Aggajoe, denied knowledge of the invasion of Taylor's house.

He told a local radio station in Monrovia that the Court has never made any request to search the home of Taylor.

On Sunday, a group of ex-patriates led by heavily armed men from the Liberia National Police (LNP) forcibly entered the residence of Taylor. It was not clear what they did inside the house.

Meanwhile, one of the lawyers representing the interest of Charles Taylor has written to the Minister of Justice Philip Banks, requesting a probe into the invasion of the home of Taylor.

Attorney-at-Law Sajina Syrenius Cophus of the Kemp and Kemp Associates in a letter, a copy of which was obtained by Public Agenda, that he was bringing to the attention of the Minister a "rather troubling development which tends to confirm the deep held suspicion amongst most Liberians, particularly the Taylor family, that the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Justice was part and parcel of the recent invasion of the home of former President Charles Taylor who is currently on trial in The Hague on charges of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity."

The letter dated June 24, 2008 states: "As you may have heard, on Sunday morning, June 22, 2008 at about 8:00 A.M. the family of former President Taylor again became a victim of undue harassment, intimidation and illegal and forceful invasion of the premises of the same (Charles Taylor), a citizen of this sovereign Republic, by U.S. Embassy officials masquerading as officers from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and accompanied by a bailiff from the Monrovia Magistrate Court and the heavily armed uniform officers of the Liberia National Police (LNP).

Based on what we read from the writ, the letter stated, "the U.S. Embassy officials through the heavily armed LNP officers "prayed" the Magistrate Court for a writ which is not a writ of search and seizure to enter the premises of Charles Taylor to take photographs and reconstruct a crime scene" in support of whatever allegations they were prosecuting against him.

The letter continued: "We have gathered from the guard on duty that morning and Mr. Sandra Johnson, the Attorney-in-Fact of the said premises, that the U.S. Embassy officials in the absence of the service of service of whatever writ they had, forcibly entered upon the premises, ordered the police officers to drive out the guard and remained inside Mr. Taylor residence with all of their sophisticated equipment for forty-five minutes to the detriment of the interest of the Taylor family and their right to privacy.

"Attorney Cophus said the action of the U.S. Embassy officials accompanied by their police causes a serious fundamental question as to the level of collaboration or collusion between the government of the sovereign Republic of Liberia and the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague for these basic reasons."

"Firstly, you will recall that the Constitution of Liberia grossly furnishes upon the Special Court for Sierra Leone and other foreign courts the right to enter and serve process, if and when necessary, upon the property of Mr. Taylor's property by U.S. Embassy officials for more than forty-five minutes in the absence of any of his family members, officers and employees of the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague for these basic reasons."

"Secondly, you will recall that the Constitution of Liberia grossly furnishes upon the Special Court for Sierra Leone and other foreign courts the right to enter and serve process, if and when necessary, upon the property of Mr. Taylor's property by U.S. Embassy officials for more than forty-five minutes in the absence of any of his family members, officers and employees of the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague for these basic reasons."

"The relationship between the remainders of the Taylor era and the following the military party of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been a tricky one.

"Taylor's National Patriotic Party joined Sirleaf's Unity Party in the run-up to the 2005 elections for what some analysts called the assumed confidence of the NPP that Mr. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf government would resist Taylor's delivery to the then raging Sierra Leone Civil War. But Sirleaf, whose political rival with Taylor started when the latter prevented the 1989 so-called popular people's uprising into an automatic pursuit, gave the Taytirs "wide-way" or deception and instead justified her longtime rival to the Special Court.

Jury Tampering

Judge Geevon-Smith continued that there are many state securities on the grounds of the Temple of Justice that could have effected arrest of anyone who would try to tamper with the jury, in this case, this was not done. As for the figure, he pointed out that one of the jurors asked the assigned bailiff to buy her alcohol beverages so as to celebrate her birthday with her colleagues in their dormitory. "This court is informed that state securities inspected the bottles before they were taken into the jury room," he pointed out.

Regarding the clothing, the Judge stated that they were properly inspected by state securities before taken to the jury room. "Exclusion from the public does not in any way means the jurors should be treated like prisoners," the Judge clarified in his ruling.

Meanwhile, the trial is expected to continue today with another state witness taking the stand. Prosecution had requested the court yesterday for continuance to today to allow one of its witnesses who left the court's premises to testify.

Those indicted in the ongoing economic sabotage case include former Finance Minister, Lamine Kamara, his principle deputies Tubge Doe and Puse Wallo; former lawmaker Tapple Doe and former chief of Anti-fraud at the Ministry of Finance Albow Quaye.

They are all on trial for allegedly stealing USS 3.6 million and LDS 11.6 million from government coffers during the transitional period.
Imprisoned in the dark shadows of The Hague, Charles Ghankay Taylor remains public enemy number one, on the blacklist of his political rivals, not least, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who is now President of the Republic. And so while he is even struggling for the last gasp of his life in the dock, waiting for the moment when his captors will descend, back in Liberia, Taylor’s residence has become a political ‘playground’ for search and seizure warrants, almost always approved by President Sirleaf without any question perhaps to put the last nail on his coffin. But while other search and seizure exercises went without any notice; without any comment, the event of last Sunday, June 22, 2008, inarguably ignited the anger of many Liberians and further raised a serious fundamental question as to the level of collaboration and collusion between the office of President Sirleaf and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Kaymu Weah reports.

