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:

Thursday, 3 July 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Africa ending impunity for rights abuses

Former President of Liberia and Chad face trial

Although the commission recommended that Mr. Harbe be charged and tried in a Chad court, the government declined to file the case. Instead, it charged Harbe with murder, and he was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years in prison. Despite the absence of a trial, Mr. Harbe was released from prison in 2003 and moved to Chad, where he continued to operate as a warlord. In January 2006, the African Union (AU) established a committee of seven eminent African jurists to review the case of former Chadian President Hissene Habre.

In July 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Mr. Habre on charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The warrant stated that Mr. Habre had been responsible for the systematic and widespread persecution of the population of Chad, and that he was directly responsible for the deaths of thousands of people. The warrant also stated that Mr. Habre had ordered the torture and murder of political opponents and that he had operated a system of terror and intimidation.

In August 2009, the Chadian authorities agreed to extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, where he was arrested and transferred to the jurisdiction of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights. In January 2010, the African Court of Justice and Human Rights ordered Mr. Habre to stand trial in Senegal for crimes against humanity.

In May 2010, the Senegalese government announced that it would not extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was released from prison. In September 2010, Mr. Habre was again arrested in Chad and taken to Senegal, where he was again charged with crimes against humanity. In January 2011, the Senegalese Supreme Court ordered Mr. Habre to stand trial in Senegal for crimes against humanity.

In April 2011, the Senegalese government announced that it would not extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was released from prison. In May 2011, the Senegalese government announced that it would extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was again arrested in Chad and taken to Senegal, where he was again charged with crimes against humanity. In December 2011, the Senegalese government announced that it would not extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was released from prison.

In January 2012, the Senegalese government announced that it would extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was again arrested in Chad and taken to Senegal, where he was again charged with crimes against humanity. In April 2012, the Senegalese government announced that it would extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was again arrested in Chad and taken to Senegal, where he was again charged with crimes against humanity. In June 2012, the Senegalese government announced that it would extradite Mr. Habre to Senegal, and he was again arrested in Chad and taken to Senegal, where he was again charged with crimes against humanity.

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Human Right Commission promotes democracy, peace

justice, including the conditions of prisons and places of detention which are still to be addressed. She puts the gains of the past few years at risk. 

The need for adequate protection of the rights of women and children cannot be overstated. Sierra Leone is engaged in human rights and democratic values as a signatory of a number of international and regional treaties. Along with current efforts led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with other stakeholders to fulfill the reporting obligations, these efforts are commendable and should be sustained.

The Human Rights Commission is hopeful that the government of Sierra Leone will ratify the UN Convention on persons with disabilities without delay, which will guide the establishment of national mechanisms for the protection of the right of persons with disabilities.

After the presentation of the HRCSL’s report, President Koroma said the government of Sierra Leone attaches great importance to the Human Rights Commission and assured the Commission that the government would do whatever it takes to guarantee their success.

President Koroma stated that HRCSL has been working hard and that he and his government is quite impressed with the Human Rights Commission’s performance. "We believe and we will do something that can sustain the success story that the Commissioner has started," he said.

The President also appealed to the people of the country to maintain the good record that the country had earned for itself with the success of the recent parliamentary and presidential elections. "I would not encourage anybody of any political party, including our political party, to embark on violence," he said.

A concerned citizen, Mr. Alpha Sam, said the annual report shows that the commission is working in the interest of the country. "These are the kind of information people need to hear everyday," he said adding that the government needs to monitor the activities of institutions operating in the country. "We need human rights as we are practicing democracy. I believe that all human beings are equal," Mr. Sam said.

Maraima Seray Sesay, another Freetown resident, said she has not been beaten by her husband lately as it has been in days past. "He has changed and I hope it is because of the human rights we have in the country," Sesay said.

Many communities across Sierra Leone have, as a matter of tradition, not allowed females to take part in any form of leadership but today they are promoting and electing female candidates. "We are really happy to (have) the human right to teach our people. This commission needs to go to our people in the villages," she said.
Newspaper Summary
World’s largest Steel Company Reports Progress in Post-war Liberia

- The world’s largest steel company, Arcelor Mittal, has reported steady progress following the launch of more than a billion dollars mining venture in Liberia.
- The company announced that it has provided jobs for at least 1,700 Liberians and used up more than US$160 million of its US$1.5 billion investment in the country. The disclosure was in apparent response to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf’s plea for Arcelor Mittal to increase the employment of Liberians in significant positions as the company begins work on its investment in Liberia.
- It can be recalled that the Mittal Steel last year launched its investment in Liberia to coincide with the country’s 160th Independence anniversary. Under the agreement, Mittal is expected to create at least 3,000 new full-time and generate up to 20,000 more temporary jobs.

Lower House Passes New Defense Law
(The News and The Informer)

- The House of Representatives has passed into law the Defense Act, placing the responsibilities of the army under the authority of the Chief of Staff. The media portrayed the development as a ‘blow’ to the Executive that sought for that role to be carried out by the Minister of Defense.
- The original draft Defense Act submitted by the Executive devoted the duties of the army to the Minister of Defense. But the House Security and Defense Committee described the action as a usurpation of the roles of the Chief of Staff who traditionally heads the army.
- When concurred by the Senate, the new Defense Act would replace the National Defense Act of 1956.