Cont’d on page 6
**PAID AGENT**

Apparently embarrassed by the unmasking of its paid agents, the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague has distanced itself from the recent invasion of the premises of former President Charles Taylor by heavily armed LNP officers accompanied by U.S. Embassy officials.

A Spanish radio news cast early this week quoted the Registrar at the court as denying any knowledge of the Special Court sending people to enter the 'Whiteflowers' compound of Mr. Taylor.

The clarification by the Special Court has brought the U.S. Embassy in the spotlight and further exposed the level of collusion between the Executive Mansion and the Special Court on the one hand and certain security apparatus using their powers to work for the Special Court and the U.S. Embassy on the other.

Although, Justice Ministry officials remained tight-lipped on the matter, that has now raised doubts and there are strong indicators that the manner in which the illegal invasion was reported and the fourteen days allowed to them to compound plans of being 'paid agents' on the payroll of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The current team of officials at the Justice Ministry is not strangers to matters of discrimination and post-election political disagreements, with Taylor or morbid dislike for his root or personality which is why any would- be 'paid agents' of the court would find it easy to apparently 'crush' the Special Court's existence.

The housekeeper looked quite distraught as he narrated his story.

"I found this woman stood in the corner and looked on with eagle eyes to apparently 'crush' any dissent from the surrounding crowds when order to do so.

The housekeeper continued.

"The white people officers ordered him to push me outside and when the police did that, they entered the house and closed the doors with equipment in their hands", he said.

"Because I did not have a mobile phone, I left the yard and ran to a telephone booth several meters away to call Sando Johnson and by the time I came back, the white people had spent more than 45 minutes inside President Taylor's residence", the housekeeper continued.

The heavily armed LNP officers in U.S. Embassy vehicles with diplomatic license plates accompanied by American security personnel. When one of the American personnel was asked about his mission in Taylor's compound, he replied: "Our presence here is sanctioned by your leader and the courts of Liberia".

"If you have any qualms with our being here ask your leader or the Ministry of Justice to explain to you", he clearly replied.

Explaining further he said they had come at the command to take photographs and to reconstruct a 'crime scene'.

Charles Taylor is in The Hague on trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity alleging himself with the sisterly Republic of Sierra Leone. The prosecution indictment contains no element of information that Charles Taylor ever committed atrocities in his residence while he was President of Liberia.

Some angry resident spoke to accused the U.S. Embassy security and their Liberian counterparts of trying to plant evidence in side Mr. Taylor's residence in order to link him to the crimes for which he is on trial. Some even accused President Sirleaf of being a 'paid agent' on the payroll of the Special Court.

The police officers accompanying the American security to the compound refused to speak to the press.

The situation was put under control by Attorney Syenius Cephus who advised the bailiff from the City Court at the Temple of Justice to go and come back on Monday, yesterday.

But when the bailiff was contacted yesterday as to when he would go back on the compound he remarked: "Those who carried me they have not yet come".

When our reporter requested a copy of the writ to peruse it, the bailiff remarked: "you will not see it because it is a secret writ and we have not served the writ yet".

Efforts to persuade the bailiff to peruse the copy of the writ proved futile. This is the first time in the month of June, 2008 that the American team has visited Taylor compound. Prior to the ongoing trial countless numbers of visits made there covertly and overtly, one of which had to do with rumors of alleged spirits 'crying for human blood'.

This negative campaign according to supporters of the former Liberian leader was orchestrated by crooks and apologists of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to further humiliate the reputation of her archival as 'blood sucker'.

The taking of photos and reconstruction of crime scenes are not some of the elements of the office of the Wirf of Search and Seizure. Under Liberian law, the writ will say in clear and definite what to be searched for and with such items that the police will act accordingly.

While the Magistrate Court at the Temple of Justice agreed to issue such vague and indistinct writ is a million dollar question.

But insiders, the Magistrate could not have issued the writ if he had not been ordered by the all powerful presidency which is increasingly accused by many Liberians especially, Taylor's relatives as one of the prosecuting attorneys for the Special Court. The Executiv- is is yet to make any public comment on allegations of its collusion with the Special Court in Sierra Leone to convict Charles Taylor at all cost. Investigation continues.

**Rural Liberia**

"We too are Liberians, but the reality is, we deserve nothing good out of what the leadership in Monrovia claimed it would have done" observed a villager who refused to be put on record in Barrake, Maryland County.

He said a gallon of gasoline is currently sold for $5.10,000.00 and that residents in Harper, Maryland County are catching what he called "hell". Speaking further, he said they used to buy a cup of rice for $0.10 but that a cup of rice is sold for $1.00 due to the bad road condition.

"Traveling to Harper nowadays is like traveling to hell", he added.

The only effective means of transport of the villagers noted is "pen, pen" (motorbike) and added that riders are charging very exorbitantly, thus complicating the living conditions of residents in the area.

A woman who visited the region saw evidence of the appalling conditions of the road network and added that in some areas it is difficult to delineate between a ditch and the main road.

He said commuters are accustomed to spending sleepless nights on the roads because their vehicles are either broken down or stuck in the mud. A driver who was on the road fixing his vehicle which had gotten stuck on the road broke down in tears saying "ah, papay, my business will..."
Over ‘Invasion’ Of Taylor’s Residence:

CEPHUS WRITES
JUSTICE MINISTER

A celebrated member of the Independent Public Defense Team, Sayma Syrenius Cephus is demanding an immediate explanation and investigation into the illegal and unprovoked invasion of former President Charles Taylor’s ‘White Flowers Compound’ by heavily armed national Police officers accompanied by U.S. Embassy officials on Sunday, June 22, 2008.

Mr. Taylor residence was the scene of heavy police presence accompanied by U.S. Embassy officials posing as experts from the Special Court in Sierra Leone. Attorney Cephus was invited on the scene by friends of the former Liberian leader to give legal advice on whether or not to reject the writ from the Monrovia Magisterial Court or protest vehemently.

Though he is not a member of the legal team representing the former Liberian President, but he advised both the heavily armed police officers and angry crowd on the scene to exercise extreme caution.

Vehicle Backwindshield Damaged

Wobby Bwanali, a Zambian UNMIL environmentalist, was recently caught pants down when his ‘playboy’ game of flirting with two women, one single and another a married woman (name withheld) ended in violence that led to the damage of the back windshield of his assigned UNMIL vehicle.

Cont’d on page 5

Amb. Ellen Magrette Loj

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Rural Liberia

of accidents in the area are very high. See pictorial of the bad road condition on page 4.

CEPHUS WRITES

restraint until the next morning to avoid any confrontation.

But in a strongly worded letter dated June 24, 2008, Cephus said the situation at Taylor’s residence on June 22, 2008 by members of the Liberian National Police tends to confirm the widely held suspicion of most Liberians and the Taylor family in particular that the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Justice has become part of the prosecuting attorney of President Charles Taylor, currently on trial in The Hague on charges of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

He said the family of former President Taylor continue to be victims of undue harassment, intimidation and the illegal and forcible invasion of the premises of their son (Charles Taylor), a citizen of this sovereign Republic, by U.S. Embassy officials masquerading as experts from the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

And the Justice Ministry being responsible for such public disgrace, Cephus added, is using the Monrovia Magisterial Court at the Temple of Justice and heavily armed uniform officers of the Liberian National Police to prosecute a hidden political agenda against the Taylor family.

Attorney Cephus who was part of the legal defense team that won the recent landmark treason trial involving Andrew Dorbor and Charles Julius said he has been informed by the boy on guard at Taylor’s residence and Mr. Sando Johnson, the Attorney-In-Fact of the said premises that the U.S. Embassy officials in the absence of the service of whatever writ, forcibly entered upon the premises and remained inside with all of their sophisticated equipment for forty-five minutes to the detriment of the interest of the Taylor family and their right to privacy.

Mr. Ministers, the action of the U.S. Embassy officials accompanied by our police raises a serious fundamental question as to the level of collaboration or collusion between the government of the sovereign Republic of Liberia and the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague for three basic reasons,” Cephus said.

Writing further, Cephus said the illegal invasion of a private property without court order is not only indecent but also lends credence to rumors that the presence of the U.S. Embassy officials were intended to further gather evidence of how Mr. Taylor’s house looks inside, what color of paint it has on the walls, what color of chairs, doors, location of sitting room, whether it is an upstairs or low flat house, etc., to aid and abet the testimonies of subsequent witnesses who claimed to have met and held discussions with Mr. Taylor while the war in neighboring Sierra Leone was being prosecuted.

He said it is becoming increasingly clear from the suspicions of most Liberians and the Taylor family that the Justice Ministry is acting or receiving direct instructions from the Special Court to humiliate Taylor and therefore demands an immediate investigation into the entry of his house in the absence of the service of a warrant.

He argued that the action of June 22, 2008 is part of the scare tactics and other forms of retributions that are being sponsored by the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Justice to put on trial Taylor’s properties and constantly subject and humiliate his family under the pretext of executing precepts from the Special Court in Sierra Leone. See p. 2 for Cephus’ letter.

UNMIL were prepared to defend the Plain Truth in case of any possible legal action, she tuned down her rhetoric and said: “this man has been making ‘passes’ to me; sometimes he would invite me to a beach for us to have a drink and I have met him twice at his house.”

She also confirmed having a ‘drink of wine’ with Bwana and at his house on June 12, 2008, the very day of the scuffle that led to the destruction of the back windshield of the UNMIL vehicle.