Urey Sues for US$4.5M Libel following Blah’s Testimonies in Taylor’s Trial
(Daily Observer, New Democrat, The Inquirer, The News)

- Legal arguments in the US$4.5 million libel suit filed by former Commissioner of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs (BMA), Benoni Urey, against ex-president Moses Z. Blah were on Tuesday entertained by the assigned Judge of the Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia, Korboi K. Nuta.
- Urey had complained to the court that the former president gave false testimony against him (Urey) when he testified in the war crimes trial of detained former President Charles Taylor in The Hague.
- The Plaintiff is requesting US$2.5 million in special damages and US$2 million as general damages to his character.
- Urey alleged in his complaint that Blah claimed during his testimonies in The Hague, he Urey collected Maritime funds four years in advance and delivered it to Mr. Taylor on the eve of his (Taylor’s) departure into exile in 2003.
- The Inquirer newspaper quotes Mr. Urey as claiming that the false information provided by the former President has caused him to suffer both physical and psychological damages.
ranging from enormous and unbearable financial losses representing contracts, agreements, negotiations and investment with local and international firms.

- Taylor is being prosecuted for war crimes he supposedly committed in neighboring Sierra Leone.

**Anti-Rape Campaign Pulls Record Crowd**  
*(The Analyst The Informer)*

- The ‘Stop Rape’ Concert jointly organized by the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the Government ended successfully in Monrovia, pulling thousands of Liberians from all walks of life. An estimated 20,000 Liberians thronged the country’s main sports stadium to participate in a weekend concert.
- Vice President, Joseph N. Boakai, voiced concern over incidents of rape, which is currently the most frequently reported serious crime in the country. UNMIL’s Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Rule of Law, Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, called on all Liberians to play their part to prevent, stop and report rape. “Rape is a terrible crime. Real men don’t rape,” she stressed.
- Incidents of rape are increasingly high across the country with continuing public recommendation for the establishment of a fast track court to prosecute rape cases. UNMIL has been in the vanguard of a vigorous nation-wide campaign, informing the population on the danger of rape in Liberia. The mission’s effort appears to be paying off. Saturday’s turnout at the ‘stop rape’ concert speaks to the level of enthusiasm among the public regarding the act.

**Radio Summary**

**Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 9:30 am)*

**House Passes Defense Act**  
*(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)*

**Budget Hearings Begin Today at Capitol**

- The Joint Legislative Budget Working Group today began live broadcast of public hearings into the Draft 2008/2009 Fiscal Budget, which is over US$276m.
- In an interview, the Chairman of the Legislative budget group on appropriations and expenditure, Senator Blamo Nelson said the ministers of Public Works, Agriculture, Education and Health would appear before the committee to rationalize their respective budgets.
- The Grand Kru Senator said the committee would further ascertain the spending of the outgoing fiscal year in the respective counties.
- Meanwhile, the opposition New Deal Movement said the draft national budget lacks a sustained national program for the revival of the health, agriculture, trade and security sectors among others.

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

**Mittal Steel to Make First Shipment in July 2009**

- The world’s steel giant, Arcelor Mittal has announced the official timetable for the shipment of iron ore from Liberia.
- The Chief Executive Officer of Arcelor Mittal, Mr. Joseph Mathews said the company would begin the shipment of ore from the port of Buchanan in July 2009.
- According to Mr. Mathews, a Brazilian company, Geosol has conducted drilling operations at Mount Tokadeh to establish the quality of ore there.
- He said of the fourteen shipments tested, it was discovered that the ore at Mount Nimba has a grade of forty-eight percent far below LAMCO’s sixty-eight percent but the ore would be treated and brought to the required grade before being shipped out of the country.

**Former NIC Head Formally Charged**

- Police have formally charged former National Investment Commission Chairman Roosevelt Quiah for forgery.
The police said Lands Mines and Energy Minister, Eugene Shannon reported the forgery case in May this year.
In a complaint, Dr. Shannon alleged Mr. Quiah falsified his signature, along with the stamp and seal of the Ministry to dupe the Capricorn Iron Ore Limited based in South Africa.
Mr. Quiah was brought in from Ghana, detained, sent to court Monday but was released for lack of evidence.
He was later re-arrested but was released on bail.

Local University Dismisses Two Professors
The Cuttington University in Suakoko, Bong County has dismissed two professors from for allegedly compromising the academic ethics of the university.
Correspondents said the university administration did not however disclose the names of the professors.
The dismissal followed a statement by the University’s President, Dr. Henrique Tokpa at the 47th graduation convocation on Sunday that some instructors were engage in academic malpractices.
He said 16 students from the under-graduate school and 17 students of the masters program were denied graduation for violating the university’s handbook.

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ICC orders Congo warlord release

The International Criminal Court has ordered the release of the first-ever war crimes suspect to face trial before it, Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga.

The judges said Mr Lubanga could not be guaranteed a fair trial as prosecutors had withheld evidence from the defence.

A prosecution appeal over his release will be heard next week.

Mr Lubanga, who has been in custody for two years, denies charges of recruiting child soldiers during the Democratic Republic of Congo's conflict.

Four million people are estimated to have died during the conflict in the DR Congo.

Mr Lubanga led the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) militia in the north-eastern Ituri district, where fighting continued long after a 2002 peace deal.

In a statement released early last year, the prosecution argued that children had been snatched as they walked to school and forced to fight for Mr Lubanga's ethnic Hema militia against their Lendu rivals.

But his lawyers said he was trying to end the conflict and is being punished by the international community for refusing to give mining concessions to foreign firms in areas he controlled.

The ICC, based in The Hague, was set up in 2002 as the world's first permanent war crimes court.

It was designed to end the need for various ad hoc war crimes courts - including the chambers created to deal with war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the genocide in Rwanda.