“Yet it’s true his girlfriend saw me coming out of his fence after I had a ‘drink’ with him in his house and this is how the confusion started but I don’t have any sexual re-
Taylor Loyalists Warn American "Gangsters"

"Their Heads Would Have Been Cut Off..."

Key loyalists of former President Charles Taylor, on trial for crimes against humanity amongst others, have vowed swift resistance against US embassy officials, accusing them of illegally invading the home of their boss as "gangsterism."

Mr Cyril Allen, ex-chair of Mr Taylor's National Patriotic Party, speaking after the Americans arrived at Taylor's White Flower residence, defied the accused US embassy officials to repeat their act. He said they were fortunate that they (Americans) did not encounter ex-fighters in the building because they would have been physically challenged, adding, their "heads would have been cut off". He blamed the government for allowing these "American boys and girls" to conduct the search.

"It was an act of gangsterism. Supposing yesterday those little five American boys and girls bringing a writ could have come in contact with ex-combatants with cutlasses? They would have cut their heads off. Who would you blame? Gangsters meeting gangsters; they met up with gangsters. They should try it again!" Allen foamed.

Mr Sando Johnson, another loyalist, said ex-fighters would have seized weapons from the Americans to challenge them. "If they shoot one bullet, we will shoot 10", Johnson, a former Legislator, said. Both men are known for their ranting against the US when Taylor ruled here.

The motive of the search is not clear. Although the Sierra Leone Special Court has been linked to the search, a spokesman for the court denied the court ordered the search.
The search of Mr Charles Taylor’s residence, White Flower, is more linked to his son, on trial in the US, and not the father’s ongoing trial for war crimes in The Hague. Chucky Taylor, Jr., is facing charges for human rights violations while he served as a feared commander in his father’s Special Security Service, with allegations that he executed several persons.

A witness in The Hague, testifying against his father, said he saw Chucky execute a number of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans. The search was authorized by a writ from a Liberian court, may have been conducted to gather material and other evidence against Chucky, also on trial for US immigration violations.

And contrary to speculations, it has now been established that the Special Court of Sierra Leone had nothing to do with the Sunday search at the White Flower home of former President Charles Taylor, currently on trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity in The Hague.

Sierra Leone Special Court spokesperson, Peter Anderson emphatically told the New Democrat Tuesday that the Court had nothing to do with the search at White Flower Sunday.

“I spoke with the Prosecutor of the Special Court, Stephen Rapp… and what happened at White Flower has nothing to do with the Special Court,” Mr. Anderson said.

Mr. Anderson said the last time the Special Court carried out a search at the home of Mr. Taylor was a year ago.

Asked whether it was possible that the International Criminal Court (ICC) could have authorized the search since, Charles Taylor Jr., was on trial at a Florida Court in the United States, Mr. Anderson said that could not have been possible because the ICC did not have jurisdiction in the Taylor case.

He said at the Taylor’s trial recently something was brought up in Court by one of the Prosecution witnesses, who is also expected to testify in the Chucky trial in Florida, which was not before the Prosecution and that, that particular statement was in effect squashed.

Asked further whether the search could be linked to Chucky trial in the US, Mr. Anderson could not be definite but said some Courts have Universal jurisdiction for certain crimes, adding that all he knows about the Chucky trial is what he reads on the internet.

Last Saturday morning individuals believed to be US Marines were seen lifting up the Congo Town White Flower home of Mr. Taylor for what is known as the reconstruction of the scene.

The men believed to be US Marine Corps were seen blacking the home before the search started. They used a truck to lift the roof off the house.

Mr. Taylor, whom is also known as Poro, was last seen in his home on Sunday the 15th of June 2008.

White Flower Crime Search

Chucky, Not Father, Targeted?
The prosecution in the trial of former President Charles Taylor has presented another witness, a former member of the RUF, who has unveiled a trail of weapons and mercenaries transfer linked to Mr. Taylor when he served as president. He told the court that a consignment of weapons for Sierra Leone came from Mr. Taylor's garage, presumably at White Flower.

Known only as TF1-375 with facial distortions to conceal his identity, the witness said he met Mr. Taylor, at one time on his farm in Bawranga.

Pros: What happened after Maaza met you on Foya?

Wit: We went with the helicopter to the president's farm in Bawranga.

Pros: Who was the President

Wit: Taylor

Pros: What happened?

Wit: I met Benjamin Yeaten. He was introduced to me as the director of the SSS. Eddie Kanneh introduced us as the boys he came with to take the ammunition.

Pros: Did you get to know Yeaten in other years?

Wit: Yes

Pros: So what happened when you got to the farm?

Wit: They gave us two cars. They told us we should go the President’s house to get the ammunition. The cars were driven by Jungle and Samson. The ammunition was loaded at the President's house in Bawranga. That was where he used to stay.

Pros: Where exactly did you get the ammunition from?

Wit: In the garage of the president’s house

Pros: What did you do with the ammunition?

Wit: Eddie Kanneh told us that Jungle will lead us to Foya and the he was going to Monrovia with Yeaten to see the president.
SPECMATION

With
Stephen Thomas

JUSTICE AT TAYLOR'S TRIAL! A DREAM INDEED.

It is a common judicial practice that individuals with interest in a case cannot be judges or jurors for that matter. British-trained judges appointed by Sierra Leone and the United Nations cannot remit transparent justice at The Hague's trial of Charles Taylor for it would be the very nations prosecuting and judging him.

Britain and Sierra Leone initiated, planned, and conclusively decided and established the so-called "War Crime Court" for Sierra Leone, and of course with the backing of Britain's powerful Western allied countries. And to give the court an internationally acceptable flavor, through the cunning, intrigues and trickery of Britain's Tony Blair, the backing of the United Nations was solicited for the sole and only purpose of getting at Taylor, after whose trial the court will cease to function.

Common sense tells us that no-where in the world would the very nations accusing an individual establish the trial court, appoint the judges of the court, and at the same time prosecute the accused. Would such an accused be expected to have transparent justice?

Legally all judges or jurors who have any connection or interest in matters being adjudicated by them would have to automatically recuse themselves from further participation in the trial.

The failure of the court to comply with such a motion should leave the defense team with no alternative but to walk out, leaving the court to do what it is perceived to do, carry out its proceedings and bring down the accused guilty. After all, guilty on just one of the charges levied against the accused would have him put away in jail for the rest of his life.

Conspicuously and most evidentially, Britain, one of the prime planners, architects and perpetrators of the charges against the accused, is ironically the very identical one which has contracted to have the accused imprisoned, even when the trial has not yet commenced. The court, obviously, is expected to hand down a verdict of guilty, come what may. Is this then transparent justice, or just a dream? Let's wait for the final outcome.
Newspaper Summary

State Prosecutors Suspect Foul Play in Economic Sabotage Case
(The Inquirer, Heritage, Daily Observer)

- State prosecutors in the Economic Sabotage case involving some former public officials suspect that jurors in the trial have been tempered with by unidentified individuals. The Daily Observer said Liberia’s judicial system is reportedly corrupt and has seen at least one case in 2005, an economic sabotage trial marred by accusations of jurors tempering. It can be recalled that former executives of the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation charged for stealing thousands of United States dollars from the corporation were found not to be guilty by the trial juror even though the prosecution alleged that the jurors were being tempered with.

Senator Kaine’s Family Claims Murder Charge against accused is Politically Motivated
(Heritage)

- The family of Margibi County Senator Roland Kaine has spoken out for first time, saying the murder charge against the senator is politically motivated, challenging the government to provide incontestable evidence in court, linking the accused to the deaths of 19 people killed in a land dispute.

Key Referral Hospital Suffers Over-Crowdedness – Two Patients to one bed
(The News)

- The News newspaper reported of over crowdedness at the Phebe Hospital, the only referral hospital in Central Liberia. Reports say due to inadequate beds in the pediatric ward, two patients are assigned to a bed, including patients in critical condition. The reports suggest that the situation at the Phebe Hospital needs urgent attention.

Liberia Seeks Support to Reduce Poverty at forum in Germany
(Heritage, The Informer, Daily Observer, The News)

- Outgoing Finance Minister Antoinette Sayeh said Liberia will be seeking broader support at its Poverty Reduction Strategy programmes at a forum in Berlin, Germany from Thursday to Friday. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will lead Liberia’s delegation to the forum which is expected to bring together multilateral organizations and bilateral governments as well as NGOs and private corporations.

Man, 28, Kills Fiancée
(Heritage)

- A 28-year old man has been arrested and detained at the Liberia National Police (LNP) Headquarters on Capitol Hill for allegedly beating to his fiancée to death. According to police sources, James Sonpon on Sunday, June 22 beat his longtime fiancée, Ada Nah, after he
suspected her of having a love affair with another man. The Heritage quoting a police source say Sonpon is currently undergoing investigation and is expected to be charged upon the completion of the investigation. Sonpon has meanwhile denied beating his fiancée to death.

Radio Summary

**Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

**Special Court Denies Ordering Search of Taylor’s Residence**
- The UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone says it did not sanction the search of the residence of detained former Liberian President Charles Taylor.
- The family and associates of Mr. Taylor on Sunday reported that a team from the Court backed by heavily armed personnel of the Liberia National Police had forcibly entered the residence and searched it for 45 minutes.
- In reaction, the spokesman of the Special Court, Peter Andersen denied that the court had requested the search.

**Ivorian Student Delegation in Liberia**
- A student delegation from the Institute of Dignity and Human Rights in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, is in the country on a study trip.
- The students are studying the human rights, peace building and sustainable development of Liberia.
- According to the head of the Ivorian delegation, Mr. Justin Ilboudo, the trip is an annual adventure carried out by the institution for outside exposure and said the trip to Liberia has made them to understand how some of the sectors in the country work.
- The Ivorian student delegation visited the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL), the Information Ministry and the University of Liberia.

*(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

**Liberty Party, CDC Respond to Labour Minister**
- The Opposition Liberty Party and the Congress For Democratic Change(CDC) have described as unfortunate and a disappointment a statement by Labour Minister Samuel Kofi Woods in which he said the silence of the parties whose members have been linked to crimes against the state creates concern.
- In separate interviews, the National Chairman of the Liberty Party, Mr. Israel Akinsanya accused Minister Woods of attempting to draw the party into a matter that was being politicized urging him to instead focus on how they could relieve the downtrodden workers of Firestone whose salaries have been slashed by 37.5 percent.
- For its part, the Congress for Democratic Change said it has since condemned the killing of the fourteen young farm workers while accusing the Minister of turning a blind eye to alleged human rights abuses in the country.
- In an interview at the weekend, Mr. Woods alleged that things would have been “chaotic” in the country had the CDC or Liberty party taken state power.

*(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

**AI Official Urges Liberians**
- Amnesty International (AI) says Liberia’s war history should never be repeated and called for more support to sustain the efforts of the post-conflict country.
- In an interview, an official of Amnesty-Canada, Mr. Dave Shellnutt said the heinous post-war stories heard in the countryside suggest that Liberia needs more help to recover.
- Mr. Shellnutt’s comment was a result of a follow-up on the plight of women allegedly excluded from the DDRR process.
- The Amnesty follow-up report was conducted in collaboration with the Liberia Coalition of NGOs, LICONGO.

**Dozens of Liberians Detained In Ivory Coast**
- Grand Gedeh County Representative Zoe Pennoh says hundreds of Liberians are languishing in
detention in the Ivory Coast for various crimes.

- Representative Pennoh who is visiting Ivory Coast said the Liberians are being detained at a prison cell called Mecca some for a protracted period.
- He said his visit is aimed at encouraging the return of Liberians still in that country.
- Meanwhile, the lawmaker has promised to liaise with the relevant authorities to facilitate the release of the detained Liberian.

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The deadly convenience of Victor Bout

With international arms dealer Victor Bout behind bars in Bangkok, many world leaders are squirming over revelations of his client list.

By John C K Daly for ISN Security Watch (24/06/08)

The arrest on 6 March of 41-year-old Viktor Anatol'evich Bout in Bangkok continues to shine a most unwelcome (for some) spotlight on the shadowy world of the international arms trade, and will doubtless leave many governments, including the US, scrambling for cover as they attempt to limit the fallout from his arrest.

Bout was taken into custody in a conference room on the 27th floor of Bangkok's five-star Sofitel hotel after reportedly attempting to sell armaments to Colombia's FARC guerrillas.

His arrest involved not only the Royal Thai Police and the US Drug Enforcement Agency, but the Romanian Border Police, the Romanian Prosecutor's Office Attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the Korps Politie Curacao of the Netherlands Antilles and the Danish National Police Security Services.

The following day, Michael Garcia, the US Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Michele Leonhart, the Acting Administrator of the DEA, announced the unsealing of charges against Bout (aka "Boris," Victor But," "Viktor Budd," "Viktor Butt," "Viktor Bulakin," "Vadim Markovich Aminov … and so on.

On 10 March at 9 am in Manhattan district court federal agents arraigned Bout's associate, Andrei (Andrew) Smulian, who, according to the DEA, was arrested along with Bout in Thailand.

Smulian, apparently spirited out of Thailand, was charged with conspiring to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, according to the Economist magazine. Smulian was detained without bail. Prosecutors did not say where or when he had been arrested, Agence France Presse reported.

One of Bout's three lawyers, Yan Dasgupta, claimed that, "Some [US] governmental officials at the moment of his detention tried to actually send him to United States without following proper extradition procedure prescribed by the law. He was doing everything in his power including physical resistance not to fly to the US," according to Profile magazine.

Dasgupta confirmed that Smulian had been in Bangkok at the time of Bout's arrest, telling journalists, "We don't really understand what happened to Mr Smulian. It is quite interesting and surprising and strengthens my argument on (Bout) being forcibly sent to the United States," AFP quoted him as saying.
On 8 March after a brief hearing, Bout was fingerprinted before the media and transferred to Bangkok's Klong Prem Special Prison. The Russian embassy immediately hired Thai lawyer Lak Nitiwatvichan, who told reporters, "He was a military man. He has done nothing wrong. Thailand is a sovereign country, so since he was arrested in Thailand, he is willing to be prosecuted under Thai law," according to the Bangkok Post.

On 11 March, Lak posted 500,000 baht (US$15,835) in cash for bail, but the Criminal Court issued a statement noting that "The suspect is accused of being involved in international terrorism. This is a serious case and he may leave the country, so the court is not allowing the bail for the suspect," the daily reported.

On 23 April, the US Department of Justice issued its Overview of the Law Enforcement Strategy to Combat International Organized Crime, which revealed the sting operation, noting: "Unbeknownst to Bout, the people he believed to be FARC members were actually confidential sources working with the Department of Justice."

Equal opportunity supplier

During his career Bout has been an equal opportunity merchant of death, reportedly supplying former Eastern bloc weaponry to 17 African countries, al-Qaida, Afghanistan's Northern Alliance, the Taliban, Hizbollah, Muammar el-Qaddafi and the Philippines' Abu Sayyaf militant group, among others.

Demonstrating a real flair for business, Bout's numerous, shadowy firms and their suspected accomplices comprise a very impressive list, including nearly 40 aviation companies and their numerous branches around the world, with the Air Cess entity being the flagship.

Nearly everything about Bout’s past is murky. While his USSR passport states that he was born in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, Bout said during a February 2002 interview that he was in fact born in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, according to Russia's Ekho Moskvy radio. The Guardian lists Bout’s birthplace as Tashkent, Uzbekistan. As late as 2004, the Chairman of Britain's House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs identified Bout as a Ukrainian.

Further muddying the portrait are such relatively simple questions as the number of passports that he carries (five or more), which include two Russian (internal and foreign) and one Ukrainian. The January 2005 UN Security Council Committee on Liberia Assets Freeze List gave four differing passport numbers. The Ukrainian SBU, successor to the Soviet-era KGB, states that Bout is a citizen of the United Arab Emirates.

Bout graduated as an interpreter in the late 1980s from the prestigious Military Foreign Languages Institute in Moscow, where in addition to his Russian and Uzbek, he reportedly learned English, Farsi, French, Spanish and Portuguese, later picking up the African languages Xhosa and Zulu during his travels, Alain Astaud writes in "Portrait du trafiquant d'armes 'Victor B' A Bout portent."

Bout subsequently served in the 339th military-transport aerial regiment of the Soviet Air Force in Vitebsk, Belarus, and was in 1987 subsequently posted to Angola with UN peacekeeping forces, where he worked as a translator and developed political and military ties, according to Russia's Kommersant newspaper. Bout also served in Mozambique, furthering sharpening his abilities in Portuguese, Izvestia reported.

Opportunity knocks
The 1991 implosion of the USSR was a catastrophe for the Soviet military-industrial complex. The USSR's former first deputy defense minister Pavel Grachev subsequently observed that of the Soviet Air Force's three military transport aviation divisions only two regiments remained operational, while the breakup of the USSR left units in Vitebsk and Ukraine's Dzhankoe, Zaporozh'e and Krivoi Rog beyond Russian control. Among the newly unemployed in Vitebsk was Senior Lieutenant Bout.

An executive decision opened the door for wide-scale looting of Soviet-era military equipment deemed surplus, not only in Russia but throughout the newly created Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Immediately after the collapse of the USSR, when the last Soviet defense minister Evgenii Shaposhnikov became commander-in-chief of the new CIS armed forces, the right to dispose of "surplus property" was granted down to the level of battalion commander, according to an article in the Soversheno Sekretno magazine.

In 1992, Bout left the military and was discharged into the reserves as a Senior Lieutenant, according to Russia's Novosti newspaper. Bout found the shambolic post-Soviet aviation environment a perfect setting for his unique skills.

It was in this chaotic setting that Bout ostensibly made his first "purchase" of three Antonov AN-12 aircraft for US$120,000. Bout then started Transavia Export Cargo Co, based in Ostend, together with the Belgian pilot Ronald Desmet.

Bout's planes, registered in Monrovia in 1993, covertly supplied Belgian soldiers in Somalia. Several reports in the Russian media claim that, in return for a cut of the profits, Bout was proffered the Antonovs by the General Staff's Main Intelligence Directorate, while many speculate that he might have been a member of the directorate himself, given that it (the GRU) ran the Military Foreign Languages Institute. Bout's possible KGB links included possible marriage ties. A December 2000 UN report on his activities noted that his wife Alla's father, Zuiguin, "at one point held a high position in the KGB, perhaps even as high as a deputy chairman."

In 1995, Bout also started the Air Cess air cargo company, the only firm in Bout's network that ever officially listed him as its head, which he registered in Liberia. Like Transavia Export Cargo Co., Air Cess operated out of Ostend, which Bout used until 1997. Interestingly, Ostend had been a transit point for weapons in the Iran-contra operation 11 years earlier.

The scale of Bout's various enterprises was startling; one Russian media source reports that, in the aftermath of the post-Soviet economic chaos in the Ukraine, Bout and his associates purloined one-third of Ukraine's Soviet-era arsenal and sold it on the global market, netting US$49 million.

In 1997, under pressure from the Belgian authorities amid media allegations that he had sold 40 tonnes of weapons to the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, Bout moved his operations to Sharjah in the UAE. Shortly thereafter, he was running the biggest of the Emirate's 160 air-cargo companies, employing 1,000 air and ground crewmembers.

Africa, the diamond years

It was in Africa that Bout built his aviation empire. By 2000, in eight short years, his aerial armada had grown from three to nearly 60 aircraft operated by a dizzying array of shell companies.

UN experts in 1996 claimed that Bout was shipping arms from Bulgaria and Romania to Hutu forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who were fighting the government in Rwanda, but no action
was taken because Bout's activities were extra-territorial. Rwanda still allegedly owes Bout US$21 million for the weapons.

Between 1997 and 1998, Air Cess shipped US$14 million of weapons from Bulgaria via Togo to Angolan rebel group UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and the Liberian-backed Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, violating the UN embargo. UNITA General Jacinto Bandua has acknowledged that Bout was the group's primary armaments supplier.

Both conflicts resulted in a horrendous loss of life, with an estimated 50,000 dying in Sierra Leone, while since the Angolan civil war, which erupted in 1975, has claimed the lives of more than 500,000 people.

Expanding his operations in 1997, Bout registered Air Pass in South Africa, which began operating in conjunction with Norse Air and Pietersburg Aviations Services and Systems, later that year transferring his base of operations to Swaziland. Bout's African client list would eventually expand beyond Angola to include Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Congo-Brazzaville, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland and Uganda.

Bout's pilots knew how to evade radars, used false identification markings and observed radio silence, flying with their aircraft navigation lights turned off. African clients would set up temporary airstrips, deceiving American satellites by only cutting down underbrush to slightly below wing level rather than clear-cutting an identifiable runway for the rugged former Soviet aircraft. Bout's pilots specialized in precise parachute cargo drops onto prearranged coordinates. For such services the money in the early 1990s for Russians was extraordinary. In Angola, leasing Bout's aircraft cost US$1,200 per hour and pilots made US$5,000-10,000 per month.

In 1998, as South African authorities moved to indict Bout with 146 breaches of civil aviation regulations, he moved his operations to Swaziland. When authorities there subsequently grounded 43 of his aircraft because of inadequate documentation, the aircraft magically reappeared in Bangui in the Central African Republic.

In 2000 and 2001, Bout shuffled dozens of flights through South Africa using front companies.

After the December 2000 publication of two UN reports on African gun-running, many European diplomats expressed outrage during UN meetings that Bout was working so openly in Africa's war zones, causing him yet again to relocate his Air Cess and Air Pass offices to Sharjah.

The following year, Bout's company headquarters reappeared in the neighboring emirate of Adjman, even though Bout continued living in Sharjah. Meanwhile, in Central Africa, Bout's villa in the Kimihurura section of Kigali, Rwanda, was so overrun with Bout's CIS personnel, from pilots to mechanics, that the locals dubbed it "The Kremlin."

As interesting as Bout's lethal arms deliveries were the materials he took in payment. Beside the better known "blood diamonds" and gold, one of Bout's major mineral exports from the Congo was coltan, or columbo-tantalite, which is processed into tantalum and used in the production of mobile phones, computers, jet engines, fiber optics and capacitors.

By late 2000, the suddenly rising global demand for tantalum capacitors for mobile phones, laptop computers, video cameras, consumer and automotive electronics caused coltan prices to soar that year from US$30-40 per pound to over US$300 per pound by December. As coltan prices skyrocketed, Bout's planes transported coltan from the DRC to Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, according to France's *El Pais* magazine.
During Africa's "second Congo war" (2000-2002), Bout supplied weapons to more than 20 armed groups from eight states participating in the slaughter. By then Bout was the biggest operator in the African arms market; his front companies employing an estimated 300 people operating 40 to 60 aircraft, including the world's largest private fleet of Antonov cargo planes, according to Russia's *RIA-Novosti*.

**Determining Afghanistan**

Bout said during a 2002 interview, "Before the Taliban came in we had a very large volume of shipments there. In 1997, we were the second-biggest operator in Afghanistan after Lufthansa. We cooperated with the legal government of Rabbani, which was recognized by the world community," *Komsomolskaia Pravda* quoted him as saying.

Bout would eventually supply more than Afghanistan's Northern Alliance forces. In 1995, an Aerostan Iliushin-76 plane leased by Bout's company Transavia was forced to land in Kandahar by a Taliban MiG-21 jet fighter and Taliban officials impounded "30-odd tons of AK-47 small arms ammunition" meant for Rabbani's forces.

While the Taliban by then had captured 10 provincial capitals, it had not yet taken Kabul. On 16 August, 1996 the crew reportedly "overpowered" their Taliban guards and returned the plane to Sharjah.

Western intelligence believed that Bout subsequently used the incident to establish relations with the Taliban, with some US and UN officials asserting that Bout made his first deal with the Taliban in 1996 in the UAE, one of only three nations to recognize the regime.

On 15 April 2002, the British publication *Air Cargo News* published an article alleging that in 1995 Bout had supplied an aircraft to Osama bin Laden. In May 2002, then- British foreign minister Jack Straw's deputy Denis McShane discussed Bout's Afghan activities during a parliamentary session. In commenting on one of Bout's cargo planes, McShane said, "Prior to September 11th, this aircraft had reportedly been frequently overflying Iran from Saudi Arabia to Kabul and Kandahar in Afghanistan. It is now reportedly parked at Jiddah in Saudi Arabia."

Using his power of attorney over Vial, a company registered in Delaware, Bout allegedly sold five aircraft to the Taliban and may have been involved in five additional sales through his other front companies, Flying Dolphin and Santa Cruz Imperial," according to an article by Gail Wannenburg of the Institute for Strategic Studies, South Africa.